



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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Forward Baptist Church 2022 Annual Report

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STATEMENT OF FAITH

Bible: We believe the Bible to be the complete Word of God; that the sixty-six books, as originally written, comprising the Old and New Testaments were God-breathed and were entirely free from error; we believe that God, in His providence, ensured the preservation of His Word so that that the Bible is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice and the true basis of Christian union.

God: We believe in One God, Creator of all, holy, sovereign, eternal, existing in three equal Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit who have enjoyed perfect love and community for all of eternity.

God the Father: We believe in one God, the Father almighty who is over all and who sovereignly works through all and in all according to His purpose. He shares the same divine essence as His Son and the Holy Spirit so that they are each fully God. We believe that He sent the Son to redeem the church, whom He chose and adopted to make them co-heirs with the Son and true children of the Father, blessing them with every blessing, and disciplining them, as a loving Father.

God the Son: We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He shares the same divine essence as His Father and the Holy Spirit and is fully God. We believe in His eternal existence with the Father and Holy Spirit in preincarnate glory. We believe that He took on full humanity when He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life, died a substitutionary death, was resurrected bodily, and ascended triumphantly. He is the head of the church and now sits at the right hand of the Father, mediating for His people until the day He returns to reign.

God the Holy Spirit: We believe in one Holy Spirit of God, who shares the same divine essence as the Father and the Son and is fully God. We believe He is a person and not merely a force. The Spirit spoke through the prophets and apostles so the Scriptures are the very words of God. He actively convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement. He regenerates, indwells, and sanctifies those who put their faith in Jesus Christ. He also illuminates, comforts, unifies, and gives gifts to those who believe in Jesus Christ.

Satan: We believe that Satan is a spirit being who is an evil personality, the originator of sin, the archenemy of God and humankind, whose eternal destiny in hell is certain.

Humanity: We believe that God created humanity in His own image to glorify and enjoy Him forever.

We believe that because we were created in the image of God, we were created to work, to be creative, to care for and cultivate the earth.

We also believe that because we were made in the image of God, the value, dignity and personhood of human life comes from God; He knits us together in our mothers' wombs and numbers our days according to His will.

Furthermore, we believe that because we were created in the image of our Triune God, we were created for community. Friendship and family reflect this reality, as does the unity and diversity of the local church. This is also reflected in gender differences between male and female and in the covenant relationship of marriage, where one man and one woman are joined together as husband and wife. God created sexual activity to be practiced and enjoyed by a husband and wife in marriage to celebrate and deepen that union and for procreation. Therefore, sexual activity practiced outside of marriage is forbidden by God.

Sin: Sin was introduced into the world when Adam disobeyed God. The result of this first sin is that all humanity is alienated from God; every aspect of their total being is depraved. Humanity thereby incurred the condemnation of God, resulting in physical, spiritual and eternal death.

Salvation: We believe that salvation is by the sovereign, electing grace of God; that Christ voluntarily suffered a substitutionary death for sinners that completely satisfied God's righteous demands; that

justification is by faith alone in the all-sufficient sacrifice and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and that those whom God has saved shall be divinely preserved and finally perfected in the image of the Lord.

Future Things: We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the resurrection of the just and unjust; in the eternal blessedness in heaven of the redeemed and in the judgement and conscious, eternal punishment in hell of the wicked.

The Local Church: We believe that the church is a company of immersed believers, voluntarily associated for worship, instruction, fellowship, edification, evangelism and the observance of the ordinances. We believe it is an autonomous, independent body, under the Lordship of Christ, the Great Head of the church. Its Pastors and Board members are elected by the membership.

Ordinances: We believe there are only two ordinances for the church regularly observed in the New Testament and commanded by Christ:

Baptism which is the immersion in water, whereby a person publicly identifies with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.

The Lord's Supper which is the memorial wherein the believer partakes of the two elements, the bread and the cup, which symbolize the Lord's body and shed blood, proclaiming His death until He comes.

The Church And State: We believe in the entire separation of church and state.

Religious Liberty: We believe in religious liberty; that every person has the right to practice and propagate his beliefs.

The Lord's Day: We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day and that it is the biblically normal day for corporate worship and spiritual exercise.

Civil Government: We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interest and good order of society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honoured and obeyed, except only in the things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience and Prince of the kings of the earth.

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

Our Mission

GLORIFY God
GROW in Christ
GO with the Gospel

Our Vision

Our Vision is that Forward Baptist Church would reflect God's vision for the church laid out in His Word. We aspire to glorify God as His holy temple, **built on the foundation of God's Word** with Jesus Christ and His **gospel as our cornerstone**, where God's Holy Spirit works in us as we gather together to **worship God with our whole hearts**. We aspire to Grow in Christ as His body, a **diverse group of people who are unified in Jesus**, who are **maturing together** in Him, and who are being **equipped for ministry**. We aspire to Go with the Gospel as Christ's ambassadors to the world calling others to Christ by **loving our community** and investing in **strategic missions** work.

1. **Built on the foundation of God's Word:** We joyfully submit to God's word in all that we do as a church and as individuals.
2. **Gospel as our cornerstone:** The Gospel message is at the core of everything that is done at Forward.
3. **Whole-Hearted Worship:** Members of Forward regularly and enthusiastically gather together to hear God's Word preached, to sing together, to pray together, to participate in the Lord's Supper together, to witness baptisms together, to give, and to serve.
4. **Diverse and unified:** Forward is a diverse congregation with a deep mutual love for one another. We have unity in our Lord that transcends boundaries of age, ethnicity, and economic situation.
5. **Maturing together:** Members of Forward are maturing and abiding in Christ together; living holy lives according to God's Word, filled with God's Spirit, and regularly engaged in mutual encouragement, accountability, prayer and evangelism.
6. **Equipped for ministry:** Forward strongly emphasises equipping its members for service so they can minister faithfully at Forward and/or be sent elsewhere to serve as pastors and missionaries.
7. **Loving our community:** Forward actively serves the community of the Upper Beaches and surrounding area, showing Christ's love through tangible means.
8. **Strategic Missions:** Forward works to be an initiator in planting and revitalizing churches locally in Toronto and through global missions.



MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

Since I have placed my faith in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour and repented from my sins, and since I have professed this through baptism, and since I am in agreement with Forward Baptist Church's statement of faith,

Therefore, by God's grace, with His help, and for His glory, I make the following covenant commitments with my brothers and sisters in Christ at Forward Baptist Church:

- I will seek to cultivate my faith and love for God, by regularly spending time with Him on my own through Bible reading and prayer. (Colossians 1:9-12, Philippians 1:9-11, 1 Peter 2:2-3, John 15:4-5)
- I will submit my life to the authority of Jesus Christ by believing and obeying God's Word and by following the leading of the Holy Spirit in my life. (James 4:7-10, Romans 12:1-2, Hebrews 3:12-15)
- I will seek the spiritual growth of my family by reading God's Word and praying with them. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Ephesians 6:4, 1 Peter 3:1-2)
- I will actively seek to put sin to death in my life, fighting hard to live a holy life through the Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:13, Matthew 5:29-30, Galatians 5:16)
- I will let the gospel shape each of my relationships, loving others as God has loved me in Christ and doing all things for His glory. (Ephesians 5:21-6:9, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12, Matthew 5:43-48)
- I will seek to share the good news of Jesus with those whom God has placed in my life. (Hebrews 13:15-16, Matthew 28:19-20)
- I will gather with the members of Forward regularly for worship, fellowship, learning, prayer, and participating in the Lord's Supper. (Acts 2:42, Hebrews 10:23-25, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, 1 Timothy 2:1-4)
- I will use the gifts God has given to me to serve my church. (Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Peter 4:10)
- I will seek to maintain unity with my brothers and sisters in Christ at Forward. I will pray for them and seek to build relationships with them. I will avoid gossip, divisiveness, and unloving speech. I will pursue reconciliation when relationships break down. (Philippians 2:2-3, 1 Peter 4:8-10, John 17:20-21, 1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- I will engage in mutual accountability with my brothers and sisters in Christ, both accepting and providing loving correction as needed. I understand that if I refuse this correction, I will be subject to biblical discipline which seeks my restoration. (1 Corinthians 5:11-12, Matthew 18:15-20, Ephesians 4:15-16)
- I will engage in the outreach efforts of Forward by welcoming visitors and by praying for and participating in outreach events throughout the year. (Colossians 4:2-6, Hebrews 13:15-16)
- I will follow the leadership of Forward as they follow Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, Hebrews 13:17)
- I will support the ministries of Forward by giving financially and by attending members meetings, prayerfully voting as the opportunity arises. (1 Corinthians 16:1-2, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, Matthew 18:17-20, Acts 6:1-6)
- If I move away and am no longer able to attend Forward, I will make it a priority to seek another gospel-centred church to join as soon as possible. (Hebrews 10:23-25, Ephesians 4:11-16 John 13:34-35)

At Forward, we continue to grow in unity and peace under the message of the gospel. In these times that seem to be so tense and troubled, we are a people with a secure hope.

The Apostle Paul says in Hebrews 6:19-20 (NIV):

¹⁹We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, ²⁰where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.

What a comfort to know that nothing can separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:37-39 NIV)

The message of the gospel is the **only hope** that the world has and we, as God's people, have the privilege of proclaiming it wherever we go and to whomever we are called to.

We praise God that we continue to see our church thrive, as more are added to our number and more proclaim their faith in the waters of baptism. These are encouraging times at Forward.

We as Elders continue to lift the congregational needs to the Lord in prayer, as you continue the mission you are called to, here in the east end of Toronto. We thank God for your acts of service and love towards each other. We see this as God working through his people to further His kingdom. We thank you for your partnership in the gospel.

We also thank God for allowing us to meet once again in person this year. It's been encouraging to see Covid protocols being lifted, and our services return closer to normal. It has also been such a blessing to share in each other's lives in the after-church fellowship time and in our small group studies.

God proclaims to a tired Israel in Isaiah 40:29-31 that:

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.'

Perhaps you have felt tired after these pandemic years. But we, as God's people have the strength to do what he has called us to. With our faith in Him, we can accomplish his work. We as a church continue to **Glorify God** in our obedience to him which is in turn demonstrated through our acts of service. We continue to **Grow in Christ** as we study his Word and are transformed by it. We each reach out to a hurting world by **Going with the Gospel** and proclaiming the good news to the lost.

On behalf of the Elders, I'd like to once again thank you for faithfully upholding our church in your prayers. Thank you for being faithful in your giving and your acts of service. Thank you for encouraging and caring for each other. It's in serving others that we serve our Lord.

The Elders' and Deacons' boards over the past year continued to meet for discussion and prayer during our joint digital or physical meetings. We, as your church leadership, entreated God to be the focal point of our ministry here at Forward. We sought His direction as we led the church.

The Elders also continued to meet online or in person regularly as an independent group. We used our time to encourage and develop one another as we shared what God had been doing in each of our lives. As a group, we prayed through the prayer requests submitted to us, as well as for any known needs from the church body.

The Elders continue to give guidance with respect to policy, church vision and the direction of various church ministries. We continue to seek God's guidance and blessing as we determine how to reach the lost and develop disciples for Him.

The Elders have also served on the Mission's Committee to encourage those involved in fulltime mission work and assist those of you from the congregation who have faithfully served as well.

Thank you for the continued support demonstrated towards both your church and your leadership. It has been so very appreciated.

Our prayer for 2023 is from Hebrews 10:23-25 (NIV).

That you would:

²³...hold unswervingly to the hope *you* profess, for he who promised is faithful.

That you would:

²⁴ ...consider how *you* may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,

That you would:

²⁵not *give* up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

In Him,

Shawn Freer
Chairman, Elders Board

Elders: Pastor - Stephen Lambert
Pastor - Aaron Woodhouse
Elder - Brian Taylor

Active Participants:

Chairman, Deacons' Board – John Deinum
Chairman, Deacons' Board – Maarten Theunissen
Pastor of Student Ministries - Mark Memije



DEACONS BOARD REPORT – Maarten Theunissen

I never cease to be amazed about how God works in our everyday lives. Sometimes He allows us to see the miracles He performs, or small snippets of His plan for all of us. This is also confirmed in *John 5:17* “*In his defense Jesus said to them, My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working*”.

In the past year Forward has restarted many activities, as we adjusted to life after the pandemic. In our personal lives it was often a challenge to fit all of our responsibilities and activities into our calendars again, going back to busier pre-pandemic routines. This was indeed a challenge for many from an energy and mental perspective. We are very fortunate to be serving a living God and to be part of a church family that helped us deal with many of these challenges - *Isaiah 40:31* “*But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*”

Is it not amazing to see how God made our church stronger, and wonderful to see many new members join and serve alongside all of us? Our church continues to function due to the many members that serve without seeking reward. We are blessed to have God-fearing staff that continue to lead in their respective ways, and who continue to grow and devote their time to our church. - *Luke 22:27* “*Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves.*”

Thank you to our outgoing chair John Deinum and board member Debbie Michaud, for your years of faithful service. We are grateful to welcome new members joining the Deacons Board this year. We look forward to serve with Patricia Overholt, Irene Wigglesworth and William Snieder.

The Deacons Board continued to work on governance matters including the Missions Philosophy, a Human Resources Policy and the Church Membership Policy, the latter that is in the process of being reviewed by the members of the church. We are also looking at how the Deacons Board can continue to support the pastors as our church continues to grow, and ensure that we have allocated sufficient resources. This is a continued matter of prayer as we intentionally try to listen to and discern God’s voice, to do His will. God has always provided us with the financial resources to support our activities and we need to continue to have faith that He will continue to do so, while understanding that we need to first always ensure that we are executing His will and not ours.

As a Deacon’s Board, we appreciate your prayers, and ask that you continue to pray that God would give us wisdom, direction, and unity as we lead His church through these days.

In closing, I encourage you to participate with us together to be encouraged by the fellowship we enjoy in Christ.

Maarten Theunissen,
Chairman, Deacons Board



¹ I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
² My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.
Psalm 121:1-2 (NIV)

With these words, we began 2022 as a church. Shawn Freer, who serves as one of our elders, preached from this psalm on January 2 and reminded us that our God, who is the creator of all things, is the one who watches over us and helps us. The Lord has proven that to be true over and over in the history of our church. In 2022, as always, God cared for us through the ups and downs, the joys and the sorrows.

As we consider the past year, I hope it is clear to all of us that we have much to be thankful for. This was the first year since 2019 when we were able to gather every week with no lockdowns. As more and more of our people returned, not only did our Sunday attendance reach pre-COVID numbers, but far surpassed them! We seem to have emerged from the past two years as a new church. We haven't shifted on what we believe or teach, and our methods have only changed in superficial ways, but the church - Christ's assembled people - is new. We have had so many new people join our church this year that it was almost overwhelming. There were many Sundays when many hours were spent in conversation with newcomers, much time was invested in trying to remember people's names, and much prayer and thought went into how to get people integrated into the life of our church. And praise the Lord, He has built His church! Newcomers have not only been attending, but getting involved, joining as members, and growing together with the rest of us in Christ. Our small group Bible studies are overflowing! Our children's ministry is exploding! And relationships are deepening in mutual discipleship and love.

It has been a privilege to lift our eyes to the mountains that rose up before us, knowing that our help will come from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He has helped us. And we rejoice!

Preaching Ministry

Shawn's sermon on Psalm 121 was actually the second in a 15-week series on the Psalms of Ascent (Psalm 120-134). This series took us from the end of 2021 all the way up to Easter 2022 and helped shape the way we thought of our lives as worshippers of God. We are pilgrims who are on a journey together to bring glory to God who helps us, guides us, blesses us, protects us, corrects us, and gives us joy.

On Good Friday and Easter Sunday (and the next Sunday) we spent time together in Colossians, considering the supremacy and fullness of Christ who died and rose again for us and has made us alive in Himself. On Anniversary Sunday, Pastor Warwick Cooper, who was an assistant pastor at Forward in the 1970s came and spoke.

We spent three weeks going through the minor prophet Joel, which brought us face to face with the God who is sovereign over judgement and suffering and gives good gifts. This book of the Bible drew us into deeper understanding of God and awe of who He is. It also prepared us for our next series on the book of Acts, in which we see the fulfillment of God's promise to give the ultimate good gift to His people: the gift of Himself through the pouring out of His Holy Spirit. Working through Acts has been a wonderful exercise for this growing church as we see God's power at work in the early days of the church. We have been encouraged as we think about the reality of God's presence with us through His Spirit and the power of the gospel to save anyone. We have been challenged in how we serve together, pray together, and share the gospel to the world around us. We only got as far as Acts 12 in 2022 and are glad to be continuing into 2023.

We ended our year off back in the Psalms as we worked through Psalms 95-100 which called us to rejoice in our King - Jesus who came to save us from our sins and who is coming again to reign forever. Scattered throughout the year we also had a number of one-off sermons on Genesis 50, 2 Timothy 3, and Philippians 4, as well as some missionary speakers (more on them in the Missions Committee report!)

I am very thankful for how God revealed Himself to us through His word this year and for how we were shaped, encouraged, and challenged by it. It is my greatest privilege as a pastor to be able to proclaim God's word to His people each week. I am also very thankful to Aaron, Mark, and Shawn who served alongside me in this essential ministry this year.

Small Groups

As I mentioned above, our small group Bible studies were overflowing in 2022. With close to 90 people being regularly involved in one or more of 11 different groups, and over 120 attending at least once in the year. (These numbers don't include youth or young adult groups. See Pastor Mark's report for those numbers!) I am so grateful to God for this growth! And I am also thankful for all those who have led small groups this year! Pray with us that we can get more small groups started up to meet the need. Here are short reports from each of the groups that met in 2022.

Tuesday Afternoon Men's Bible Study (submitted by Don Webster)

The "Old Men's" Bible Study met every second week except for a summer break. Actually, the title does not reflect all who now attend. Four to eight men at each session shared in studying Romans & Revelation. The men got more from the studies by doing homework -- answering questions based upon the passage to be studied. This procedure was adopted with the intent of teaching the men how to analyze a passage in their personal Bible study. Our good fellowship included discussing topics not germane to the passage under study. Thank God for men who want to study the Word and draw closer to God.

Tuesday Evening Small Group (submitted by myself)

Our small group meets twice a month on Tuesdays in person at my house. Becky and I have really enjoyed hosting this group and growing in relationship with the people who attend. We use discussion questions based on the previous week's sermon to think more deeply about the passage and how it applies to our lives, we pray for one another, and we laugh and talk and have a lot of fun. In September we split our group in two so we would have more space for people who wanted to join a small group. I'm thankful for Arthur and Irene Wrigglesworth opening their home to host the second small group (see their report below!) We were sad to break the group up but have been glad to continue to grow in Christ together with the new members of our group this past fall and winter.

Wednesday Evening Women's Bible Study (submitted by Debbie Michaud and Carol Bain)

The Wednesday evening ladies' Bible study has been meeting for 17 years! Although for years we met face to face upstairs at the church, we now meet every other Wednesday from 7-9 pm on zoom. This allows women who can't make it out in the evenings because of physical infirmities or family responsibilities still have the joy of fellowshiping around God's word. We are a diverse group of women: different backgrounds and ages, but we all love to dig deep into God's word. In 2022 we did two studies: "The Lamb of God - Seeing Jesus in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy" by Nancy Guthrie, and a study on the book of Ephesians by Anne Graham Lotz. We do personal Bible study during the week & then meet to discuss what we have learned & heard from God. Please consider joining us in 2023!

Wednesday Evening Men's Bible Study (submitted by Aaron Woodhouse and John Deinum)

The Men's study had a great year meeting together for fellowship, studying God's word and prayer on a weekly basis. We met Wednesday evenings together in person and on zoom throughout the year. This year we studied the books of James, 1 John, and Hebrews, and we did a 10-week study entitled "Gospel Christianity". It was encouraging to connect with 21 men throughout the year. We had between 7 and 10

men at each study. John Deinum and Aaron Woodhouse co-lead the group with much participation from the Men.

Wednesday Evening Prayer Meeting (submitted by myself)

Every Wednesday at 7:00 we have our traditional prayer meeting. This prayer meeting has been taken place at the church on Wednesdays for decades (maybe even a century!) Each week we sing some hymns, go through some discussion questions on the previous week's sermon to help us think more deeply about the passage and how it applies to our lives, and spend half an hour or so praying through our prayer bulletin. I am always blessed by the faithfulness of this group as they pray for our church, our missionaries, their neighbours, and the world.

Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study (submitted by Christine Woodhouse)

The Gospel Posse women meet weekly on Thursday mornings to encourage each other to work out our faith with fear and trembling. We do this by praying together, sharing life's joys and woes, and working through books of the bible; not shying away from difficult passages that require us to grow in our faith and dependence on God. Over the last year we have studied the books of Daniel, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews. We are a group of about 14 and are blessed to usually have childcare during our study. When child care is not available we are blessed by our children's exuberant participation.

Thursday Noon Hour Women's Bible Study & Women's Missions Fellowship (submitted by Susan Ricketts, Eunice Chaffey and Patricia Overholt)

Bible Study (1st & 3rd Thursday of the month):

Our group welcomes women who are in need of fellowship, enjoy group bible study and have a desire to pray with others. We are overjoyed that we have been able to meet in person at the church during this past year. During the winter and spring of 2022, we expanded our knowledge of God by working through a book entitled "Glimpses of God: Revealed Through His Names" by Debi Pryde. This study took us on a journey of the Old Testament to discover the names of God and what they mean to us today. In the Fall we began a LifeGuide Bible Study on the life of David illustrated in 1 & 2 Samuel with the purpose of understanding more fully what is involved in developing a "Heart for God". Over the last year, our group has grown from 10 to 18 members. We continue to meet for lunch and a time of fellowship in one large group but afterwards due to the increase in number we divide into two groups for bible study and prayer.

Women's Missions Fellowship (last Thursday of the month):

During the early part of 2022 we prayed for our missionaries on-line using Zoom. In September we resumed our Mission Fellowship in-person at the church. This meeting was a new experience for some of the ladies who recently joined our group, so before we prayed, we spent time reviewing the families we support, the countries they serve in and their current struggles and victories. In October, Jennifer Oats who is a missionary with Interserve spoke of her work in Thailand with women who are suffering due to marginalization, abuse and poverty. In November, Rosalie Memije spoke to us about her life's work of providing financial assistance to children whose parents have died of Aids in the Philippines. This work is carried out through Rodel Naval Care Outreach in memory of her brother who was a famous Filipino actor, singer, and songwriter.

Thursday Evening Small Group (submitted by Arthur Wrigglesworth)

This group started in September as an offshoot of the small group that met at Pastor Steve's house in order to accommodate the growing number of people involved. We consistently have 12 women and men of all ages (20s – 60s). We met every other Thursday at 7:30pm to study God's word together (though in January we switched to every other Friday at 7pm). We have based our studies on the previous weeks' sermon topics, following through the book of Acts and branching into related passages to 'dig deeper' into the themes presented on Sunday mornings. The study is supported by passage references and questions prepared by Pastor Steve. The range of ages, life experiences, and cultural backgrounds has brought amazing

insights into our study of scripture that inform our faith journeys. Very significant is the time we spend praying for each other's needs and giving thanks for God's provision.

Monthly Friday Small Group (submitted by Allister Walsh on behalf of John Deinum)

This group meets once a month on Monday night at the Deinum household. We are currently studying a book titled "A Person of Interest" about the importance and impact of Jesus on the world. Although it is a small group (just seven people) we have uncovered a great number of gems regarding Jesus and the Christian church. We have all been blessed by the interaction of a group that is interested in learning and sharing.

Newly Married Couples Small Group (Submitted by Shanen Cudao)

A number of recently married couples met once a month and went through a book study "Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy?". Each month, the group went through a video and discussion questions about a specific topic in marriage, building a space for intentionally learning and growing in their new marriages. For each session, an experienced married couple from the church joined the group to also share their thoughts and perspectives on the discussion topic. The sessions were filled with honest conversations, biblical truth and thoughtful prayer as each couple pondered their relationship and worked on applying biblical truths in their marriages. This was a short, small group from April-December in 2022 and was meant to create a space for young couples to focus and learn about what God has created marriage to be.

Saturday Morning Young Men's Small Group (Submitted by William Sneider and JP Cudao)

Every other Saturday morning some of the young men, from their mid-twenties to mid-thirties, met to study the bible, have fellowship, and pray together. We studied the book of Daniel, focussing on how to live as sojourners in this world, particularly as men. Meetings often went longer than expected, as we had so much input, questions, and discussion from the group in each lesson. Also, prayer time often went long, and the men enjoyed staying behind afterward to chat and support one another. Seeing these men grow in their faith, understanding, and love for one another was highly encouraging.

*** Look for reports on youth and young adult related Bible studies in Pastor Mark's report. ***

Discipleship

Besides our small group Bible studies, there are several smaller discipleship relationships sprouting up in the church. I have had the privilege of walking with a couple of guys in 2022 and I know Mark, Aaron, and Beth also spend time discipling people. Beyond the staff, I know many of our people are involved in formal and informal discipleship relationships. These take various forms: regular Bible studies, frequent phone conversations about God and life, occasional walks to check in and pray for one another. It is encouraging to see these relationships happening at our church. Join me in praying that they become even more numerous in the coming year!

Salvation, Baptism, and Membership

Every year we make a point to pray for God to save 10 people through our evangelism and ministries. We picked the number 10 just so we would have a specific goal to pray for. Maybe that was silly, I don't know. Most years, as far as we're aware, we haven't been given a yes to that prayer request. However, we have had many people come to know Christ through the personal evangelism and formal ministries of our church! We praise God for that. The other side of this is that God also regularly brings people to our church that have recently turned to Christ. Maybe God wants to remind us that He doesn't need us. Or maybe it's a challenge to be more faithful to share the gospel because it is the power of God for salvation. Either way, we rejoice whenever God saves someone!

Most years, I can point to one or two people who have made professions of faith that year because they heard the gospel through our church. This year is no exception with at least one adult who I know put their

faith in Christ this year and was baptized (Praise God!) We also baptized two others in 2022. Moreover, we welcomed 14 new members into our church. It was wonderful going through baptism and membership classes with these individuals and seeing them live out their faith and grow in Christ together with us!

Becky and I are also rejoicing that our eldest daughter MJ made a profession of faith this year. She's 3 years old and so ultimately her life will bear evidence to whether she has truly turned to Christ with childlike faith. But MJ spent a long time considering this before she made a decision. She asked lots of questions about Jesus and sin and death and heaven. And she regularly told us that she didn't love Jesus. Then one day she asked us if she was a Christian and we said we didn't know and explained it meant knowing that your sins are really bad and that you need to be forgiven and believing that Jesus died and rose again for your sins and then loving him. She responded that she was a Christian because she does know that and does love Jesus. Around the same time she had been lying to us a lot, but since then she has stopped. When we told her we were thankful that she wasn't lying to us any more, she responded, "Yeah, God helped me with that!"

We're really encouraged and praying that this proves to be a true profession. I share that as a reminder that when we pray for God to save people through our church's evangelism, we should pray for our children. We should share the gospel with them regularly and show them who Jesus is in our lives.

See the Report on Membership for more details on baptism and membership.

Weddings & Funerals

Becky and I also had the privilege of providing pre-marital counselling for three couples in 2022 and I was glad to perform the weddings for two of those couples. (The other couple got married in the US and are living there now.) We're so thankful for the young married couples that are part of our church and how God is displaying his gospel through their lives and marriages.

I also had the sad privilege of performing two funerals last year for a family from the community. Both funerals were for members of the same family. As far as I know none of the family members are believers (including those who passed away). I was thankful to be able to preach the gospel to them in these times of grief and I pray that God will use those messages to bring members of the family to faith in Christ.

Worship

When Sarah Quartel resigned as Director of Worship and Communication at the beginning of last year, it left a huge hole in our church. That hole was relational, as we all love Sarah very much, but it was also a hole of practical ministry need. Almost a year later, we haven't found the right person to fill the hole of ministry need, but I am thankful for all of the worship team members who have stepped up to keep things going. I have tried to provide some oversight (such as it was) to these teams, but it is really the individuals who picked songs and met for rehearsals and led us on Sundays who have allowed us to worship God through song this past year. My thanks go out to everyone who was involved in a worship team this year, and especially to the team leaders, Shawn Freer, Craig Goodhand, and David & Katie Nunn.

Prayer

As we have worked our way through the book of Acts this year, one of the main emphases that we have noticed is the need for corporate prayer. God calls the church not just to pray, but to pray together. All of our small groups pray together as part of their meetings, and we are very glad for that. But it has been a burden on my heart to see our church growing in this aspect of praying together. As part of this, we continued our two weeks of prayer, one the week leading up to Easter and one during missions conference. But towards the end of the year, we also added a special monthly prayer meeting. For a number of years, there has been a Sunday evening prayer meeting that a faithful few attend every week. Once a month, we emphasize that prayer meeting and encourage our congregation to join in person or online. A streamlined prayer bulletin is prepared for that meeting to guide the group through an hour of

prayer. This prayer meeting only happened in November and December but has continued into 2023 and is growing. I am thankful for this time to pray with our church!

Conclusion

God is our helper, we began our year remembering that truth from Psalm 121 and it was proven for us over and over. And so it was appropriate that we ended our year by remembering this truth from Psalm 100 on Christmas day:

For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Psalm 100:5 (NIV)

Praise God for His goodness, His love, and His faithfulness.

Yours in Christ,
Steve Lambert
Pastor of Teaching & Discipleship



This past year has been such a blessing and encouragement to me. It has felt like a year of hope, renewal and growth. We have had our challenges this past year as a Church also, the passing of loved ones and saying goodbye to Sarah Quartel who was our Worship and Communications director for over 7 years. The verses in Isaiah 40:30-31 remind me of this past year.

Isaiah 40:30-31

³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;

³¹ but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

The previous 2 years have been tiring and wearying. We have hoped and relied on the Lord for strength, protection, provision, guidance, wisdom and unity as a Church. This year I have felt that God has renewed and strengthened us in various ways, to encourage us as a church to keep relying on his strength as we serve, worship and share the gospel, as Isaiah says, “to run and not grow weary”.

I have seen the lord working this past year by proving an entire year that we could meet in person for worship, including meeting for Easter, Christmas eve and Christmas day. Our summer camps were back to normal and we launched a new Basketball camp. Our Children’s ministry started up again in May 2022 and is stronger than it was pre-covid. We have a large number of young adults, newly married and expecting parents at our Church this past year. We have seen an overall increase in Sunday morning Church attendance with numbers higher than they were in years leading up to Covid. We have seen provision in finances for our church, we have seen a huge number of volunteers for Children’s ministry and the various Sunday morning teams. I have seen people step into roles this past year that needed to be filled with Sarah leaving. I’m thankful for this past year and as we continue in 2023 I’m hopefully as we continue to “hope in the Lord”.

Pastoral Ministry

During the year I have the opportunity to participate in one-on-one discipleship with various men in the church. I had the ongoing joy of Pastoral visitation by connecting with people in-person, on zoom or the phone. I had the opportunity to teach the Bible regularly in our Men’s bible study and through Monthly Preaching during Sunday Worship services. I also had the blessing of regularly praying for people and our Church. I had many opportunities to minister to families and individuals through funeral planning and services. I also spent time this year in the administration of the Church.

Ministry Team Changes

This past year we said goodbye to Sarah Quartel who worked at Forward for 7+ years as our Worship and Communications director. Sarah discerned that God was calling her to a season of rest and renewal and to try to address some ongoing health challenges in her life. Sarah moved back to Saskatchewan and has spent the year following this calling to rest and renewal as she has lived with family. We have missed Sarah greatly this past year and continue to miss her to this day her contributions were too many to list and her ministry legacy at Forward will be felt for a very long time. In Sarah’s leaving I have been very thankful to a handful of people that have stepped up to help in key ministry areas that Sarah was leading, tech responsibilities, host team scheduling, worship team scheduling, leading worship teams, graphics work, and administration work. We are in the process of evaluating our needs in the areas of Worship and Communications.

In May 2022 we welcomed on the ministry team Beth Lambert. Beth Lambert has been serving with me in supervising, mentoring and training our interns. Beth has also been leading our children's ministry and assisting with a variety of administration activities at the church. Beth has been a welcome addition to our ministry team at Forward. I have also been thankful that Katie Nunn has been providing graphic design services for our Church this past year.

Children's Ministry

Children's ministry was on hold during the pandemic, which brought some challenges and some great benefits. It was a blessing to model and expose children to "grown-up" church. It was a blessing to regularly see parents, other adults, and kids worshipping God together. Sometimes it was loud and distracting with extra patience needed. But, in May 2022 Forward's Children's ministry started again. Hooray. A big thank you to Janet Theunissen and Beth Lambert that volunteered to get this ministry started again, it took a few months of planning, scheduling, organizing, reviewing curriculum, cleaning rooms and toys and training volunteers to get the children's ministry off the ground again. Janet and Beth continue to Lead and support the Sunday morning Children's ministry. See Beth Lambert Staff report for more details.

Community Engagement and Outreach

May 2022 Community Street Party returned after 3 years of not happening (2 due to Covid, 1 cancelled due to weather). It was back and better than ever. This year we hosted the party in the Gerrard Street Parking which gave of more room and better community exposure. We had a few hundred people cycle in through the day enjoying the many bouncy castles, obstacle courses, games, face painting, BBQ and conversations. It was our first big event post covid and it was so exciting to be able to spend time together as a Church and community in large numbers.

Beachhill Community Clean-Up Day happened in April 2022 this past year. We had good participation from people in the community and from our church community. We spend a few hours on a Saturday walking the streets, parks and ravines looking for garbage to clean up. This event is held yearly on the same weekend the City of Toronto holds clean TO.

This past Halloween we had the opportunity to run our Halloween outreach event for the second year since covid. The church contributed a generous amount of candy that we got to hand out to kids. It was great to have many of our young adults helping set up and hand out candy for this community outreach event.

Our foodbank continued to be a vital outreach this past year. I'm thankful to our church for contributing to the benevolent fund regularly (see benevolent fund report for additional details). It is a joy to be able to freely bless people in the name of Jesus every month. I cannot express how many people are so thankful to our church for this ministry. It continues to impact participants but is also a great example to the Beach Hill community that Forward loves people and is being the hands and feet of Jesus.

In 2021 we started a "Little India Outreach initiative" we spent time praying for Little India, and we went to Little India to do prayer walks and share the gospel. It was a very encouraging start to this initiative, but in 2022 we did not pick up where we left off. It is my hope that in 2023 we will continue this outreach effort in Little India with continued prayer walks, learning together and through going and sharing our faith in Little India.

Liebenzell missionaries and Summer Interns

This past year Forward had the opportunity to intentionally invest in many young adult interns. We have interns that serve for 11 months via the Liebenzell Mission Impact program and some who serve for 4 months via our summer internship program. It was a blessing this past year to disciple, train and minister

with the following interns: Emely Muller, Aurelie Wolf, Cat Ryckman-Barwell, and Rowena Hobbs. Working with our Interns is such a blessing and I'm so thankful that our congregation intentionally budgets for this ministry.

Anniversary Offering

It has been our tradition to take up an anniversary offering each year in May. In many previous years, the money has been used for various capital improvements (new elevator, windows etc.) or ministry initiatives. This year it was decided by the Deacons Board that we would send the anniversary offering money (\$35,000 was the goal, which God exceeded) to ministry partners in Poland who would assist Ukrainian Refugees fleeing the war. See missions report for more details.

As I reflect on this past year, I'm again so thankful that God has provided excellent Deacons and Elders at Forward that we're able to make many difficult decisions this past year, I'm thankful for the ability they had to keep Jesus the main focus and seek unity. It has been a privilege to minister together this year. I'm also so thankful for each of you as our church congregation. I'm thankful for your love for God and His word, for your devotion to prayer and sharing the gospel. I'm thankful for your willingness this past year to get back to Church as usual and serve in many ways. I'm have been thankful for this past season of stability and growth and refreshment in our Church. God has provided so many good things to us as a Church this year. These provisions seem even greater given the last few challenging years with Covid.

It is my prayer for our Church that in this upcoming year we will continue to "run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **fixing** our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith."

Yours in Christ,
Aaron Woodhouse
Pastor of Community Engagement



2022 felt like the long-awaited spring, finally many things could return to normal. If 2021 was all about attempting to wiggle programs during an inflexible Covid-19, 2022 was all about reintroducing programs. This coming year, I look forward to snow-balling the momentum. It's become increasingly clear to me that Forward Baptist is placed in a strategic spot to shine a light in Toronto, that the student ministry is to be a light on a hill. My goal for youth isn't simply to be "relevant", but to be real, not to cater to the latest craze, but to speak timeless truths. My goal is not to be *cool*, but to *care* deeply about those God put before our care. It is my joy to report, by not compromising the truth of the Gospel, there are those young people who believe in the name of Jesus.

Youth Group

Curriculum

Here is a chart of the youth group curriculum. Additionally, bi-monthly we led something called, "Couches & Questions", where youth were free to write any question which we would attempt to answer from a Christian perspective, which facilitates critical thinking, oftentimes the more mature youth chime in with a thoughtful answer.

Time	Series Title	Lesson Details
Jan	Parables	Went through select parables of Jesus
Feb	Finding Truth	A RightNow Media series teaching youth about truth in an uncertain world
Mar	Prayer	Teaching the purpose, practice and pursuit of prayer.
Apr	Follow me	Teaching what it means to be a disciple of Jesus
May-Aug	The Book of Mark	12 weeks surveying key passages in the Book of Mark
Sept-Nov	Nua: Origins	A RightNow Media series on the foundations of the Christian faith
Nov Cont.	Lessons in Daniel	Select lessons from Daniel – Living away from our true home in Babylon
Dec	Nua: Christmas	A RightNow Media series on the birth of Jesus

Attendance

Most weeks we averaged around 16-20 youth every week.

Youth Events

We ran monthly youth events, with a vision of continuing to build and invest. Here's a list of past events.

Video Game Pizza Night	April 29th	Cheesy Movie Night	Sept 16th
Go-Karting	May 12 (Thursday)	Corn maze	Oct 14th
Joint Youth Bonfire	June 10	Blacklight Mini-Golf	Nov 18th
Youth Lock-In	June 17-18	Youth Christmas Party	Dec 16
House BBQ	Aug 26th	Pajama Cheesy Movie Night	Jan 20

Trends

Youth Leadership: Youth are stepping up into helping roles. This past year, I began discipling two youths monthly. Additionally, two youth went through, “Sing” by the Gettys and have been incorporated into leading at worship, handing out snacks or helping out at projection. I look forward to continuing to have youth become involved in leading aspects of the program. Pray for the future leadership of the youth. That youth and youth leaders will continue to step up and fill into roles of service and leadership. My hope is that I equip and prepare them as disciples ready to disciple.

Young Adults

When I started the young adults in 2016; there were a few young adults in our church, but we weren’t deeply connected to each other or the church. Part of the vision of the young adults was to get them connected and involved in the overall church picture, and to build a sense of camaraderie amongst them. In large part, that vision has found success, and many have moved from Young adults and have integrated themselves into other parts of the church, this program was only meant to be transitory. Furthermore, many of the young adults, though no longer a part of this program, continue to fellowship in other intentional ways. Because of this, the young adults group is currently in a period of fresh vision casting. William & I are currently the teaching leaders of this program, and it has transformed into somewhat of a small group Bible study. In the past year we have gone through 2 Corinthians, the Book of Jonah and have spent the bulk of our time in Revelation (which we are currently just finishing up).

Lea and I had the privilege to run a young adults camp at Beacon Bible Camp in October. Many of our young adults attended as campers or helpers.

Camps

We managed to run camps in 2021, even though Covid-19 protocols loomed over our heads. But this year we had much more flexibility and to run even more programs. Among the camps we ran were Basketball Camp, Youth Camp and Kids Camp. I directed Basketball and oversaw Youth Camp, which I will detail.

Basketball Camp

We had 22 campers registered. We taught basic basketball fundamentals, we created four teams and ran a “regular season” along with a playoff season. One of the great moments was when one team was down 1 point, one youth brought the ball up, scored a buzzer beater victory and the rest of the team along with the coaches scrambled together in celebration. Team basketball builds and reveals character, and it can platform well into life lessons and biblical truths. We went through 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, which asked questions like what prize are you running after? How do you run with purpose? Etc. Overall, we were a success, and it really built into the community.

Youth Camp

This camp was directed by the summer and German interns, and I had a role in overseeing it and giving support and direction. We did plenty of fun activities, like Bubble Soccer, Laser Tag, a trip to an inflatable water park etc. Overall, it was a great experience and we were happy to run this program again. Pray that God would lead us in the hiring process of interns, so we can be a blessing to them, and they can be a blessing to programs.

Discipleship

2022, discipleship is a big part of church life. Discipleship is something I've been doing throughout the year, meeting with people periodically. I am currently meeting up with Alex, Luka, Lucas, and Lester. Additionally, I was meeting with two others.

Sabbatical

During this year I was graciously given the opportunity to go into sabbatical from February 7 - March 14. I used that time to intentionally grow in my faith and my interpersonal skills. I spent the majority of my time in Germany. I read Do More Better by Tim Challies. I met twice with Aaron for accountability. I dedicated more time to do schoolwork. I meditated upon and memorized 2 Timothy. And also, I got engaged!

Misc. Services

Apart from my regular set of ministry I have also been involved in the following: I did bi-weekly street evangelism on the corner of Danforth & Victoria Park. I preached on four Sundays. I helped run sound during Sunday services. I led a funeral and helped with several others on sound. I met with new young male church goers who have recently attended.

Thanks

Ministry cannot happen without the co-labouring of brothers and sisters in Christ. I'm thankful for the mentorship of Steve & Aaron. I'm thankful for our Liebenzell interns; Annie, Joanna, Aurelie and Emely who have been a blessing in serving around the clock. I'm thankful for David & Katie N who consistently helped lead worship and lessons at Youth Group with smiling hearts. For Jamie C who serves faithfully and diligently. I'm thankful for co-labourers who gladly served in the crazy chaotic goodness of Jr. Youth, Maarten T, Tamla M, Lea, Mark D, and youth helpers, Clara B, Alex S, Luke A. I'm thankful for those who have come alongside me and served at Young Adults, teaching, planning events and generally putting up my antics, William S & Conor R. Finally, I'm thankful for all your support and prayer, like Patricia O who kept nudging me, asking how she could pray for the youth. God's kingdom pressed onwards by the trumpets of prayers!

Submitted by
Mark Memije
Pastor of Student Ministries



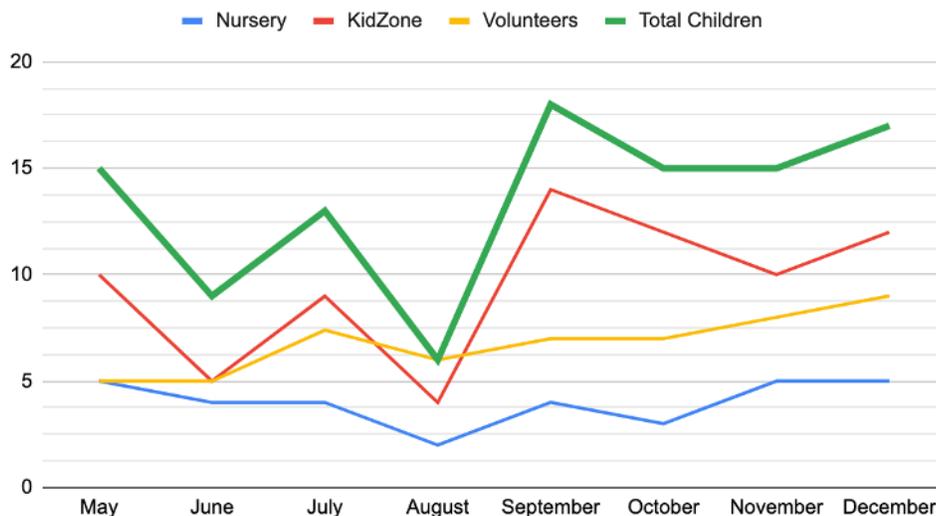
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY AND INTERN LEADERSHIP – Beth Lambert

This past year I had the opportunity for the first time, to witness and serve alongside Forward during its yearly ministry, rather than just the summer programming (May- Aug). It's been a joy to serve, and now work, at Forward and watch how the whole church ministry is done. I've been challenged in my understanding of church and ministry, as well as fellowship and community. Our series in Acts on God's heart and design for the church coincided with my learning to work and enjoy fellowship with my new church family at Forward! As we weekly engage in teaching about what it means to be Christ's church, it has been so encouraging to see that put into action through weekly ministries, small groups and one on one discipleship.

Sunday Morning Children's Ministry

In May 2022, we started our Children's Ministry up again, reopening the KidZone & Nursery classrooms during Sunday morning services. In June we opened the Jr. KidZone class for ages 3-6, splitting up the ages for more developmentally appropriate teaching. Since the spring we have seen the numbers grow significantly as families began to regularly attend services again post-covid, and we had an increase in numbers after camps. In the fall we saw a greater increase of children, especially in the Nursery as several young couples with babies started attending. With the exceptions of holidays and a bad flu season, we have been consistently seeing around 15-20 children in our classrooms. As we continue to grow, it has been an exciting challenge to make sure our children's ministry is effective, safe and fun for our church kids as we partner with their families in discipling them to know God's word and love Christ's Church.

Monthly Averages - Children's Ministry Attendance



Check Ins

We have implemented a new Check In system, adding a level of security for our younger children, requiring a parent tag for pick-ups, and allowing us to take more accurate attendance needed for our child protection policies. This has become more accurately used and effective in the later months of the year.

Curriculum

In the two KidZone rooms, we are using the Gospel Project, which outlines the timeline of the Bible in 2-3 years. It is broken down into units which each have a Big Picture Question and Answer and Key Passage that teaches about who God says he is or who God says we are. Students are encouraged to memorize each unit's Question/Answer and Key Passage, as well as follow along on our wall poster timeline so they can see the big picture of the Bible. I love this curriculum for many reasons, but my favourite is at the end of every unit,

there is a New Testament story that shows how our Big Picture Question is answered fully in Jesus, reminding students to see the Old Testament in light of the cross and the New Covenant we have through Jesus. It also has take-home pages that have questions about the lesson for parents to walk through with their children.

Volunteers

As our classes have grown, we've advertised a need for volunteers and have seen our numbers increase! I have been so encouraged by our church's desire to serve our children and care for families in this way. I've held 2 Children's Ministry training sessions and have enjoyed casting vision for the importance of children's ministry, whether that's holding crying babies, teaching lessons, or preparing crafts and games. We continue to need volunteers in all our classrooms, pray with us that God would raise up more people to be equipped for this ministry!

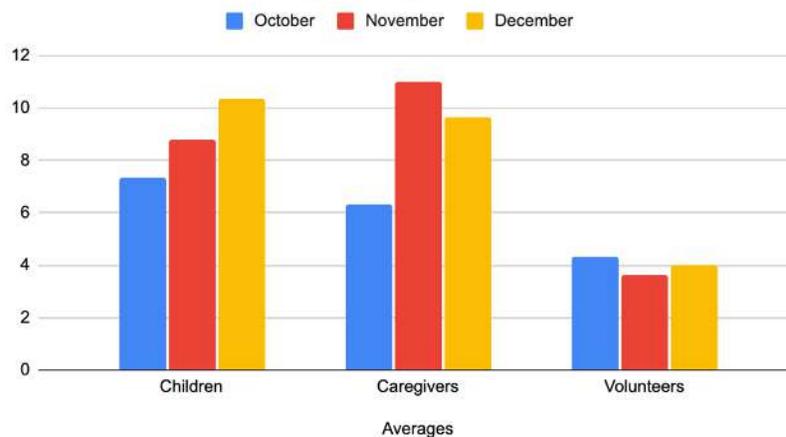
Camp Ministries

In July and August we ran 3 different camps, Kids Camp (Monumental VBS), Youth Camp and our first Basketball Camp. We were grateful to not have to adhere to Covid guidelines during this time, allowing us to do more activities and have more kids register. We had around 40 campers at our Kids Camp', and 20 for Youth and Basketball Camp. Even though our numbers were smaller than they were pre-Covid, we were excited to see God bring back some of our former youth, younger siblings of previous campers, and new children from our neighborhood. As well as new volunteers! As mentioned earlier, this had a direct impact on our Sunday Morning Children's Ministry as we saw more families attend services.

Above the Beach Drop In

In October of this year we started running our drop in ministry, Above the Beach, every Tuesday 9:30-11:30am. We began very small, but over the weeks, as news spread, we have seen an increase in parents and caregivers attending with their children. We have also begun to hand out food bags on the Tuesday before we hold foodbank, for people who cannot come in with their children on Wednesdays. We have seen around 4-6 nannies ask for a bag each month. A big thank you to Bertha Sharpe for continuing to be our wonderful greeter, welcoming each child and caregiver with a smile. Also, to Joanna Schoefisch, Annie Haug, Becky Lambert, and Mary Deinum, who do a great job serving in this ministry each week. We are meeting a need in the neighbourhood. Please pray that we would be able to meet the spiritual needs of people who come in and connect with us.

Above the Beach Monthly Averages



Discipleship

One of my favourite roles at Forward is having the opportunity to meet up with other women for discipleship, both formally and informally to discuss the joys and challenges of life and faith. Often these are

regularly planned times to meet up or they can be one-time coffee meetings. With church interns, both German Liebenzell and summer interns, this includes a small group book study to deepen and challenge our faith.

Interns

The internship program at Forward has continued to be an important part of ministry at Forward. For myself, it has obviously had a huge impact on my life. My times as an intern were where God gave me a heart for church ministry, discipleship and Forward! I appreciate and enjoy the heart behind the internships, for young people to grow in their faith and their love for Christ's church as they are actively participating in church ministry. In 2022, I had the joy of working with Emely, Aurelie, Cat, Rowena, Joanna and Annie.

Our interns do a number of tasks and projects that include a wide variety of ministries at the church. They cover a lot of administrative tasks that help offload some of my work, as well as children's ministry on Sundays, camps in the summer, event planning, cleaning projects, tech, music, foodbank, etc. I have enjoyed working with each of these women and greatly appreciate the work they have done over this past year and their hearts for Jesus and others!

Administration

There are a number of administrative tasks that I either do myself or oversee. The main ones include scheduling and organizing Children's ministry volunteers, creating posters or bulletins for events (although Katie Nunn does most of our design work!), church emails, etc.

In Christ,
Beth Lambert



MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Our mission as a local church is to make disciples of Christ in all the nations (Matthew 28:19-20). One of the ways we accomplish this is through the support of missionaries by ensuring they are properly equipped, spiritually and financially as they go to the nations in order that they may carry out God's Great Commission.-

The Missions Committee exists to manage the support of our missionaries and promote missions at Forward. To help us consider how to fulfill our mandate, we read the book Missions: How the Local Church Goes Global by Andy Johnson. It helped us think through the importance of the local church in missions.

Financial:

- Our special missions offering was \$34,309.00, which exceed our \$25,000 goal.
- God led the people of our church to help support ministries working with Ukrainian refugees. The Deacons' Board decided to match up to \$40,000 of the giving with Wildwood funds and in total \$87,154 was sent.
- Metrolinx funds enabled us to give extra support to our Missionaries this year.

Missionary Speakers:

We were privileged and encouraged to have four of our missionaries preach for us on Sundays this year.

- Bechara Karkafi (FEB missionary to MENA) – January
- Glendon Thompson (president of Toronto Baptist Seminary) – November
- Louis Bourque (regional director of AEBEQ) - Missions conference
- Don Longworth (SIM in Benin, Africa) – Missions conference

Missions Week of Prayer:

- During our missions conference we held a week of prayer, where our small groups used their regular meeting times to pray together for our missionaries and for missions in general.

Special Tributes:

We want to recognize a special heart-warming appreciation and thanks to Ray Repo for his many years of dedicated service to the committee. Ray resigned as chair in 2021 and decided to step down from the committee this past year.

We also want to recognize Hugh Gordon, one of our retired missionaries, who passed away in January of 2022. He finished the race well and is now with his Lord.

Submitted by Patricia Overholt

On behalf of the Missions Committee

Forward Missionaries

- Ray and Sandra Alary - Ray serves as Executive Director of Through the Bible Canada
- Louis and Denise Bourque- Louis serves as Regional Director of AEBEQ (Association d'Églises Baptistes Évangéliques au Québec)
- Aaron & Annegret Bowes - Church Planters, Halle-Neustadt, Germany; Missions3DThreshold
- Daniel & Emily Ford - Church Planter in Hincesti, Moldova; Baptist Missions to Forgotten People
- Bechara & Roula Karkafi - Leading in missions to Islamic people across the Middle East, North Africa, and Canada; FEB International
- Don & Erin Longworth - Managing the missionary guesthouse & serving in digital media ministries in Parakou, Benin; SIM
- Paul & Georgie McDonald - Training pastors & strengthening churches in Belgrade, Serbia; SEND International
- Martha Oates - Working with shopkeeper churches in Taiwan; OMF International Canada
- Valera & Laura Strugov - MoveIn Team & Malkutha Church Plant in Toronto, Ontario

Churches

- Liberty Grace Church - a church plant in the Liberty Village neighbourhood of Toronto. (Pastor Darryl Dash)

Organizations

- Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Canada
- General Fund
- Fellowship Aid & International Relief (working to alleviate human suffering and social injustice around the world in the name of Christ)
- Leaders Formation (training church leaders around the world)
- FEB Central
 - General Fund
 - Church Planting
- Toronto City Mission
- SAT-7 Canada (A satellite broadcast ministry to the Middle East)

Seminaries

- Heritage College & Seminary - Cambridge, ON
- Toronto Baptist Seminary - Toronto, ON

Our Retired Missionaries

- Jessica Breski - Newcastle, ON
- Jean Gordon - Burlington, ON
- Jo Grimshaw - Scarborough, ON
- Hugh & Carol Hamp - Carstairs, AB
- Paul & Diane Kerr - Barrie, ON
- Jim & Barb Longworth - New Brunswick
- Vi McKie - Meaford, ON
- Bob & Nancy Sheffield - Colorado, USA
- Brian & Elsbet Taylor - Goodwood, ON (Goode Beach, Australia)
- Donald Whiteside - Barrie, ON

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The role and responsibility of the property committee is to maintain and improve the amazing facilities and physical properties that God has entrusted to us as a Church community. We are also entrusted with ensuring that the facilities are used to further God's Kingdom and bring glory to Him. We have so much to be thankful for when it comes to our facilities.

We thank our Custodian Team that worked hard in 2022 to maintain and clean our facilities. We are thankful for all the following people that have helped with custodian work in 2022 at various times and in different ways:

Full-time custodians: Nathan Suntanto (Started October 2021)

Occasional custodians: Paul Bowles

Volunteers: Kenneth Chan, Jim Sleep

Highlights from 2022:

- Purchased safety mats for the walls of the gym
- Ongoing - 2-year lease agreement with Metrolinx February 2021- February 2023 - We are currently renting out $\frac{2}{3}$ of the upper Wildwood parking lot to Metrolinx.
- Fresh Paint in the CE Entrance, including stair Risers, Painted lower Sactuary area, hallways and to the gymnasium.

Looking forward to the year ahead:

- Update the Property use policy and rental fees.
- Repairs and updates to our current heating/cooling system
- Updates to the gymnasium
- Replace stairs in baptismal tank
- 10-year plan - The property committee will also make a priority list for future years. looking at needed repairs, updates and renovations that will help us to continue to best use our facility to the glory of God and that will enable us to best utilize our church facility for ministry purposes.
- Identify and implement ways to reduce utility costs in the church - Finish replacing faucets on sinks, weather stripping on outside doors, replace some exterior doors, automatic light switches etc., replacing lights with LED fixtures.
- Automatic Doors, undated buzzer system, security camera at select outside locations

Our church facility was also used this past year to host the Womens Simeon trust confrence in October 2022. For the last 8+ years Rehoboth Evangelical Church, lead by Pastor Kassa Lemma have been using our Church facilites as a meeting space. At the end of December 2022 they concluded the use of our facilities.

Library Resource Center

The church library is located on the main floor by the sanctuary. The Church Library and its books are available anytime that Church is open. You are asked to sign out the books and leave the cards on the desk. In addition to the many great physical books in the library, we also have a great digital video library offered through RightNow Media which has 1000s of video resources available for streaming online. You can request access by contacting the church office or by following this link. <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/ForwardBaptist>

May we continue to be good stewards of what God has entrusted us with in 2023 and may we make bold plans for how our facility and material possessions can be used to further God's kingdom and proclaim the gospel in the Beach Hill neighbourhood, East York, and Toronto.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron Woodhouse
Property Committee

Property Committee members: Justine Cudao, David Power, Aaron Woodhouse

BENEVOLENT FUND REPORT

The primary use of the Benevolent Fund in recent years has been to stock the Food Bank. In 2022, we saw both a rise in the number of people who used the Food Bank and a fall. Coming out of Covid and with the high food prices many people in our Church and community have needed assistance with food. At our highest months of use we were serving 80 bags of food. In Sept 2022 we made the decision to transition our food distribution back to how we did it pre-covid, which was indoors as a gathering time. So in September we transitioned back to gathering in person in the fellowship hall @ 9:30am for coffee, tea, cookies, conversation and a devotional message. This was a change from just handing prepackages bags outside the Church on a monthly basis. We realized this would likely decrease our numbers and that some people are not ready yet to meet together. We still have 15+ prepackaged bags available each month for people to just pick if they are not able to stay around. Our focus is on meeting peoples immediate need for food, connecting with them relationally and connecting them to Jesus as their personal saviour. Since transitioning inside we now serve between 40 - 50 food bags monthly. Pray for the ongoing ministry connections that are made and built on monthly at Foodbank.

We are thankful to our faith group of shoppers who are great at finding deals which helps keep our costs lower than they otherwise might have been. If you are interested in shopping let us know. Also, donations are always welcome in the form of food or money.

Other ways the Benevolent Fund was used to bless our neighbourhood were as follows:

- TTC and other travel expenses for people to get to rehab, hospital, doctors, or other important meetings
- Money for food that wasn't available through the Food Bank
- Beds, Bedding, house supplies
- Clothing bought for people in need
- Laundry expenses, Prescription costs, cleaning supplies
- Poinsettias for our shut ins at Christmas
- Grocery cards worth \$7,300 to encourage those both in our congregation and in the neighbourhood who are struggling this year.

The Benevolent fund started the year with \$14,499 in the bank. Total income to the benevolent fund in 2022, was \$15,950.00 Total Expenses of the Benevolent Fund in 2022 was \$28,752. The benevolent fund finished the year with \$1,697.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

God continues to provide for our Church. The total income for the year was \$474,742, compared to the budget of \$536,200. This includes \$47,254 received for the anniversary offering. Total expenditure for the year was \$651,208, compared to the budget of \$598,090. The expenditure in 2022 was higher than the budgeted amount due, in large part, to the generous giving to help the refugees from the Ukraine. The deacons and elders considered it a good use of the Wildwood funds, in keeping with the congregation's desires to see it used for the blessing of Gods work, to match the givings towards this cause up to \$40,000. This brought the total of this anniversary gift to \$87,254! This gift was then sent via FAIR (FBC International).

Expenditure in 2022 exceeded income by \$ 176,466. The available funds at the end of 2022, including the Wildwood funds, totalled \$ 289,745.

We may have fallen short of our budgeted income for 2022, but God, in his abounding grace and generosity towards us, made up the difference by providing us an income through the rental of the Wildwood parking lot even before we knew that we would be coming up short.

This balance of available funds at the end of the year is clear evidence that God is continuing to looking after our church and providing exactly for our needs.

The Elders and Deacons believe God is telling us to be bold and do more, trusting that He will provide the means and volunteers rather than to cut back and consolidate due to shortfalls in our giving. So far God has continued to bless our congregation as we see numbers grow and small groups multiply.

The healthy finances we have been blessed with at our church over the past few years may have come with the risk that we have become complacent in our giving. This is especially true as many people's finances are stretched thin due to rising costs of living and inflation everywhere.

Each of us needs to pray and understand what God wants us to do and how He is challenging us in our faith. As we go to our knees we need to not lose sight of the fact that that we have a faith budget that we need to support with prayer and by listening closely to God's direction and guidance.

I would like to thank Carol Bain our bookkeeper for her unfailing diligence and care in maintaining the books and records of Forward. I also want to thank Allister Walsh and John Deinum who faithfully assists in counting the offering.

We are once again thankful for the way God's people have supported the work at Forward. May God bless you as you give cheerfully to the work of our Lord.

Respectfully submitted,

David Nunn
Finance Committee

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2022 Budget
INCOME				
Envelopes	11,481	14,977	11,905	15,000
Where Most Needed	195,163	151,840	158,604	195,000
Pre Authorized Gifts	75,430	107,170	119,410	130,000
Loose offerings	-	1,124	910	-
Anniversary offering	47,254	33,533	37,682	30,000
Gifts through Charities	76,779	118,000	117,000	110,000
Other gifts, inc Roof Fund	35	50	3,220	-
TOTAL GIVINGS	406,142	426,694	448,731	480,000
MISSIONS INCOME				
Envelopes	8,097	13,185	16,959	15,000
Special Mission Offering	34,309	26,555	23,802	25,000
Other Missions Donations	-	-	25	-
TOTAL MISSIONS INCOME	42,406	39,740	40,786	40,000
OTHER INCOME				
Rent - Glenmore	10,200	10,200	10,200	10,200
Rent - Korean Bible Baptist Church	-	-	6,668	-
Facility Rentals	2,700	14,100	18,990	-
Government Grants	4,653	10,624	2,356	-
Recoveries & Fees (mainly camp)	8,066	3,250	4,700	5,000
Interest Earned	575	989	1,197	1,000
TOTAL INCOME	26,194	39,163	44,111	16,200
TOTAL INCOME	474,742	505,597	533,628	536,200

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
 STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE (Continued)
 FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2022 Budget
LOCAL EXPENDITURE				
Staff and pastoral costs	357,584	366,954	320,570	381,300
Christian education	19,449	9,194	11,285	16,650
Worship	2,992	3,193	3,917	4,000
Communications and fellowship	9,777	5,888	3,442	5,200
Office and general	12,513	14,236	15,196	17,400
Building	84,698	84,563	87,086	82,600
Bus ministry	-	20	332	-
Legal	-	2,830	-	-
Capital Items and special projects	10,402	48,884	48,142	30,000
TOTAL LOCAL EXPENDITURE	497,414	535,762	489,970	537,150
MISSIONS EXPENDITURE				
Individuals	32,300	47,300	30,600	31,800
Mission Organizations	111,494	27,673	14,640	18,140
Other	10,000	19,100	6,200	11,000
TOTAL MISSIONS EXPENDITURE	153,794	94,073	51,440	60,940
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	651,208	629,835	541,410	598,090
INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE BEFORE SPECIAL				
ITEMS	(176,466)	(124,238)	(7,782)	(61,890)
Wildwood funds received	-	325,809	-	-
Bequest	-	1,000	59,668	-
BALANCE, Beginning of year	466,211	263,640	211,754	466,211
BALANCE, End of period	289,745	466,211	263,640	404,321

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
 SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURE - LOCAL MINISTRY FUND
 FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2022 Budget
STAFF AND PASTORAL COSTS				
Salaries	208,309	240,173	226,615	239,600
Employee benefits	45,979	49,075	38,116	40,700
Temporary help	54,412	34,080	43,188	47,500
Summer Career Placement	31,840	28,790	3,647	35,500
Book allowance (pastoral staff)	1,600	2,000	2,000	2,000
Staff education & development	3,240	3,771	2,319	6,000
Travel	1,011	223	250	500
Pastoral costs	1,874	1,354	1,951	1,500
Long term interns	6,608	6,300	2,424	6,000
Conferences	2,711	1,188	60	2,000
	357,584	366,954	320,570	381,300
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION				
Department supplies	736	497	1,160	1,000
Bible school curriculum	3,898	3,371	4,357	2,200
Library/resource centre	-	39	-	50
Day camp	9,492	2,581	1,580	7,500
Developing Ministries	211	-	264	2,500
Men's Ministry	28	217	518	250
Family Ministry	67	70	2,304	800
Youth Ministry	4,976	2,360	841	2,200
Women's Ministry	41	59	261	150
	19,449	9,194	11,285	16,650
WORSHIP				
Organ & piano maintenance	559	835	2,222	1,000
Worship expenses	1,182	1,359	867	1,500
Special speakers	384	-	-	500
Song License	732	692	682	825
Ordinance	135	307	146	175
	2,992	3,193	3,917	4,000
COMMUNICATIONS AND FELLOWSHIP				
Communications incl. advertising	4,057	3,985	1,349	3,000
Community Outreach	2,508	75	-	500
Church fellowship and funerals	2,554	374	1,856	200
Flowers and auditorium decorations	658	1,454	237	1,500
	9,777	5,888	3,442	5,200

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
 SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURE - LOCAL MINISTRY FUND (CONTINUED)
 FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2022 Budget
OFFICE AND GENERAL				
Bank charges & interest	2,422	2,315	2,017	2,200
Cell Phones	1,788	2,208	2,208	2,200
Postage	229	1,118	1,426	1,200
Printing, stationery & office supplies	5,129	5,798	6,425	9,000
Telephone	2,945	2,797	3,120	2,800
	12,513	14,236	15,196	17,400
BUILDING				
Building maintenance, repairs and supplies	11,869	28,546	21,418	22,000
Gas	21,907	15,391	19,767	18,000
Hydro & Water	24,943	23,050	27,151	25,000
Insurance	7,930	7,591	7,265	7,600
P.A./ A.V. maintenance & supplies	4,636	4,959	2,883	4,000
Glenmore property	13,413	5,026	8,602	6,000
	84,698	84,563	87,086	82,600
BUS MINISTRY				
Bus insurance	-	-	120	-
Bus operating costs	-	-	80	-
Bus repairs & maintenance	-	20	132	-
	-	20	332	-
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES				
Wall Mats	7,128	-	-	-
CAD drawings for blueprints	3,274	-	-	-
New signage	-	9,361	-	-
Windows	-	39,523	-	-
Elevator retrofit	-	-	32,020	-
Parking Lot Study	-	-	12,954	-
Other	-	-	3,168	30,000
	10,402	48,884	48,142	30,000

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
 SCHEDULE OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE – MISSIONS
 FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2022 Budget
REVENUE				
Envelopes	8,097	13,185	16,959	15,000
Missions Offering	34,309	26,555	23,802	25,000
Other income	-	25	20	-
TOTAL REVENUE	42,406	39,740	40,761	40,000
INDIVIDUALS				
EBM: Aaron and Anna Bowes	19,000	19,000	19,000	19,000
SIM: Don and Erin Longworth	2,000	5,000	2,000	2,000
Trans World Radio: Ray and Sandra Alary	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
BMFP: Daniel and Emily Ford	2,000	9,500	2,000	2,000
AEBEQ : Louis Bourque	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
OMF Canada - Martha Oates	1,200	4,200	1,200	1,200
MoveIn, Toronto - Valera and Laura Strugov	1,700	3,200	1,200	1,200
FEB Int'l Arab Missions: Bechara and Roula Karkafi	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
SEND int: Paul & Georgie McDonald	1,200	1,200	0	1,200
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	32,300	47,300	30,600	31,800

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
 SCHEDULE OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE – MISSIONS FUND (CONTINUED)
 FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2022 Budget
MISSION ORGANIZATIONS				
FAIR (FBC Int)	87,874	2,720	720	720
FEBINT – Leaders formation	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
FEBC: General fund	8,000	7,000	4,000	7,000
Fellowship Network Project (Feb Int)	720	720	720	720
FEB Central Church Planting Program	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Liberty Grace Church	6,400	6,733	1,200	1,200
Heritage College & Seminary	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400
Toronto Baptist Seminary	500	500	0	500
Toronto City Mission	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
SAT-7 Canada	2,000	4,000	2,000	2,000
TOTAL MISSION ORGANIZATIONS	111,494	27,673	14,640	18,140
OTHER				
Conference & Special Speakers	1,100	1,000	1,200	3,500
Short Term Missions	0	0	500	4,000
Gifts to missionaries & retirees	5,850	0	3,900	3,500
Special Events (Anniv Offering distribution)	2,850	0	17,500	0
Women's Missionary Fellowship	200	600	600	0
TOTAL OTHER	10,000	1,600	23,700	11,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	153,794	76,573	68,940	60,940

Abbreviations:

AEBEQ - Association d'Églises baptistes évangéliques au Québec (FEB Quebec)

BMFP - Baptist Mission to Forgotten Peoples

FAIR - Fellowship Aid & International Relief

FEB - Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists

OMF - Overseas Mission Fellowship

SIM - Sending in Mission

TTB - Thru the Bible

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2022

	Dec. 31 2022	Dec. 31 2021	Dec. 31 2020
ASSETS			
Cash	151,392	123,474	158,315
Investments (savings acct/GIC)	176,349	425,769	108,273
Petty Cash	187	24	81
Gov't Rebates	11,132	13,749	11,167
Accounts Receivable	-	-	40
Prepaid Expenses	1,231	505	5,970
Capital assets	1	1	1
	340,291	563,522	283,847
LIABILITIES			
Accounts payable	1,013	5,382	2,705
Deferred revenue	45,696	76,779	-
Benevolent Fund	1,720	14,498	16,329
David Barr Fund	2,122	652	1,172
	50,551	97,311	20,207
FUND BALANCES	289,741	466,211	263,640

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2022

	Benevolent Fund	David Barr Fund	Total Fund Balances
Balance-Beginning of year	14,499	652	15,151
Receipts rec'd during year	16,778	2,170	18,948
Disbursements during year	29,557	700	30,257
Balance-end of year	1,720	2,122	3,842

MEMBERSHIP AND BAPTISM REPORT

Baptisms in 2022 - 3

Darue Ramsay - April 17	Matthew Wrigglesworth - Oct 22	Sydney Wrigglesworth - Oct 22
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New Members in 2022 - 14

Alexandra Goodhand - Sept 18	Craig Goodhand - Sept 18	Elisha Lai - Sept 18
Lauren Hadwen - Sept 18	Sam Hadwen - Sept 18	Shanen Cudao - Sept 18
Matthew Wrigglesworth - Dec 4	Sydney Wrigglesworth - Dec 4	Emily Marsh - Dec 4
Eprex Balucay - Dec 4	Fiona (Panlilio) Hudson - Dec 4	Gary Hudson - Dec 4
Rosalie Memije - Dec 4	Rowena Hobbs - Dec 4	

Members Removed in 2022 - 12

<u>Deceased - 1</u>	<u>Removed (Moved/Transferred) - 11</u>	
George Rodgerson - April 13	Esther Ashby	Tom Crosby
	Stephen Ashby	Monica Justice
	Bill Bain	Rachel Deinum
	Denise Britton	Brittany Veenkamp
	Gerald Britton	Victoria (Lane) Adams
	Heather Hogben-Bruce	

Membership by Category 2022

	2022	2021	2020	2019
Active Members	106	103	109	111
Member Missionaries	2	2	2	2
Inactive Members	9	16	17	15
Shut in Members	18	12	15	15
Total Membership	135	133	143	143