

FORWARD

BAPTIST CHURCH

~ Established 1919 ~

**ANNUAL REPORT
2023**

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Forward Baptist Church 2023 Annual Report

1891 Gerrard Street East, Toronto, Ontario M4L 2B9

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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

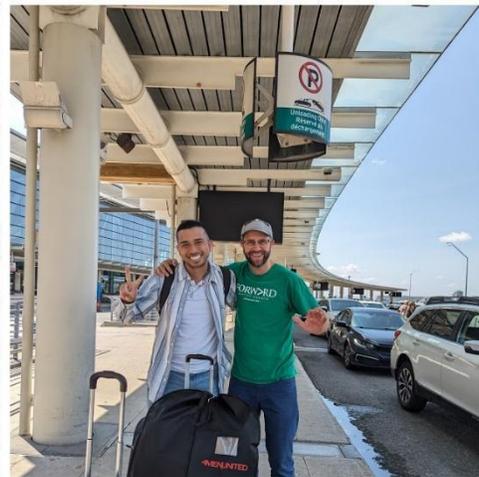
Our Mission

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)

We continue to be blessed at Forward with a rich fellowship as we sit beneath the clear declaration of God's word. The simple message of the gospel is the cornerstone of what we, as a church, endeavor to proclaim and live out in this part of the world. It seasons our speech, our prayers, our worship, and our actions.

We praise God that he continues to use this church and its members to point people to Jesus. And God has been saving those whom he has called. We see more souls turning to him and we rejoice at their desire to grow in Christ. It has also been such a blessing to witness many proclaim their faith in the waters of baptism.

Each of us at Forward, if we name Jesus as Lord, are continuing to grow to be like him. Each of us has a gradual journey of sanctification that we make. We were reminded of this last year during the series on Ecclesiastes that our lives are but (הֶבֶל) Hevel. Life is like a vapour. There is a transitory and uncertain nature to it. Solomon encourages us to live our lives in light of this truth. He says in Ecclesiastes 12:

¹³Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter:

Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.¹⁴For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.

Recognizing God for who he is and trusting in his promises, frames our lives as we grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We cling to Jesus rather than the temporal pleasures of this world. We confess our shortcomings and trust in his provision as we endeavour to live like him.

We as Elders continue to lift the congregational needs to the Lord in prayer. We thank God for your acts of service and love towards each other. We thank you for your partnership in the gospel.

Many in our church have embraced small groups and have been encouraged by other believers who are also trying to grow in their faith. They serve as good opportunities for sharing and accountability and we would encourage you to take advantage of one if you are not already involved.

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 thank you once again 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 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 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 within 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 full time 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.

The Elders, this year, lost our Pastor of Student Ministries when Mark Memije left our church to go to Germany and get married. In addition, we experienced the resignation of Elder Brian Taylor who emigrated to Australia with his wife Elsabet. We recognize God's calling on both these men's lives and ask God's continued blessing on them.

We praise God for our Pastoral Intern Gary Hudson who has joined our number as an active participant of the Elders.

Our prayer for 2024 is from the book of Jude verses 24-25 and Psalm 103:8.

We pray that Christ would keep you from stumbling and that he would present you before his glorious presence without fault. And that this would cause great joy.

We recognize that He is the only God. He is our Saviour, and that all glory, majesty, power and authority belong to Him.

We pray that you would live your lives trusting in God's promises and fearing him, knowing that the Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

In Him,
Shawn Freer
Chairman, Elders' Board

Elders: Pastor - Stephen Lambert
Pastor - Aaron Woodhouse

Active Participants:
Chairman, Deacons' Board – Maarten Theunissen
Pastoral Intern – Gary Hudson



DEACONS BOARD REPORT – Maarten Theunissen

We were once again blessed by being able to witness God executing His plan through so many believers at our church. I am reminded to trust in the Lord in *Proverbs 3:5-6* “*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight*” and I think this is an important reminder for us to always look for God’s plan and place our trust in Him with everything we do at the Church.

We saw many changes in our Church this year. We welcomed many new members, witnessed multiple baptisms and are encouraged to see God working in people’s lives in different ways. It is also wonderful to see so many children participating in the various ministries at the church. 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.*” We encourage everyone to find ways to participate in church activities or serve in any way that they may feel called to, and are thankful for everyone that keeps on faithfully serving. It is not about the importance of the activity, but rather the act of serving that is making our church function as a body of Christ.

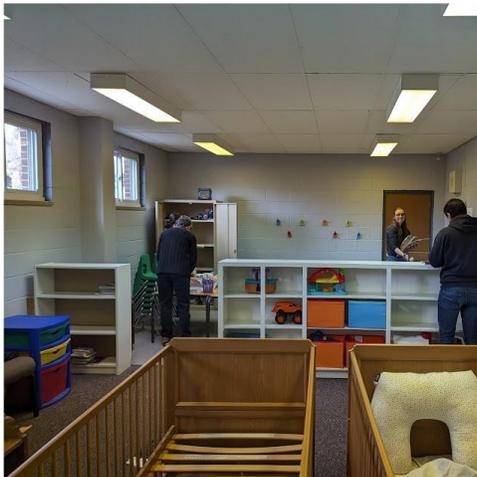
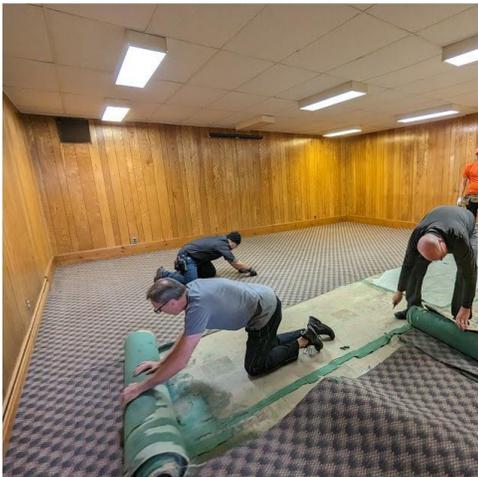
We also had some changes in staff with Mark Memije moving to Germany and saw some changes in the Deacons Board with David and Katie Nunn moving to work at Beacon Bible Camp. We thank them for their serving attitude, and we will certainly miss them. We ask that everyone pray for God’s wisdom and guidance as we look for someone to lead our youth ministry.

The Deacons Board continued to work on governance matters and how to best structure the church to achieve glory for God, how the Deacons Board functions best 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. 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 Deacons’ 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



There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:
a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing...
- Ecclesiastes 3:1-5 (NIV)

The past year was a season of change. At times it felt like we were constantly meeting new people while also saying goodbye to members of our church that we knew and loved. Not only were there 7 babies born to families in our church this year, and four funerals of longtime members or attenders, but there was a constant flow both of new people joining our church and of people we know and love leaving. One particularly hard goodbye was when our youth pastor, Mark Memije, moved to Germany to marry Lea. Mark was with us for seven years and is greatly missed. Lea was one of a handful of people who became members and then moved away within the space of the year! We have rejoiced together through the births and new members at our church and mourned together through the funerals and as people left. We mourned particularly hard as we exercised church discipline on one member this year.

Through all this change, all the ups and downs of church life, we have put our hope in God. “He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.” (Ecclesiastes 3:11). We often don’t understand God’s ways, but we know that he has given us the gift of this life and we should be glad and revere him.

Preaching Ministry

We took great comfort in these truths and many others as we spent seven Sundays diving into the book of Ecclesiastes together in the summer. We were reminded again and again that without God, our lives on this earth are *hevel* - like a mist that doesn’t have any real substance, you can’t hold onto it or understand it or find purpose in it.

This sermon series in Ecclesiastes was a helpful follow-up to our series in the book of Acts, which took us about a year, beginning in the summer of 2022 and ending in the summer of 2023. Acts challenged us to trust God, to pray together, and to share the good news of Jesus with boldness. In Acts, we were challenged to live for Jesus, and then in Ecclesiastes we were shown why living for Jesus is the only worthwhile way to spend our lives on this earth.

After Ecclesiastes, we finished the year off with three shorter topical series. First, we looked into what the Bible says about who God is as the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who are the one, uncreated God who has life in himself and does not change. Then we dove into the first couple of chapters of Genesis to see what it means that we are humans created in the image of God. Then we spent Advent learning how the covenants that God made with humans in the Old Testament point us forward to the coming of Jesus.

Throughout the year, we also had a number of missions speakers (see the Missions Committee report for more details) as well as some one-off sermons on John 8, Matthew 13, and 2 Timothy 4. We also spent Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Easter looking into the Gospel of Mark. We were blessed to have a joint Good

Friday service with Christ Church Toronto, in which Pastor Kyle Hackman preached. I am thankful for all the men who joined me in the preaching ministry this year, including Shawn Freer, Mark Memije, Aaron Woodhouse, and Gary Hudson.

Small Groups

We were blessed this year to have twelve active small group Bible studies. Over the course of the year, almost 130 people attended a group at least once and more than half that number were regularly involved. It has been a blessing to see this ministry continue to thrive and be an avenue for our church to build close fellowship while studying God's word together. I am especially thankful to all the leaders of the small groups. Please pray that more small groups will start up this year so that we can get more members of our church plugged into them! Here are some updates from each of the groups.

Act II - Young Adults (Monday Night) - submitted by William Snieder

Act II continued its programming as consistently as ever in 2023. We finished our long, fruitful study of Revelation. We also finished Jonah and James. We started the book of Esther, which we continue to study in 2024. As always, God has been faithful in leading us in His Word, providing His wisdom in so many different forms. We've all been challenged to grow in our relationship with God, and live more Christlike lives. It has been so encouraging to see everyone faithfully come out every week. The fellowship of the group has always been its hallmark, and that did not change at all in 2023. We had several fun social events, and of course all our meetings end with asking "how you doing, doing?"

Of course, 2023 brought a lot of change. First and foremost, our leader and founder, Mark, moved to Germany, leaving a hole and large shoes to fill. We dearly miss our God-fearing leader, but God has provided so faithfully in this time of transition, and we have not missed a meeting so far. Many new people joined the group and others left. Meetings have fluctuated in size but have never fluctuated in spiritual value. Please pray for us in 2024 as we continue to study God's Word, grow in our relationship with Him, and do life together.

Tuesday Morning Senior Men's Group - submitted by Pastor Don Webster

The Senior Men's Group began in 2015 in Ron Picard's home. He and Jim Aldridge were burdened to reach their chums from High School days with the Gospel. As these seniors passed on, they were replaced with Forward members. The group chose Forward for its venue when Pastor Steve introduced Small Groups to the church. During 2023, attendance varied from five to nine. Studies included: the fruit of the Spirit, an overview of the Bible and its credibility within our current culture (current scientific research supports the literal reading of Genesis chapter one), and First John. Affirmation of our faith and fellowship have characterized our meetings.

Tuesday Evening Small Group - submitted by Gary Hudson

Conor Murphy and I have been leading a small group since September 2023. We currently have 10 members in our group (Conor, Emma, Sydney, Matthew, Nathan, Sandina, Michael, Jamie, Fiona and myself). It has been a blessing to lead this group, with individuals who have different stories. A big highlight for us has been seeing the spiritual growth of some who have just become Christians in the last 2-3 years. It has been encouraging to see their growing curiosity for the deeper things of the Bible and their commitment to serve at Forward. It's never hard to stir up a conversation, and there are never any awkward moments of silence, everyone comes in ready to build each other up and to learn more about the Bible. A desire of mine in the next couple of months is to grow in my individual relationship with some of the men in the group by spending time with them outside of the small group context. Pray for us to stay committed to our two Tuesdays a month, and for those who struggle to commit. Pray for Conor and I, that we will continue to lead with the desire to help others grow in their love for Jesus, and that we would grow in our love for Jesus as individuals. Pray for our prayer life, that we would pray for each other outside of the small group context.

Tuesday Evening Small Group 2 - submitted by Steve Lambert

It has been my pattern for the past couple of years to gather a small group and when the time is right, hand off the leadership of that group to someone within the group. This fall, I handed off the group I was leading to Gary Hudson and Conor Murphy (see Gary's report directly above this) and started a new group. Our new group has been meeting for about half a year now and is still quite small. We would love to welcome more members, but in the meantime are enjoying the intimacy of the small small group (or tiny group, as we call it!) We meet twice a month to discuss discussion questions from the previous week's sermon, and then to pray for one another. I'm thankful for the relationships we have developed with one another as we encourage one another in our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Wednesday Morning Prayer Meeting - submitted by Steve Lambert

Our church has run a traditional midweek prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings probably for over a century. I have been glad to lead this group for the past eight years or so. This year, due to various circumstances, we decided to move the meeting from Wednesday evening to Wednesday morning at 10:00. Each week we sing some hymns, go through discussion questions from the previous week's sermon, and then spend half an hour or so praying from our weekly prayer bulletin. I am thankful for the faithful group of prayer warriors who come each week to this small group/prayer meeting.

Wednesday Evening Women's Bible Study (co-led by Debbie Michaud and Carol Bain, report submitted by Patty Wheaton)

The Wednesday evening women's Bible study is made up of a diverse group of women from different cultural backgrounds and a wide range of ages. Since covid we have been meeting on zoom from 7-9 pm on alternate Wednesday nights and intend to continue to meet online in order for those who can't get out at night to continue to be a part of our study. In the winter/spring of 2023, we studied The Son of David-Seeing Jesus in the Historical Books by Nancy Guthrie. We read through the narrative books from Joshua through to Esther, seeing how these books point us to Christ, although they were written many centuries before Jesus was born. Last fall we studied the book of Ecclesiastes using David Gibson's book Living Life Backward, seeing how this difficult wisdom literature teaches that without Christ, life is meaningless. We're women who want to deepen our relationship with Jesus through studying His word. We welcome any ladies who want to join us in 2024. As one of our members testifies, "I enjoy this Bible study a lot and I really feel like I need the Lord in my life even more now than I did before. Thank you for letting me stay connected to the word of God."

Wednesday Evening Men's Bible Study - submitted by Aaron Woodhouse

The Men's study had a great year meeting together for fellowship, studying God's word and prayer on a weekly basis. We meet Wednesday evenings in person and on zoom throughout the year. This year we studied the book of Hebrews and Ecclesiastes, we did a 4 week study on holy habits by Derwin Grey, we did an in depth study on the Beatitudes and on the Sermon on the Mount, Pastor Don Webster led a 3 week study on the revelation of Scripture, Aaron Bowes, missionary to Germany, shared his testimony with the group one week as did a few other men during the course of the year. The Men's group had a few men's BBQ's hosted by John Deinum this year. The Men's Bible study group has also been serving together on a monthly basis at Fellowship Time (Coffee Time) after the Sunday morning service. It was encouraging to connect with 40+ men throughout the year at our men's study. We had between 9 and 14 men at each study. John Deinum and Aaron Woodhouse co-lead the group with much participation from the men.

Thursday Morning Women's Gospel Posse - submitted by Christine Woodhouse

God parts the waters of time each Thursday morning and makes a way for the Gospel Posse women to meet. He brings together a group of women who, by the world's standard, have no time or capacity for unified prayer or the study of the word of God. Yet we meet with the goal of encouraging one another to stand firm to the end and grow in faith, holiness and virtue while we wait. This year we have studied the books of Genesis (1-12), Deuteronomy, John, and an Advent study. We have between 6 to 14 regular attendees, with

a number of guests along the way. We are blessed to have childcare during our Thursday morning studies, making it possible for those with young children to join us.

Thursday Afternoon Women's Bible Study - submitted by Patricia Overholt and Susan Ricketts

We are women who have a desire to study and grow in God's Word and spend time in prayer. We meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month. The study commences in September and finishes at the end of June. To accommodate the growing number of people it was decided to branch off into two groups. Our study starts at 12.00 noon – 1.00 pm. At 11.30 am we all come together for lunch and enjoy a time of fellowship before we go to our own separate groups for Bible study and prayer. Last year we were once again blessed by having new people join us.

We finished our study on David, and in the Fall of 2023, we started to study the book of Esther. Esther stirs us to examine our character, the deep aspects of our hearts and encourages us in taking a stand for what is right and gives us courage that God is still in control and that we align ourselves with God's desire.

"Serving God who oversees the universe and works all things according to the counsel of His will" (Eph: 1-11)

See Missions Committee report for an update from the monthly Missions Fellowship

Friday Evening Small Group - Submitted by Arthur & Irene Wrigglesworth

Our group has chosen to meet every second Friday, so that people don't feel pressured for work the next day. We are a very diverse group of people who desire to mature as Christians. At each meeting we discuss the sermon topic from the previous Sunday, using questions supplied by Pastor Steve. The questions typically expand the themes and dig deeper into the content of the sermon.

Added to this are the thoughts that group members have been working through over the week. This results in a rich and meaningful discussion that challenges, encourages, and blesses us, as well as expanding our understanding of scripture.

Equally important is our time of praying for each other. We leave enough time for each person to share their prayer requests. Over the past year we have established a level of trust that allows us to share the difficulties in our lives as well as praise for God's many blessings. It has been amazing to witness God working amongst this small body of believers as we grow together in our faith and walk with Christ.

Saturday Morning Young Men's Group - Submitted by William Snieder

The Young Men's group met bi-weekly to study God's Word and have fellowship. Meetings usually ended with me trying to herd men out of the church, as they were engrossed in continued conversation long after the study had ended. We studied the book of James and started the book of Jonah. The discussions have continued to be edifying and encouraging for all of us. Justine took a step back from leadership in the group, and we are so thankful for how he taught, led, and organized the group. Shawn and I continue to share the leading responsibilities and are always blessed by the discussions. Please pray as we finish the book of Jonah, and that God would guide us to the next study He wants to lead us to.

See Beth Alexander's report for the young women's small group

Salvation, Baptism, and Membership

God has been so gracious! Several years ago, we began praying as a church that God would save 10 people each year through our ministries and the evangelism of our members. We know God is able to do much more than that, but in his sovereignty, he has not chosen to give us a full yes to that prayer. However, since we have been praying in this way (and probably before as well), there has been at least one salvation connected

to our church each year. This is an incredible privilege, and we praise God for using us for his glory in this way! In 2023 we were excited to hear the testimonies of a couple of people who had come to trust in Jesus and follow him in baptism. Let's remember the call to shine the light of the gospel in our lives and share the gospel with those around us. God will save those who are his, we are simply called to be faithful witnesses.

Overall, we had eight baptisms in 2023. Some of these were new Christians and some were Christians who had been trusting in the Lord for a number of years but had not yet been baptized. We are thankful to God for all eight of them. We were also blessed to bring sixteen new members into our church.

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

Weddings & Funerals

After a wedding boom in 2022, 2023 was quite a bit quieter on this front. Becky and I had the privilege of providing pre-marital counselling to one couple (our youth pastor Mark Memije and his now wife, Lea). We also began pre-marital counselling with another couple, which we will continue in 2024. As I mentioned in my introduction, Mark and Lea got married in Germany, but before they left, they had a wedding celebration with Forward. I was glad to participate and give the charge to the bride and groom (short sermon) at that celebration. I also helped Pastor Emmanuel Palisoc of Waverley Road Baptist Church by performing a wedding of a couple from his church.

Our church grieved together through a handful of funerals this year. Three of our members, one long-time attendee, and at least one former member who was well loved, went to be with their Lord in 2023. Though we grieved, we did so with hope, knowing that each of these dear saints loved Jesus and are now with him. I was glad to be able to lead two of these funerals and attend a number of others.

Worship

I continued to try to give some oversight to the worship ministry this past year as we searched for our new worship director. I'm glad that we were able to bring Emma Murphy on in early 2024 to take this role, but that's for next year's annual report! In 2023, we had many dedicated and talented men and women take part in leading worship. We had several more people join and fill out our worship teams. I am thankful to Shawn Freer who helped me interview these new worship team members and for Shanen Cudao who did a lot of work to get them organized into teams and scheduled. Shawn also spent a significant amount of time working with me to think through new song suggestions for the Christmas season and helping to pick which ones we would use. I am thankful for those who led teams in 2023: Shawn Freer, Craig Goodhand, and David & Katie Nunn.

Prayer

At the end of 2022, we began to have a monthly Sunday evening prayer meeting. This prayer meeting has continued on throughout 2023 and is going strong in 2024. I am thankful for all who have come to be part of it and pray for our church each month. Along with that, we have continued our tradition of having weeks of prayer before Easter and during our Missions Conference in the Fall. It has been wonderful to have our small groups praying together during these weeks.

Sabbatical

I was thankful to have a five week sabbatical in the Spring of 2023. It was a blessing to have this extended time to rest, invest deeply in my relationship with God, and spend time with my family. Having this rhythm of rest built into the ministry life of the church is so helpful for the long-term spiritual and physical health of myself and the other ministry leaders.

Conclusion

Thinking back over a whole year of life and ministry is always a challenging exercise, but it is so helpful to remember the Lord's goodness to us over the past year. Through the various seasons and ups and downs of change, we remember that God "has made everything beautiful in its time" (Ecclesiastes 3:11) and we praise him.

In Christ,

Pastor Steve Lambert



The verses in Isaiah 55:8-11 remind me of this past year.

*“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,”
declares the LORD.
“As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.
As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.*

Throughout this past year I have been continually reminded that my thoughts, hopes and ways are not always aligned with God’s. At best, my ways are good and comfortable, but in comparison, God's ways are perfect, even though sometimes uncomfortable, they are perfect. I’m reminded that His ways and His word will always accomplish the purposes that He set out for them. I praise God that His word has continually directed the mission and actions of Forward Baptist Church and has continued to shape me to be more like Him. I also praise God for the many ways that I have seen the Gospel and the Word of God transform the people of our Church. I have seen God's Word convict, encourage, bring hope, heal and spur people on this past year. I have seen God’s Word bring people from spiritual death to new life in Jesus Christ, hallelujah! God's Word is powerful and lifegiving and is the foundation of all that we do at Forward Baptist Church. May we continue to Glorify God, Grow in Christ and Go with the Gospel together.

This past year has been such a blessing and encouragement to me. It has been a year of growth in many ways, a year of constant change and another year of seeing God's faithfulness on full display.

Ministry Team Changes in 2023:

This past July 26th, we said goodbye to **Mark Memije** who served on the ministry team at Forward for 7 years as our Pastor of Youth and Young Adults. Pastor Mark Memije got married on August 5, 2023 to Lea Antzenberger. The two had been praying and seeking God's direction on where to live after marriage for many months. Ultimately the Lord directed them to live in Germany where Lea is from. We celebrated Pastor Mark’s faithfulness to God and Forward with a sending off party, prayer, cake and a special “pew pew puppets video”. Pastor Mark has been missed by the youth, young adults, parents, church and ministry team deeply. Mark was such a blessing to our church and Ministry team. Mark used his creativity, joyful attitude, love for God, the Gospel, people and evangelism while serving among us. Serving with Pastor Mark shoulder to shoulder, day in and day out for 7 years, sharing the Gospel and surviving a pandemic together are memories I will cherish. We are particularly thankful for Pastor Mark's discipleship, love, patience, and acceptance of the youth and young adults of Forward. We continue praying for Mark and Lea living in Germany.

This past May 2023, Forward also welcomed onto the ministry team, **Gary Hudson**. Gary joined us for a 16 month pastoral internship where he continues to train, serve, and discern his call for pastoral ministry. With Pastor Mark's departure, Gary Hudson has been serving the Youth at Forward Baptist Church, leading the Wednesday evening youth group and monthly youth events. Gary has also had opportunities to preach, assist with foodbank, lead Jr Youth (Grades 3-6), disciple people, be a KidZone leader and grow in pastoral and ministry experience. Gary has been taking 2 classes per semester at Toronto Baptist Seminary (TBS) in Toronto (TBS is one of Forward's supported missions organizations). We are thankful for Gary's love for the youth of Forward and have been thankful to have him as part of the ministry team this past year.

Each year Forward has also welcomed missionaries from the **Liebenzell Mission** located in Germany to serve at Forward for 11 months from the end of August each year to the end of July. So yearly we welcome Impact interns and yearly we say goodbye to them. This past year we said goodbye to Annie Haug and Joanna Schofisch and we welcomed Jana Ulmer and Debo Kammer. Debo served at Forward for 2 months and then moved to a ministry in North York called "Reach North York" which was better suited for her time in Canada.

We also had 3 **summer interns** who served for 4 months from May 2023 - August 2023: Gary Hudson, Rowena Hobbs and Katie Nunn. Rowena Hobbs returned for her second summer at Forward and was a great blessing in all the camps and events. Katie Nunn also served in camps and events and helped with all the graphics and communications aspects of the ministry. Katie Nunn had also been working doing freelance graphic design work. Katie continued with her regular freelance graphic design work for Forward until December 2023. As a Church and ministry team we said goodbye to Katie and David Nunn who both got jobs starting in January 2024 at Beacon Bible Camp.

I'm thankful for all the ways that Forward Baptist Church has and continues to intentionally invest great amounts of time and money in the development of young adults through internships and developing and training young adults who desire to pursue full time ministry. This generosity and vision to train people for ministry is unique and special. Continue to pray for this part of Forward Baptist Church's ministry, as we equip people to "Go with the Gospel".

Search Committee Updates:

The search committee for our Director of Worship and Communications continued to pray and meet this past year to consider candidates for this position. At the end of the year, we had yet to find a candidate to fill the position but continued to trust the Lord for wisdom and direction as we headed into 2024. *2024 Spoiler Alert: The Lord provides Emma Murphy as our new part time Director of Worship and Communications, starting Feb 2024. Praise God.*

The Youth and Young Adult Pastor Search Committee began meeting in 2023. They have been praying and meeting together to find a candidate for the position. By the end of December 2023 the committee had yet to find a candidate to recommend for the position. Please continue to join us in praying for wisdom, patience and discernment in finding a Youth and Young Adult Pastor that will love and disciple our youth and young adults at Forward.

Pastoral Ministry

During the year I had 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.

Community Engagement and Outreach

The May 2023 Community Street Party returned this spring and was another amazing community event. We hosted the party in the Gerrard Street parking lot which provides lots of room for the party and better visual community exposure. We had approximately 200 - 250 people cycle in throughout the day, enjoying the many bouncy castles, obstacle courses, games, face painting, BBQ (I think we served over 300 hotdogs) and Gospel conversations and connections. It is our biggest community connection event of the year and provides a great opportunity to be present and visible with the community around the Church. Many thanks to all that pray and volunteer to make it a success.

Beach Hill Community Clean up Day happened in April 2023 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 event is a great way to serve our community, show creation care and connect with the neighborhood around us.

This past Halloween we had the opportunity to run our Halloween outreach event again. We actually had good weather. Again, the church contributed a generous amount of candy that we got to hand out to kids. We also include information on the church and various programs they can be involved with. 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.

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 as 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. God has provided so many good things to us as a Church this year.

It is my prayer for our Church that in this upcoming year we will continue to keep the Gospel and the Word of God our focus and foundation. I pray that we will see 10 people come to know Jesus as their Lord and Saviour this year through the people and ministry of Forward.

Let us Glorify God together, let us Grow in Christ and let's Go with the Gospel.

Yours in Christ,
Aaron Woodhouse
Pastor of Community Engagement

These last 9 months have been a life changing experience for me. I am grateful to our elders and deacons for considering me for this opportunity, to be a pastoral intern, and to work out this calling of ministry in my life. So far, it has been both challenging and rewarding. I have had help every step of the way, with mentorship and discipleship from our elders, which has helped me in every aspect of ministry here at Forward, and my life as a husband and friend. I look forward to the next 6 months, praying that I grow in my faith, and the calling of ministry becoming clearer. Below are ministries I have been involved in in the last 9 months, listed and expanded on:

Youth Group:

My involvement as leader of our Youth Group at Forward has been a majority of my focus during my internship. In the beginning, I spent as much time as I could with Pastor Mark, learning from him about how to plan a Wednesday night and how to engage with the Youth. I do wish our time together was longer, but I believe it was sufficient for me to dive in and take over the group. It has taken me a while to view this ministry as my own, as a potential future pastor leading other leaders and discipling the Youth. I have been leading our Youth since September through the Gospel of Mark. It has been a great blessing to learn how to preach to our Youth. At first, I thought it would be easy, but I am grateful for the feedback I receive from Pastor Steve on almost a weekly basis, focusing on how I can improve and focus more on the story aspect of the Gospel of Mark. A big hurdle for me has been the planning of games and events, but I am grateful for the perspective that both Pastor Steve and Aaron have given me in approaching this task. Recently, Pastor Aaron has challenged me to take more initiative when it comes to my desire to focus more on discipleship. The growing pains of leading Wednesday evenings and planning events has led me to trying my hand in something I believe I am more competent with and have a great desire for. Beginning in the new year, I have started a new discipleship group with 5 Youth (3 boys, 2 girls). We have met 2 times already, and it has been a great blessing to me and to these individuals. By the grace of God, 2 of these youth have decided to obey the Lord by being baptized. I have also been spending one on one time with our oldest youth, who is graduating in a year. My goal in all of these meetings is to equip them to be a bigger part of Wednesday nights, but also a bigger part of the church in general. Doing this has given me a boost in confidence and the Lord has been helping me see what I need to work on, and what I am good at. In the next couple of months, my goal is to reboot our small group time on Wednesday nights, and also to try to create a stronger bond with those who come and have confessed to me that they are not Christians. I have many ideas, but I want to make sure I do well with what is already on my plate. I look forward to the next couple of months, as we continue through our lessons in the Gospel of Mark, planning the next couple of events and praying to God that He will continue to bear fruit. Lastly, I praise God for all our leaders who give their evenings up to help. We have been asking for help and God has answered our prayers. We continue to look for more help with our worship time on Wednesday nights, but we trust God will provide in the right time.

Preaching:

Preaching and teaching has been a big part of my ministry here at Forward, spread throughout different ministries which include Sunday mornings (sermons and KidZone), Youth Group, Food Bank and also being sent to another church to preach. I am thankful once again to my elders who have mentored me and disciplined me through this. Specifically with preaching on a Sunday morning, I have had 2 opportunities so far, and some more coming up soon. Each time, I have received feedback from our elders. I preach and teach weekly on Wednesday evening at Youth Group. This has been the most challenging and rewarding part of my time at Forward. I am thankful to Pastor Steve who has given me a lot of feedback and exhortation with how I am teaching and preaching through the Gospel of Mark to our Youth. Preaching is something I enjoy but it is a fearful task for me. It is something I enjoy more watching and commenting on than doing myself, but because I do believe the Lord is calling me to ministry, it is something I want to make sure I am competent in.

I believe preaching to our Youth has been the greatest opportunity I could get, because I need to make sure I am always preaching the story, and not just theology and good points. I praise God for this opportunity, and I am excited to continue wrestling through this with our Youth Group, and with opportunities I get on Sunday mornings.

Discipleship:

This is an area that I have not really focused on until recently with our Youth. I say this with regret because I do believe it is my greater gift. I am grateful that God has enabled me to tackle this in the last 2 months and that fruit is being seen already. I have been meeting with 5 Youth (3 boys, 2 girls) in the last month, and also meeting with our oldest Youth who is graduating next year. It has taken me some time to get to know some of the Youth on a deeper level, but again with regret, I wish I had approached this much sooner. Nevertheless, I am grateful for what I see God doing so far through this discipleship time. Each Wednesday, I ask 2-3 of those Youth that I meet with to pray for us before each lesson and to read the scripture that will be taught. At first, all of them were nervous, but I am seeing them grow in confidence as I continue to ask them to pray and read and encourage them that they are doing well and have nothing to be nervous about. Through these meetings, I am blessed to know that two Youth in that discipleship group have decided to obey the Lord by being baptized. It is so encouraging and also overwhelming, seeing God do great things in a short time. I pray that I will continue to persevere in this, knowing that maturity isn't a fast track, but comes through a steadfastness in mentorship and discipleship. My next goal is to figure out how to walk with those who have shared with me that Wednesday night is not something they look forward to and that Jesus is not their Lord and Saviour. I pray that God will equip me with the ability to love these individuals as well and to find out how this group can be a blessing to them.

I have also had the opportunity to lead a small group with Conor Murphy. Our small group time has been a great time to speak into the lives of some adults, especially the men that attend. I am seeing growth in a different way in this group. I am grateful that we spent a lot of our time being led by Pastor Steve last year, but I have now been entrusted to co-lead this group. The discipleship moments have been less formal, but I am thankful for the opportunity to be able to build into relationships with the men of our group. I am currently thinking through how this will look in a more formal way with 1-2 individuals who have a desire to grow in their faith. I pray that the Lord will give me wisdom with how to approach that.

Food Bank:

I am thankful for our Food Bank ministry at Forward, which has been a very sobering ministry in my life. It is something I look forward to every month, getting to know and learn about different individuals who have very different struggles than I do. I am glad I get to be myself around them, but that I also have the opportunity to preach the Gospel to them and share my life story. I have had the opportunity to preach a couple of times and always get good feedback. I have been speaking to some individuals more than others, and I am always thinking through how a discipleship relationship could look like. I can just simply hang out and talk about life. I look forward to continuing my time through this ministry and seeing who I can build stronger relationships with.

Sunday Morning:

Sunday mornings have been a mixed bag of different things: giving the welcome to worship, announcements, pastoral prayer, preaching, communion, benediction, KidZone, fellowship time, building host, and hospitality. It has been an amazing learning experience to have my hands in almost everything that makes our Sunday mornings successful. Each month, I am regularly a part of our service on stage, and teaching and helping out with our KidZone. This part of ministry has been one of the greatest blessings, which helps me not to be just a consumer, but a saved server. Recently, I have started meeting with 5 Youth (3 boys, 2 girls) after Sunday

service to go through a book and some passages from the Bible. It has been a great blessing for all of us. The plan is to meet every 1st and 3rd Sunday after service for an hour. I am grateful to the Lord for the fruit that I have already seen through this, seeing a greater enthusiasm with these specific Youth, a greater interest and excitement, and 2 youth have already decided to obey the Lord in being baptized next month. Overall, I am thankful for the Sunday morning experience, that helps me serve our church community and enables me to grow in my relationship with our people.

Summer Camps:

This past summer was a great experience for me, enabling me to get to know most of our Youth a lot better and grow in my experience of planning and leading our Wednesday night Youth Group. I had an opportunity to lead in some aspects of every camp, and planned and led our Youth Camp in late August with Rowena. It was very exciting and encouraging to see how everything played out with our Youth Camp and hearing parents tell me that their kids enjoyed it. It was a boost of confidence that I needed in leading our Youth Group. I am again thankful for this opportunity which helps strengthen me in areas where I am not confident, and I look forward to this year's camps, to keep on building on those areas.

Street Party & Deacons Meetings:

One of my first tasks as an intern was to plan our annual Street Party. It was a successful and great time to see our community come together for a time of fun and food. I look forward to our Street Party this year.

I am thankful to our elders and deacons who allow me to spend every month with them during their Tuesday evening meetings. I have learned so much about the ins and outs of our local church, from every aspect possible. It has been a front seat to seeing how God is blessing our church and how everyone works together to make sure we are obedient to the Lord and successful.

School:

I am beyond thankful for the opportunity that the elders and deacons have given me to go back to school. Even though it is not within my working hours here at the church, it definitely has had a good influence on ministry, and ministry has had a good impact on my school experience. Seeing it all work together has been a blessing and I am excited to see what happens in the future with my schooling.

CHILDREN’S MINISTRY AND INTERN LEADERSHIP – Beth Lambert

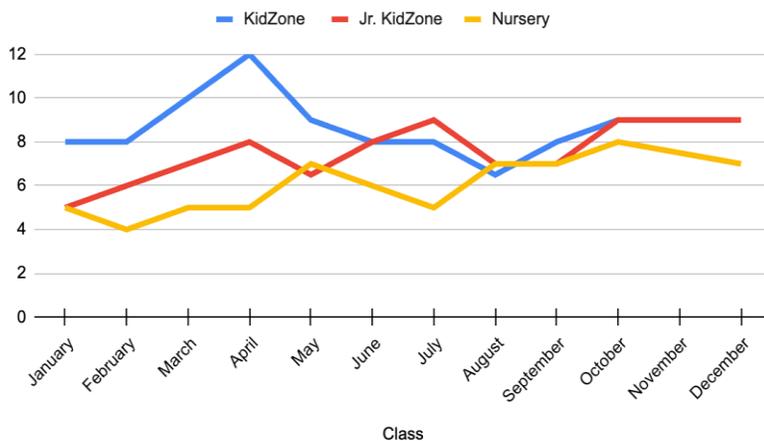
This past year was a continual season of change and transition. Saying goodbye to many loved ones, staff and congregation alike, has been challenging as we mourn them and try to fill all the ways that they have served with joy and passion for so long. As I have been looking back on the year and have seen how God has provided for us over and over, I am in awe of his goodness and faithfulness to sustain us as a church. Although it has been uncomfortable and uncertain at times, God has stretched us and raised up many with unique gifts and joyful hearts to serve alongside us in making Jesus known in our church, community and city.

I have worked at Forward for almost 2 years now and am learning to see change as an opportunity for the Spirit to work in the midst of our weakness. This year I am overwhelmed to look back and see the Spirit’s work in my own life, in our kids, youth, families, and community. I am grateful to have been witness to God’s sovereign hand guiding and shaping us as a church over the past year, and know that I will continue to bear witness to his goodness in the years to come.

Children’s Ministry

Since starting KidZone back up in May of 2022 we have seen our children’s ministry grow from month to month. It has been both exciting and an ongoing challenge to see classes continue to change and outgrow their classrooms. We’ve had three classes this past year, KidZone (Gr. 2-5), Jr. KidZone (3 yrs-Gr.1) and Nursery (0-3 years). In our KidZone classes we have been going through the Bible Project curriculum for the past year and a half and have finished the Old Testament. It’s been encouraging to see our kids grasp these big concepts, ask hard questions and memorize foundational verses.

2023 Children's Ministry Monthly Averages



This chart indicates our monthly classroom averages. KidZone (blue) & Jr. KidZone (red) were very unpredictable for a while but have averaged out around 8-10 weekly. Our nursery (yellow) especially increased in attendance, starting the year with 4-5 babies and ending with around 8-11 each Sunday. The number of volunteers needed in the nursery increases as well, due to our protection policy requiring 1 adult for every 3 babies. We struggled for a while to find enough volunteers to move from 2 leaders scheduled weekly to 3-4 scheduled, but I have been so

encouraged by the response of our congregation to love our church families and children, allowing for a safe and welcoming environment for our youngest age group. We have a rotation of about 30 volunteers and 12 LITs helping across our Children’s Ministry classes. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication teaching our children the love of Christ! And a big thank you to Janet Theunissen who has helped in managing this ministry with me.

Classroom Renovations

I made a number of proposed changes to classroom age ranges as well as their physical spaces based on the increase in numbers over the past year. We implemented the first change in November during our Church Clean Up day, switching the nursery and Jr. KidZone room. This switch has been very helpful for our Jr. KidZone class, giving them access to the child bathroom and a smaller room to manage attention spans. The nursery was switched into the larger space, with the intention of adding a 2 & 3 year old class on the other

side of the room in 2024. There are further changes that will be proposed in the coming year as basement renovations occur.

LIT (Leaders in Training) Program

In September we launched our Leaders In Training program for youth in grades 6-12, including several of our KidZone children who had recently aged out of Children's Ministry. In total we have 13 teens who participate regularly. Each month, LITs serve 1-2 times in a variety of Sunday morning ministries, including the Tech team, Children's Ministry, Host teams, and Fellowship Hour. Communion Sundays are designated as Sundays where they all sit in the service to hear the sermon and take notes. The following Sunday we have our LIT class, where we review and discuss the sermon. I have led this group with the help of Gary, Aaron and Steve. This has been an encouraging experience, seeing our teens learn how to participate in church on their own and start thinking through their faith seriously. Pray for these 13 young people, and for their parents, as they consider their faith and navigate the many challenges of living in an increasingly secular world as a teenager.

Above the Beach Drop In

Since restarting the Above the Beach program in 2022, it has taken time to regrow our attendance, however it has slowly been growing and becoming busier as community members have spread the word for us. From Jan. 2023 to the summer we had between 20-30 children & caregivers/parents attend weekly. The fall and winter months increased to 40-60 participants each week. We also have been handing out food bags to nannies on the Tuesdays before Food Bank. This number has also increased as our ATB numbers have gone up, from 5-6 bags each month (early 2023), to 10-13 bags each month (late 2023).

Thank you to our ATB helpers who have made running all of this possible in the past year. Annie Haug and Joanna Schoefisch set up and oversaw much of the weekly activities; Jana Ulmer now has taken that role over. Mary Deinum has been a big help in connecting with the adults who attend and leading our song circle time. Bertha Sharpe is a constant smiling face; she is there each week welcoming every person into the building and ensuring they're all there to have fun!

Interns

Working with our Leibenzell and Summer interns is always one of my favorite roles. I have had the privilege of walking alongside 6 young women throughout the year as they serve in a variety of roles and grow deeper in their love for the church and Jesus. In 2023 I worked with Annie, Joanna, Rowena, Katie, Jana, and Debo (Sept-Oct). 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, youth group, young adults, event planning, cleaning projects, tech, music, food bank, 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!

Discipleship/small group

One of my 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. In 2023 I also led a small group with Lan Power of 6 high school and university aged girls. We read through *Women of the Word* by Jen Wilkin and practiced the new Bible reading skills we learned as we went.

Admin and Church Ministry

I do a variety of administrative tasks throughout the week. I have taken on more of this role in the fall of 2023 as we said goodbye to Katie Nunn, who previously did all of our designs and as we have only 1 German Liebenzell intern for the current year. These tasks include scheduling Sunday volunteers, overseeing

registrations for events, managing the church email, sending the weekly email, creating designs for events, etc.

I also participate in a number of wider church events such as: helping with clean up days, camps, training days, foodbank, Christmas events such as the Christmas Eve service, Carol Sing and the community meal and care package project.

In Christ,
Beth Alexander

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Forward is blessed to be able to support a number of missionaries and mission organizations who actively work to make disciples of Jesus. Our missionaries are actively sharing the good news of Jesus, baptizing new believers, gathering them into churches, teaching them to obey all of Christ's commands. Some of our missionaries are doing this in Toronto and some in other parts of the world. Some are on the front lines as well as some who are in support roles behind the scenes. Some are planting churches and some are strengthening existing churches. All of them are dedicated to glorifying God through the great commission.

This year we had the privilege of seeing several of our missionaries in person. Aaron and Anne Bowes (Halle, Germany) were with us for a number of weeks during their home assignment this past summer, and Aaron also gave us a report of the ministry and preached for us in June. Paul McDonald (Belgrade, Serbia) also gave a report and preached for us in July. We also heard reports from Ray Alary (Thru the Bible Canada) and Godfrey Paruthivilai Sundararaj (representing Liberty Grace Church plant here in Toronto) during our missions conference in October. Finally, Martha Oates (Taiwan) came in November to give a report on the shopkeeper church ministry she is involved with.

We were also blessed to receive short video updates from many of our missionaries and missions organizations throughout the year. Likewise, the Missions Fellowship (formerly Women's Missions Fellowship) had several missionary speakers share their ministry with them throughout the year. Some of these were our supported missionaries, some were not. (See detailed report below). It was so encouraging to hear many reports of faithful service and God's incredible work through the women, men, and organizations we support. We are truly thankful to the Lord for how he is at work in his world.

This year has also been a big year of change amongst our missionaries. As mentioned above, we support a church plant, Liberty Grace Church, here in Toronto. This year they celebrated their ten year anniversary and their founding pastor, Pastor Darryl Dash, ended his time there and moved to another ministry in the city. Both Ray Alary and Aaron Bowes announced their upcoming retirements when they were with us this year. Ray plans to retire at the end of 2024, and Aaron in three years after the end of this term. Don & Erin Longworth returned to Canada after a couple of years serving in Benin, West Africa. They will be serving in New Brunswick for the time being. Our missionaries Bechara and Roula Karkafi took on extra responsibility this year. For a number of years, they have worked with the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Canada as missionaries to Arabic speaking peoples (and more) both in Ontario and in the Middle East & North Africa. In December, Bechara took on the added role of being Director of Church Planting for FEB Central (the region of the Fellowship which includes Ontario and English speaking churches in Quebec). In addition to his other ministry roles, he will be overseeing all of the church planting in FEB Central. Finally, two of our retired missionaries, Brian and Elisabeth Taylor, who were long-time members of our church, moved to Australia.

I am thankful for how God has guided our missionaries during all of this change. I am also thankful for our missionaries themselves who have served the Lord in such sacrificial ways this year. Finally, I am thankful for all who served on the Missions Committee with me this year. Thank you to Jamie Cudao, who resigned from the committee this Fall. Thank you also to Patricia Overholt and Sandina Sutanto, as well as to our elders, Aaron Woodhouse and Shawn Freer, who serve on the board *ex officio*.

Submitted by

Pastor Steve Lambert
(on behalf of the Missions Committee)

Appendices

Missions Fellowship Report (submitted by Susan Ricketts & Patricia Overholt)

We were formally known as the Women's Missions Fellowship. Now, we are inviting men to join us. We seek to deepen our faith, learn more about missions and serve God in ways we may never have imagined! Prayer is the cornerstone of our monthly gatherings; prayer for our own missionaries as well as mission organizations in the Toronto area. Our appreciation for missions has grown in the last year through our exposure to the following mission organizations:

Liebenzell Mission - Annie Haug & Joanna Schofisch from Germany shared how God led them to serve at Forward, how their lives have been impacted and their goals for the future.

Mully Children's Family (Kenya) – Al & Cathy Snowball gave us an update on Grace Nthenya's progress. We have just completed a 14-year sponsorship of Grace. This ministry rescues and rehabilitates abandoned orphan children. We watched a movie on how the ministry began and how our world can be changed, one child at a time. We all received complimentary copies of Charles Mully's biography.

Martha Oats (Taiwan) shared with us how her work has progressed with the dorm ministry and the shopkeepers' Bible study group. Martha also told us about her desire to start a new work in Kaohsiung, an area that is unreached with the gospel, when she returns to Taiwan in 2024.

Toronto City Mission – Mila Abellera is an Outreach Worker in Kingston-Galloway (East Scarborough). She is actively sharing Christ's love through a variety of programs for children and their families who have been impacted by poverty.

The Salvation Army – Major Heather Matondo and Glenn Van Gulik gave us an overview of the work the army is involved in through Brighter Futures (sponsorship), the support of schools, preschools, orphanages and many other programs. The honorarium they received from us was used to purchase a goat through "Gifts of Hope" which benefited a family in need.

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. Now also Director of Church Planting; FEB Central
- Don & Erin Longworth - Previously managing the missionary guesthouse & serving in digital media ministries in Parakou, Benin, now serving in New Brunswick; 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.

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 & Elsabet 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 2023 to maintain and clean our facilities. We are thankful for all the following people that have helped with custodian work in 2023 at various times and in different ways:

Full-time custodian: Nathan Sutanto - Finished June 2023.

Part-Time custodians: Paul Brason (Started June 2023) and Ron Wilkie (Started March 2023)

Occasional custodian: Paul Bowles (A few hours each month)

Volunteers: Kenneth Chan, Jim Sleep

We are thankful to Nathan Sutanto who served as our Full-Time Custodian at Forward for 20 Months (Oct 2021 - June 2023). Nathan resigned his position at Forward in June 2023. Nathan had been having back pain for many months and was going to be having back surgery and felt it best to resign. We are thankful for all Nathan's hard work and his positive attitude even in the middle of winter as he served at Forward. We are very thankful that Nathan's back surgery was successful and his recovery was speedy. Nathan continues to be a member at Forward Baptist.

Highlights from 2023

- Metrolinx continued to use $\frac{2}{3}$ of the upper wildwood parking lot. They began February 2021 - February 2023. Starting in February 2023 they exercised a 1-year extension that was previously agreed upon. In November 2023 Metrolinx expressed a desire to sign a new 2-year extension for use of the upper lot. That new agreement will be from Feb 2024 - Feb 2026. Exact terms of the agreement were still being worked out by the end of December 2023. We are so thankful for the ways that this underutilized parking lot has been a financial blessing to Forward these past 3 years.
- Replaced one set of stairs in baptismal tank
- Installed a new tankless hot water tank to replace the broken rental hot water tank for CE Building.
- November 25, 2023 - We had a Church "work day" and 20+ people came to assist in a variety of projects. We started the transformation of the CJ Fever room to the new Food Bank and Custodian room. A group of men gathered over 25+ bags of yard waste from the upper parking lot. We switched around the Nursery and Toddler room.
- Wooden Gate installed on the west lawn property line, between the church and the house on Kingsmount Park Road

2024 - 2025 Building improvements and repairs

In the 2024 budget the members of Forward Baptist Church voted to approve a number of capital projects for the next 2 years. The 2024 Budget has allocated 200K over the next 2 years for the projects outlined in the 2024 - 2025 budget proposal. A few highlights of these upcoming projects include: Updating and creating a Children's Ministry Area, Gym renovations, HVAC updates and automations, electrical updates and Fellowship Hall updates.

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 the 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 2024 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 neighborhood, East York, and Toronto.

Respectfully submitted,

Aaron Woodhouse
Property Committee

Property Committee members: Justine Cudao, Aaron Woodhouse

BENEVOLENT FUND REPORT

It is our custom at Forward Baptist Church to take up a benevolent offering once a month following our communion service. People are also able to designate money to the “benevolent fund” throughout the year by the usual means of donations (mail, offering boxes and e-transfer).

The primary use of the Benevolent Fund in recent years has been to stock the Food Bank. In 2023, we saw a consistent rise in the number of people who used the Food Bank. From January 2023 - June 2023, we had between 45 - 55 monthly recorded visits. We had a slightly lower number of visits in the summer months which is usual and then from September 2023 - December 2023 our numbers jumped to approximately 75 recorded visits per month. Overall, we had 704 recorded Food Bank visits in 2023.

Our Food Bank meets on the second Wednesday of every month in the Fellowship Hall @ 9:30am for a Gospel message, coffee, tea, cookies and conversation. The Gospel message is shared at each meeting by a ministry staff or volunteer. Our focus is on connecting with our guests relationally, befriending them and having genuine conversations. We also seek to meet people’s immediate need for food. We are always aware that people's greatest need is Jesus, and our hope and prayer is that each guest would come to know and trust Jesus as their personal Saviour. Pray for the many ongoing ministry connections, for people to come to Church and that people would accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

We are thankful to our faithful group of shoppers who are great at finding deals which helps keep our costs lower than they otherwise might be. Our overall expenses for Food Bank purchases for 2023 was \$20,001.00 which is an increase of only \$951.00 from 2022. If you are interested in shopping let us know. Donations are always welcome in the form of food or money.

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

- \$6,445 in grocery cards at Christmas plus use throughout the year
- TTC fare & gas money and other travel expenses to medical appointments, church and other important meetings
- Occasional money for food that isn’t available through the Food Bank, (milk, eggs, meat)
- Christmas poinsettias & cards for our shut ins
- Help with purchasing medicine for illness
- Small gifts for basic needs, laundry, cleaning supplies
- Christmas community meal
- Child Car Seat
- Assistance with a bill, help with a vehicle repair, rent, utility bill

For the first time in over 10 years Forward hosted a Christmas meal for our community. The goal was to gather people together to share a family type meal together, share the Gospel and share the joy of Jesus coming as Saviour of the world. We had delicious food graciously catered by FoodDudes, we sang Christmas Carols, and shared a meal together. Each table had at least 2 table hosts from Forward to connect with guests. The meal was delicious and enjoyed by over 65 people. This past year our Church community also purchased and packed Christmas gift boxes for our guests at the Community Christmas Meal. Our Church was enthusiastic about purchasing the items and assembling the boxes on a Sunday afternoon following the church service. In total 60 bags were made and had many lovely items inside.

The Benevolent Fund started the year with \$1,720.00 in the bank. Total income to the benevolent fund in 2023, was \$39,104.00; Total Expenses of the Benevolent Fund in 2023 was \$29,324.00. The Benevolent Fund finished the year with \$11,500.00.



FINANCE REPORT

I want to start by thanking David Nunn for taking on the role of Treasurer for the last few years and wish him all the best in his new role at Beacon Bible Camp.

Forward has been going through a summer season with its finances, a period of abundance – ready to harvest. In 2020 we commissioned a study on what to do with the Wildwood parking lot. We didn't need to think long about it because we were able to rent it out, and this has supplemented our regular givings. The more recent challenge has been how to prudently deploy these funds in a manner that glorifies God.

The income for 2023 was \$634,153 from regular givings and income, that included a very generous one time gift. Other income included \$155,807 from Wildwood-related rent income, and an additional \$142,000 from a bequest, for a grand total revenue of \$931,960. Expenditures were down from \$651,128 in the prior year, to \$598,832 in 2023, as the previous year included a generous gift to refugees in Ukraine.

As a result, our cash resources swelled from \$289,741 at the beginning of the year to \$622,870 at year-end. It is important that we deploy our resources to further the work of God's Kingdom, so please pray for the church leadership to have wisdom and capacity to prayerfully, thoughtfully, and diligently put these funds to work.

God's faithfulness in looking after the church's finances is not designed to give us a holiday on giving. Giving is our personal duty to God's instruction. Absent the unusual income items of Wildwood rental income and the bequest, our finances were quite balanced, with only \$35,321 of income more than expenses.

Missions expenditures in 2023 were comparable to 2022, except for the large donation to FAIR in 2022 to support refugees in Europe as a result of the Ukraine war.

I would like to thank the tellers: Maarten Theunissen, John Deinum, Allister Walsh, Jamie Cudao, Arthur Wigglesworth, and Tony Quesada. I also want to thank Carol Bain, our bookkeeper, for her work in keeping our finances properly recorded and presented.

We are blessed to be a church where underfunding is not a distraction from the work of the Lord. May God continue to bless the work of Forward as we follow Him.

Respectfully submitted,

David Power
Treasurer (effective January 1, 2024)

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2023 Budget
INCOME				
Envelopes	10,709	11,481	14,977	10,000
Where Most Needed	332,835	195,163	151,840	170,000
Pre-Authorized Gifts	88,455	75,430	107,170	85,000
Loose offerings	-	-	1,124	-
Anniversary offering	40,835	47,254	33,533	40,000
Gifts through Charities	80,852	76,779	118,000	100,000
Other gifts	-	35	50	-
TOTAL GIVINGS	553,686	406,142	426,694	405,000
MISSIONS INCOME				
Envelopes	25,820	8,097	13,185	15,000
Special Missions Offering	26,708	34,309	26,555	25,000
Other Missions Donations	-	-	-	-
TOTAL MISSIONS INCOME	52,528	42,406	39,740	40,000
OTHER INCOME				
Rent - Glenmore	10,200	10,200	10,200	10,200
Facility Rentals	2,700	2,700	14,100	3,000
Government Grants	-	4,653	10,624	3,000
Recoveries & Fees (mainly camp)	11,452	8,066	3,250	6,600
Interest Earned	3,587	575	989	1,000
TOTAL INCOME	27,939	26,194	39,163	23,800
TOTAL INCOME	634,153	474,742	505,597	468,800

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
 STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE (Continued)
 FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2023 Budget
LOCAL EXPENDITURE				
Staff and pastoral costs	388,164	357,584	366,954	378,760
Christian education	27,213	19,449	9,194	21,150
Worship	1,557	2,992	3,193	3,700
Communications and fellowship	10,058	9,777	5,888	13,900
Office and general	16,145	12,513	14,236	12,700
Building	93,714	84,698	84,563	90,600
Bus ministry	-	-	20	-
Legal	1,589	-	2,830	-
Capital Items and special projects	1,406	10,402	48,884	30,000
TOTAL LOCAL EXPENDITURE	539,846	497,415	535,762	550,810
MISSIONS EXPENDITURE				
Individuals	34,040	32,300	47,300	33,390
Missions Organizations	19,700	111,494	27,673	18,200
Other	5,246	10,000	19,100	13,500
TOTAL MISSIONS EXPENDITURE	58,986	153,794	94,073	65,090
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	598,832	651,209	629,835	615,900
INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE BEFORE SPECIAL ITEMS				
	35,321	(176,467)	(124,238)	(147,100)
Wildwood funds received	155,807	-	325,809	-
Bequest	142,000	-	1,000	-
BALANCE, Beginning of year	289,741	466,211	263,640	289,741
BALANCE, End of period	622,870	289,744	466,211	142,641

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURE - LOCAL MINISTRY FUND
FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2023 Budget
STAFF AND PASTORAL COSTS				
Salaries	215,121	208,309	240,173	247,360
Employee benefits	45,111	45,979	49,075	41,100
Temporary help	89,977	54,267	34,080	47,500
Summer interns	20,803	31,985	28,790	28,000
Book allowance (pastoral staff)	1,283	1,600	2,000	2,000
Staff education & development	2,857	3,240	3,771	1,500
Travel	971	1,011	223	800
Pastoral costs	2,880	1,874	1,354	2,000
Long term interns	6,666	6,608	6,300	6,500
Conferences	2,494	2,711	1,188	2,000
	388,164	357,584	366,954	378,760
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION				
Department supplies	2,201	736	497	600
General Ministry expense	3,979	3,898	3,371	4,000
Library/resource centre	30	-	39	50
Day camp	10,380	9,492	2,581	8,500
Developing Ministries	1,545	211	-	2,500
Men's Ministry	222	28	217	250
Family Ministry	414	67	70	1,000
Youth Ministry	8,206	4,976	2,360	4,000
Women's Ministry	236	41	59	250
	27,213	19,449	9,194	21,150
WORSHIP				
Organ & piano maintenance	670	559	835	1,000
Worship expenses	-	1,182	1,359	1,000
Special speakers	-	384	-	700
Song License	615	732	692	800
Communion	273	135	307	200
	1,557	2,992	3,193	3,700
COMMUNICATIONS AND FELLOWSHIP				
Communications incl. advertising	1,778	4,057	3,985	5,500
Community Outreach	2,903	2,508	75	3,600
Church fellowship and funerals	4,943	2,554	374	4,000
Flowers and auditorium decorations	435	658	1,454	800
	10,058	9,777	5,888	13,900

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURE - LOCAL MINISTRY FUND (CONTINUED)
FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2023 Budget
OFFICE AND GENERAL				
Bank charges & interest	2,088	2,422	2,315	2,500
Cell Phones	1,242	1,788	2,208	2,200
Postage	972	229	1,118	100
Printing, stationery & office supplies	9,669	5,129	5,798	5,000
Telephone	2,174	2,945	2,797	2,900
	16,145	12,513	14,236	12,700
BUILDING				
Building maintenance, repairs and supplies	24,761	16,070	32,693	22,000
Gas	24,016	21,907	15,391	25,000
Hydro & Water	30,112	24,943	23,050	26,000
Insurance	8,979	7,930	7,591	7,600
P.A./ A.V. maintenance & supplies	1,076	435	812	4,000
Glenmore property	4,769	13,413	5,026	6,000
	93,714	84,698	84,563	90,600
BUS MINISTRY				
Bus insurance	-	-	-	-
Bus operating costs	-	-	-	-
Bus repairs & maintenance	-	-	20	-
	-	-	20	-
LEGAL				
Legal expenses	1,589	-	2,830	-
	1,589	-	2,830	-
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES				
Wall Mats	-	7,128	-	-
CAD drawings for blueprints	-	3,274	-	-
New signage	-	-	9,361	-
Windows	-	-	39,523	-
Pew Bibles	1,406	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	30,000
	1,406	10,402	48,884	30,000

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
 SCHEDULE OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE – MISSIONS
 FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2023 Budget
REVENUE				
Envelopes	25,820	8,097	13,185	15,000
Missions Offering	26,708	34,309	26,555	25,000
TOTAL REVENUE	52,528	42,406	39,740	40,000
INDIVIDUALS				
Missions 3D: Aaron and Anna Bowes	20,600	19,000	19,000	19,950
SIM: Don and Erin Longworth	2,100	2,000	5,000	2,100
TTB: Ray and Sandra Alary	2,100	2,000	2,000	2,100
BMFP: Daniel and Emily Ford	2,100	2,000	9,500	2,100
AEBEQ : Louis Bourque	2,100	2,000	2,000	2,100
OMF Canada - Martha Oates	1,260	1,200	4,200	1,260
MoveIn, Toronto - Valera and Laura Strugov	1,260	1,700	3,200	1,260
FEB Int'l Arab Missions: Bechara and Roula Karkafi	1,260	1,200	1,200	1,260
SEND Int: Paul & Georgie McDonald	1,260	1,200	1,200	1,260
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	34,040	32,300	47,300	33,390

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
SCHEDULE OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE – MISSIONS FUND (CONTINUED)
FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2023 Budget
MISSIONS ORGANIZATIONS				
FEB Int: FAIR	720	87,874	2,720	720
FEB Int: Leaders Formation	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
FEB Central: General fund	8,500	8,000	7,000	7,000
FEB Int: Fellowship Network Project	720	720	720	720
FEB Central: Church Planting Program	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Liberty Grace Church	1,260	6,400	6,733	1,260
Heritage College & Seminary	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400
Toronto Baptist Seminary	500	500	500	500
Toronto City Mission	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
SAT-7 Canada	2,000	2,000	4,000	2,000
TOTAL MISSIONS ORGANIZATIONS	19,700	111,494	27,673	18,200
OTHER				
Conference & Special Speakers	2,121	1,100	1,000	3,500
Short Term Missions	-	-	-	4,000
Gifts to missionaries & retirees	2,825	5,850	-	3,500
Special Events (Aniv Offering distribution)	-	2,850	17,500	2,500
Women's Missionary Fellowship	300	200	600	-
TOTAL OTHER	5,246	10,000	19,100	13,500
TOTAL EXPENSES	58,986	153,794	94,073	65,090

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 - Serving in Mission

TTB - Thru the Bible

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Dec. 31 2023	Dec. 31 2022	Dec. 31 2021
ASSETS			
Cash	248,649	151,392	123,474
Investments (GIC)	354,935	176,349	425,769
Petty Cash	185	187	24
Gov't Rebates	22,776	11,132	13,749
Accounts Receivable	17,684	-	-
Prepaid Expenses	3,007	1,231	505
Capital Assets	1	1	1
	647,238	340,291	563,522
LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable	10,346	1,013	5,382
Deferred Revenue	-	45,696	76,779
Benevolent Fund	11,499	1,720	14,498
David Barr Fund	2,522	2,122	652
	24,366	50,551	97,311
FUND BALANCES	622,871	289,741	466,211

FORWARD BAPTIST CHURCH
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2023

	Benevolent Fund	David Barr Fund	Total Fund Balances
Balance-Beginning of year	1,719	2,122	3,841
Receipts rec'd during year	39,104	400	39,504
Disbursements during year	29,324	-	29,324
Balance-end of year	11,499	2,522	14,021



MEMBERSHIP AND BAPTISM REPORT

Baptisms in 2023 - 8

Siene Lau - April 9	Graydon Power - April 9	Olamide Taiwo - April 9
Alex Shuttleworth - July 23	Liz Shuttleworth - July 23	Lucas Verbeke - July 23
Emma Vincent - July 23	Christina Campbell - Dec 3	

New Members in 2023 - 16

Lea (Antzenberger) Memije - March 19*	Clara Boschmann - March 19*	Eva Boschmann - March 19*
Viktor Boschmann - March 19*	Amber McClenahan - March 19	Brent McClenahan - March 19
Conor Murphy - March 19	Emma Murphy - March 19	Lester Penalosa - March 19
Brian Lau - June 25	Siene Lau - June 25	Graydon Power - June 25
Phil Alexander - Dec 3	Christina Campbell - Dec 3	Elli Clarke - Dec 3
Eduardo Franco - Dec 3	*Four of these have since moved and removed their membership.	

Members Removed in 2023 - 22

<u>Deceased - 3</u>	<u>Removed -19</u>	
Jim Aldridge - January 13	Olatunde Babalola	Sarah Babalola
Lorraine Salsman – March 19	Eprex Balucay	Clara Boschmann
Dorothy Watterson - May 10	Eva Boschmann	Viktor Boschmann
	Eunice Chaffey	Joshua Chao
	Terry Donaldson	Lauren Hadwen
	Sam Hadwen	David Iggulden
	Brennan Little	Emily Little

Lea (Antzenberger) Memije	Mark Memije
Shirley Payne	Sarah Quartel
Travis Cambre	

Membership by Category 2023

	2023	2022	2021	2020
Active Members	102	106	103	109
Member Missionaries	2	2	2	2
Inactive Members	13	9	16	17
Shut in Members	12	18	12	15
Total Membership	129	135	133	143