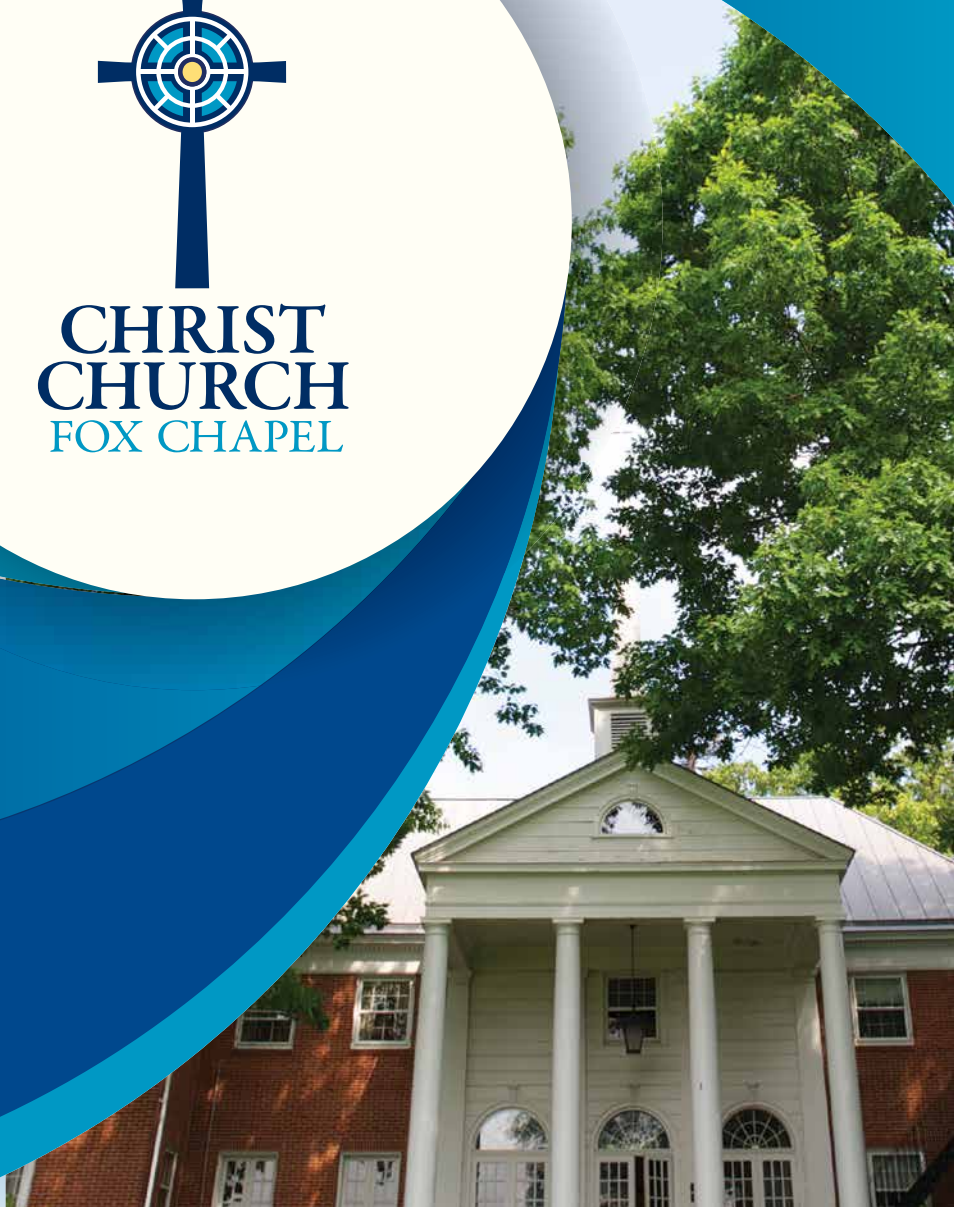


# 2022 | ANNUAL REPORT

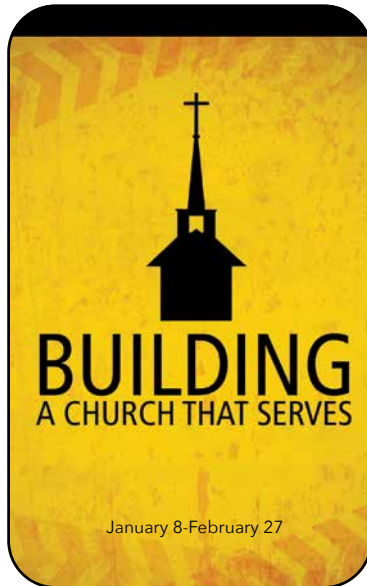
*As presented on January 29, 2023*



**CHRIST  
CHURCH**  
FOX CHAPEL

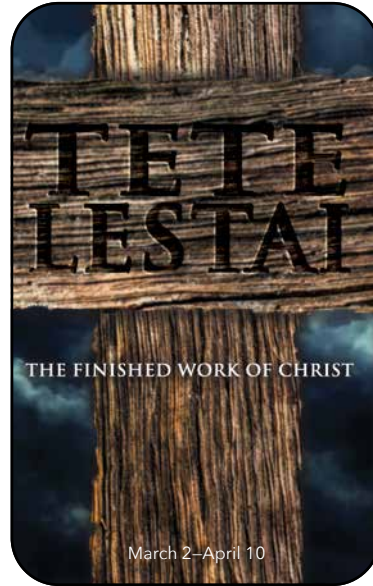


# Our 2022 Teaching



**BUILDING**  
A CHURCH THAT SERVES

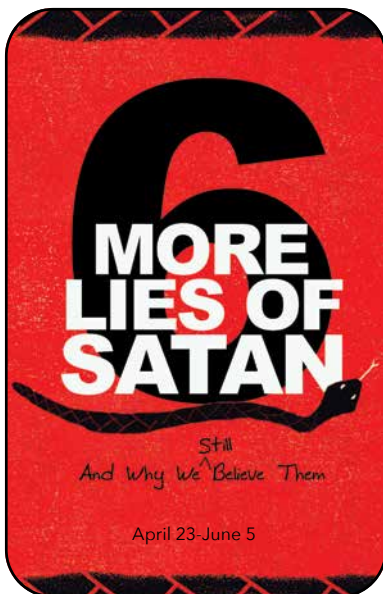
January 8-February 27



**TETE  
LESTAI**

THE FINISHED WORK OF CHRIST

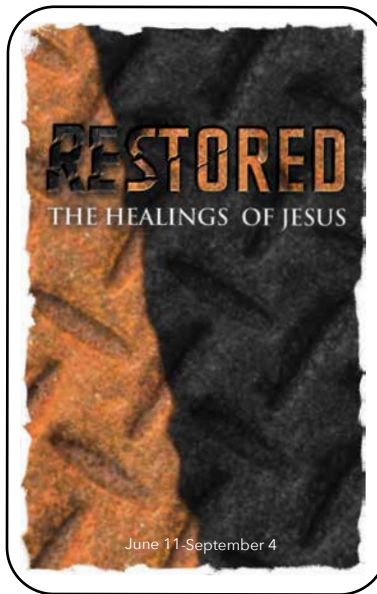
March 2-April 10



**MORE  
LIES OF  
SATAN**

Still  
And Why We Believe Them

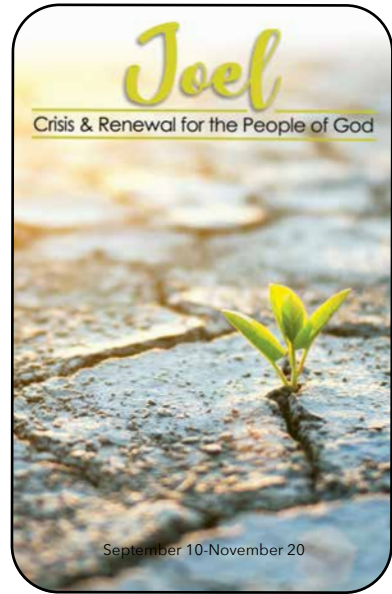
April 23-June 5



**RESTORED**

THE HEALINGS OF JESUS

June 11-September 4

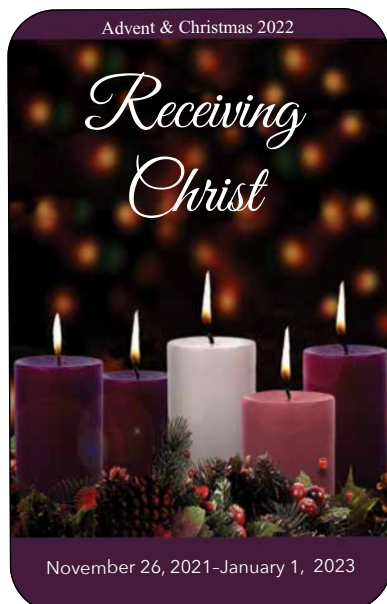


**Joel**

Crisis & Renewal for the People of God

September 10-November 20

Advent & Christmas 2022



*Receiving  
Christ*

November 26, 2021-January 1, 2023



**CHRIST  
CHURCH  
FOX CHAPEL**

*Sermons*

2022 Sermons & Bible Studies are available on our

**Podcast**

Search for "Christ Church Fox Chapel" wherever you get your podcasts or visit our app

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# OUR VESTRY



Jane Flaherty, Anne Malone, Catherine Parham, Zack Gray,  
Joe Nawrocki, Matt Beresik, Becky Lowe

### 2020-2023 Term

Jane Flaherty  
Becky Jordan Lowe

### 2021-2024 Term

Matt Beresik  
*Junior Warden*  
Joe Nawrocki  
*Treasurer*  
Catherine Parham  
*Senior Warden*

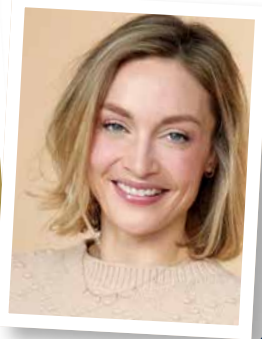
### 2022-2025 Term

Zachary Gray  
Anne Malone

**2023-2026 Term  
Nominees**  
Richard Cagley  
Alyssa Campbell  
Jane Flaherty



Richard



Alyssa

**Christ Church Fox Chapel**  
Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting

Because of COVID-19 concerns, two meetings were held, one after the Saturday evening service on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, the other between the two services on Sunday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Vestry members George Beluk, Matt Beresik, Zach Gray, Kris Kahn, Becky Lowe, Joe Nawrocki and Catherine Parham were present as were approximately 40 members of the Congregation along with the Rev. Alex Shuttleworth, the Rev. Ben Hughes, the full staff and Vestry Secretary Bill Gordon. Vestry member Jane Flaherty was unable to attend.

Alex noted that the Annual Meeting was started after the Saturday service and was continued until this date. Accordingly, Alex called the meeting back to order at 10:15 AM. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the Annual Meeting held January 31, 2021 were unanimously approved.

Alex reported that the Nominating Committee met on January 9<sup>th</sup> and voted unanimously to recommend that Zack Gray be nominated to a second 3-year term on the Vestry and that Anne Malone be nominated to a new 3-year term on the Committee, Anne having previously served in 2020. Ballots were distributed and collected after everyone had a chance to complete them. They will be counted along with absentee ballots and the result announced at a later date. Alex then thanked retiring Vestry members George Beluk and Kris Kann and Vestry Secretary Bill Gordon for their years of service.

Treasurer George Beluk reported that in 2021 income was healthy and expenses were on target which led to a year-end surplus. He indicated that capital reserves, donations and historic assets were used to make many improvements without impacting the operational budget. He noted that in 2022 planned giving and donations are up and many expenses have been further reduced to make up for the loss of the PPP loan. He also reported that after a 2-year freeze, cost-of-living salary increases are included for all employees in the 2022 Budget.

He then reviewed the 2021 and 2022 Budgets as follows:

<b>INCOME</b>	<b><u>2021 Budget</u></b>	<b><u>2021 Actual</u></b>	<b><u>2022 Budget</u></b>
Planned giving	\$464,000	\$456,500	\$487,000
Donation, plate & other	\$88,000	\$217,800	\$133,700
Legacy	\$0	\$0	\$0
Building/capital donation	\$0	\$23,500	\$0
Cell tower & investments	\$85,000	\$89,000	\$86,600
PPP "loan" or PRF	<u>\$74,000</u>	<u>\$74,000</u>	<u>\$37,000</u>
Total	\$711,000	\$860,700	\$744,300

George noted that planned giving was down a little but donations were up considerably as people joined, increased commitments in response to our membership campaign or otherwise gave sums we were not expecting. He also noted that a big chunk of our income from a one-time PPP "loan" received in 2020 and forgiven in 2021. Overall income was \$149,500 more than expected!

<b>EXPENSE</b>	<b><u>2021 Budget</u></b>	<b><u>2021 Actual</u></b>	<b><u>2022 Budget</u></b>
Planned giving	\$464,000	\$456,500	\$487,000
Pastoral	\$228,800	\$220,900	\$260,000 **
Music, Office & Education	\$191,400	\$188,100	\$178,000 **
Building & Grounds	\$155,600	\$161,400	\$165,500
Inside parish events	\$44,000	\$52,600 *	\$41,700
Outside parish costs & tax	\$91,400	\$90,800	\$96,600
Total***	\$711,200	\$713,800	\$741,800

\* Due to service equipment and small Christmas bonuses

\*\* Youth salary moved, no FT curate, but budget for new hire

\*\*\* Not including CRF spending, etc.

Alex reported that we spent more on broadcast equipment as it became clear that we needed a permanent solution for our service outreach and we needed to spend more on nursery care and coffee as things opened up. However, George noted that most categories were under budget which enabled overall expenses to come in just 0.3% over budget!

Alex noted that we continue to invest conservatively in mutual funds of stocks and bonds. He also reported that in 2021 we used \$75,000 of tightly restricted historic assets to make improvements to the property. He indicated that we used \$55,000 of Capital Reserve Funds to address security and deferred maintenance needs and \$56,500 of Building Fund donations to renovate the Meeting House and improve access. In spite of these expenditures, our total assets have increased by \$38,000! Some of the improvements made in 2021 include the following:

Accessibility and safety

- 7 new parking spaces by the door
- 2 blue-badge spaces
- New wheelchair path
- Security cameras
- 6 new security lights

Deferred maintenance

- Installed 2 new drains
- Thorns and bushes were cleared at the entrance
- New landscaped ornamental entrance
- New street name
- New street signs

New online equipment

- Improved sound desk
- Improved Internet connection
- New camera
- New podcast mics and “studio”
- New recorder

“New” Meeting House building

- Entrance lobby
- Chapel
- Meeting room
- 2 bathrooms
- Kitchen with coffee machine
- Garden and path
- Flexible furniture and TVs

Alex then gave a brief overview of the membership campaign conducted in the summer of 2021 that had the primary goals of welcoming new members, enabling growing members to recommit, including and reassuring isolated members and seeking out lost members and secondary goals of discovering who we are and what people need, resourcing the church appropriately and creating a

reported that as a result of this exercise we can say with confidence that we have 184 committed members plus another 20 probable members, 30 new regulars who have the potential to become members and 21 who are not sure! He also noted that our demographics have shifted dramatically from an average age ten years ago of over 70 to an average age today around 46 which approximates the average age of those living in Fox Chapel and indicated that the fact that our membership reflects the surrounding community is a sign of a healthy church.

Ben next discussed challenges and opportunities for service at Christ Church, noting that some ministries were struggling to recruit people while some folks wanted to serve but could not see a good opportunity to serve and he indicated that COVID created a “natural” break to consult and relaunch many things. As a result we identified “contribute” as a key component of membership in the Bylaws and recognized that Scripture also calls us to build a church that serves. He indicated that we created an online sign-up system, formed a new “Service Team” and identified 20 ways to serve, including Greeters, Readers, Servers, AV and Coffee/Hospitality. Additional opportunities for service are available in the nursery, children’s ministry, youth group, choir, mentor moms through MOPS, Blawnox Bible study, mission partners such as Kairos, Shepherd’s Heart, Uncommon Grounds Café and Urban Impact and simply doing what God is calling you to do. Ben indicated that ideas for future service include prayer teams, party teams, home groups, podcasts participation and hosting home gatherings with Alex noting that our podcasts are really becoming very popular, and he encouraged members of the Congregation to consider sharing something about their Christian walk using this format. Ben and Alex also encouraged members of the Congregation to pray and explore how God is gifting you and calling you for service and to talk to one of the service leaders (Greeters - Bill Gordon & Joe Nawrocki; Readers - Jim Edwards; Servers - Jane Flaherty; AV - Matt Beresik and Coffee Ministry - Desa Voelker) to explore how you can serve.

In response to a question from Richard Voelker, Alex indicated that the health of CCFC is quite good when compared to other denominations nationwide and is also doing better than other churches in the local area.

Another question was asked about using nametags and Alex indicated that the Vestry has had a lot of discussion about the pros and cons of using them but indicated that perhaps something can be done to address this issue in the future.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM following a short prayer.

Respectfully submitted,



William B. Gordon, Secretary

Approved by the Congregation this 29th day of January, 2023

Alex Shuttleworth, Rector

# RECTOR'S REPORT



Rev. Alex & Kat with their children,  
Hannah & Ben

In 2021, we renewed our baptismal vows and agreed to (re)commit, connect, and contribute to life together. 2022 was all about finding ways to make it happen.

## Our Teaching in 2022

As the pandemic entered the rear-view mirror, or at least the side windows, we began the year by studying 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy in a series that we called **Building a Church That Serves**. Although 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy is a book written to one specific leader, it shows how God calls and equips us all to contribute. It warns of the difficulties if we do, but also warns that our spiritual gifts will wither unless we use them. At the end of the series, we launched a new service team (see below and later in this report).

In our Lent series, **Tetelestai: The Finished Work of Christ**, we prepared for Easter by looking at the cross. I liked the graphic because usually when you see an image of the cross, it is up on a hill, far away, with space and sky around it. This one was tightly zoomed in, and that was deliberate as each week we sought to exposit just one specific facet of the cross; never feeling able to take it all in at once. If there was one thing we saw each week, it is the promise that the unfathomable work of Christ is full, perfect, and sufficient, a satisfaction that is completely finished already, presenting those of us who love Him, as holy and righteous before our redeemer and judge, by grace alone. We don't add to it and any attempts to do so, merely take away.

At the end of the series, Ben preached a great Easter sermon on the 500 witnesses of the resurrection, which I enjoyed. But what I think I enjoyed even more, was seeing him inflate and affix 500 balloons around the chancel as part of his children's talk. Whilst it did make the church look a little bit like a car dealership, it also made a good point: the events described in the bible were prophesied, fulfilled, and witnessed to by so many people all at once that the facts we proclaim must be true.

Leading up to Pentecost, we returned to a series from 2021. In **Six (more) Lies of Satan and Why We (still) Believe Them**, we focused on just one passage from Luke chapter 4 where Jesus, in the wilderness, was tempted by Satan, identifying an unbelievable six lies from just three things he said. The enemy loves to isolate us using every tactic possible (for example being offended, challenged, bored, tired, busy, guilty) and then once he has us on our own, he seeks to become our own little personal preacher, "educating" us to see the world his way. We revisited this series because another major aim of 2022, alongside contributing to the church, was creating more ways for us to connect with one another.

In the Summer in **Restored: The Healings of Jesus**, we saw what an enormous variety of healings there are in scripture. Sometimes they involve physical touch, sometimes just a word, and sometimes Jesus is not even there at all. Sometimes they involve faith on the part of the person being healed, but sometimes that person has all but given up. Sometimes it's a prominent person being healed, but sometimes the recipient is an outcast. Then, as for the healing itself, sometimes they are physical, but sometimes they are more emotional, spiritual, ritual, financial, or even mental. As for the cause, sometimes the problem is demonic in origin, but sometimes the person is just sick. The only pattern we were able to find after 12 weeks of study was Jesus himself: as we say "every heal is a reveal of who He really is".

In the Fall, we started a challenging series from the book of Joel. It's one of the least read books in scripture, and few of us can remember ever hearing a sermon on it, let alone a series like this. But in **Joel: Crisis and Renewal for the**



**People of God**, we learned the important lesson that often our faith is renewed when we find ourselves at the lowest point. We learned that it's OK to complain to God and lament our suffering, and we even learned how to do it. Above all, we learned how to read Old Testament prophecy properly, discovering (1) that prophecies often use key biblical themes to situate them within the greater story of God, and (2) one single prophecy can be fulfilled multiple different times, multiple different ways, all pointing to the end of days, when in one last and final fulfillment, the Lord will come again to judge the living and the dead.

This was the perfect lead-in to Advent, where again we visited the prophecies about Jesus and saw how he fulfilled them all so clearly.

## **Launching New Things**

As I say above, 2022 was all about finding ways to help us to serve as we've been called and equipped by God, and ways to get to know one another more deeply as we worship together.

### **Contribute**

Although contribution is a key Christian idea, and one of just a few basic things our bylaws say as they define membership, the reality is that it's a lot easier to consume than to contribute, unless someone shows you where you're needed.

In 2021, at the renewal of our baptismal vows, we joined or rejoined the church, and agreed to give and serve, so in 2022, we built a new sign-up system and launched a new service team of greeters, readers, servers, AV, and coffee ministers to help make it happen.

About 100 people signed up and I have loved seeing us try new things and figure out how God is shaping us for service here. You can read more about these ministries later in this report but in short, it was a success. As was the Advent choir. It was a joy to see the pews full, and to hear the laughter of the rehearsals each week. I was also very grateful to two people who helped prune and tidy the flowerbeds in front of the church, and for a change culture as these things become more normative.

### **Connect**

At the renewal of our vows we also made a promise to connect with one another more deeply and more frequently. I've loved seeing the way that people dwell at church long after the service has ended and it's been exciting to see the men's ministry, women's ministry, adult forum, MOPS, Mothers at Prayer, and Blawnox bible study flourish. But we've also known for some time that what we really lacked here was a successful home group ministry where people who are very different to one another can become friends. There's something precious about developing Christian relationships slowly, in the intimacy of a home like this, and then bringing those relationships into the sanctuary before the wider body. So, in 2022 we launched three home groups which have been going incredibly well. In 2023 our aim would be for every member of the church to be a member of at least one small group of some kind, so that no one is ever left out.

## **Renovations & Repairs**

We are entering the 9<sup>th</sup> year of a 20-year plan to renovate, develop, or repair pretty much every part of our property, after several decades of deferred maintenance, and wear and tear. God has blessed us with some historic reserves which can only be used on projects like these, and several year-end surpluses which we've been able to use, in part, to accelerate our plans.

We never want to fundraise for boring stuff like this, and in 2022 we were excited to do a lot of boring things! We re-pointed both chimneys on the main building (one of which was held up by gravity) and fixed several leaks in the roof, and problems with gutters and drains. We also replaced all the siding around the third-floor dormers. Next, we removed four decaying oak trees outside the Parish Hall that had destroyed the drains and were damaging the building, and we constructed a new courtyard which we used several times for parties and receptions. Elsewhere on site, we installed a new French drain to manage water run-off, built a new trash area, and we added security lighting,

more security cameras, a hearing assistance system for the sanctuary, and completed the kitchen with a new stove, extraction, and fire suppression system. At the Rectory, we installed new garage doors, a back-up power generator (it suffers a lot of power outages as the supply comes through the woods) and we repaired several areas of damage from historic water ingress or bathroom leaks. Finally, five days before Christmas, and with a “once-in-a-generation” freeze on the way, both sanctuary furnaces blew up. In God’s grace, we already had some money saved up to begin our renovations in that part of the building, and a local contractor put his entire team on the job to have us up and running for Christmas Eve. As I say: “boring”.

The Vestry takes the view that “staff is more important than stuff” but every time we have fixed a thing, it has enabled us to function even better as a church. For example, in October we held three big events in the new courtyard space outside the Parish Hall, in November the Adult Forum, meeting in the new Meeting House, was so full, that we ran out of chairs, and in December we served 175 bacon, egg, and cheese muffins from our new kitchen stove\*. This sort of thing is fun and it’s part of our vision for what church should be: a community church preaching the gospel. We’ve often been able to muddle through but as we grow, clearly we need the right space to thrive.



*\*sausage was also available*

As we approach the half-way point in a 20-year vision, this leaves just three major jobs to do: the road; sanctuary; and Parish Hall, which you can read about on the next page.

## Pastoral Changes

In the Summer we elected our new bishop, and I’m impressed by what he and the team are doing at the Diocese. Most of you know that I avoid diocesan jobs like a pandemic (is that a phrase yet?) but I was pleased to join the Commission on Ministry, interviewing and selecting new clergy. I was also pleased to join a task force working on a new employment guide for clergy. They’re both things I care about and would like to see done well. Until we have the resources to hire another training curate, this feels like a good way to contribute to the wider province.

As for the rest of the team here, I’m so proud of how they’ve handled our exit from the most disruptive crisis in two generations. We really are blessed with great staff. Several of them have had a tough year in multiple ways, physically and emotionally, but they’ve loved each other through their crises, and our church through one as well. In 2023, four (technically two) of them are having babies. Praise God for new life, and His infinite blessings.

Finally, I’m really pleased to say that in June, Tami will be increasing her hours, taking on a new half-time job visiting even more families and our oldest members.



*Rev. Alex & Kat with their children,  
Hannah & Ben*

## Personal Note

On a personal level, it’s been an encouraging and fruitful year for me and my family. Ben started his first job at Chick-Fil-A, Hannah achieved Highest Honors at middle school, Kat’s ministries grew, my parents seemed more well than they were during the height of the pandemic and our family on Kat’s side were able to be with us for several extended stays. I had a small health scare with my heart, but it turned out to be a side effect of reflux and nothing serious and the care I received was excellent.

In 2023 I will need to apply either to extend my green card, or apply for citizenship of these United States. It’s a challenge to move countries, to learn new words and foods, and ideas, to measure distances in inches and temperatures in Fahrenheit, and to be corrected every time I say “Isaiah”. But it’s a privilege to be welcomed as a friend, to park outside of any store I want to go into, and to have a actual dentist examine my teeth using both equipment and training (don’t ask!). America has spoiled me. You’re fun, optimistic, lovely, brave, faithful people (with nice smelling mouths) and this really does feel like home to me now. Thank you for having me!

## Current Issues

### 2023 Building Project

This year we will be repaving all of our roads and parking lots, taking care of substantial water run-off problems, potholes and the strange melting tar pit where we park our cars (and occasionally lose a shoe). It is in bad repair in several places, and at school pick-up there are some serious bottle-necks. We are also aware that several of our sidewalks are crumbling, are significantly out of code, and need to have snow cleared by hand because they are too narrow for a machine. We should be grateful that in God's blessing, this enormous project will be completed using money we have been able to save up and with the co-operation of the school next door.

We are also launching a building development project which we hope to complete in two phases over the next few years as well.

The Sanctuary and Parish Hall have poor sound, lighting, décor, heating, cooling, insulation, storage, visibility, functional space, accessibility, and safety. Indeed the hall even lacks a light switch! Both spaces have a lot of deferred maintenance that we need to address soon, but it feels like a poor use of money just to make repairs, when we could address some bigger issues at the same time.

In the sanctuary, our biggest problem is that some people cannot access the communion rail because of all the steps, the chancel is crowded and even though it's a small room there are several places where it's hard to see or hear very well.

In the hall, the stage is too high to use, and takes up too much space. And we lack a dedicated children's ministry space, even though there is a lot of wasted space behind the stage. These spaces could be reconfigured far more efficiently.

We have a plan to address all of these issues, whilst maintaining the feel of the existing church and still allowing for further expansion in the future should we ever need it. Here you can see some of the problems and some beautiful renderings of what these spaces could become.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev'd. Alex  
Rector

## Vision for the Future





## VESTRY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Members of the 2023 Nominating Committee, Matt Beresik, Becky Lowe and Catherine Parham, Chair; Marion Ahlers and Jesse Egeler (*by phone*) met on January 8, 2023.

We reviewed Luke's account of the choosing of the Seven when the Apostles realized they could not do everything for everyone in the growing church and asked the congregation for help:

*Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. Acts 6:3*

We unanimously voted to nominate Alyssa Campbell and Richard Cagley for the 2023-2026 term, and Jane Flaherty to be re-elected for a second term. No other nominees were presented either before or during the meeting. Having prayed that the nominees and the entire vestry would be blessed by God and seek his will for our decisions in the next year, we gave thanks for Becky's service and adjourned.

### **Richard Cagley**

Richard came to Pittsburgh from Texas in 2003. He grew up in a Christian home but really began growing in his faith in his 30's after attending an adult Bible study at church and Bible Study Fellowship.

Richard earned a Bachelor of Science in Finance from the University of Tulsa and an MBA in Marketing and Finance from the University of Texas. Richard and his family attended CCFC for ten years after moving to Pittsburgh at which time he co-led adult Bible studies, the Alpha program, a small group and served on the Vestry. He and his family rejoined CCFC in 2021 and has been involved with the Men's and Adult Forum groups and recently the Advent Choir. He and his wife, Jackie, own the Zoup!! Restaurant and he runs a marketing consulting business and serves as an Area Advisor for Bible Study Fellowship. He and Jackie have four children (Noah, Camille, Jonah and Micah) who enjoy, and are blessed by each other, when together.

### **Alyssa Campbell**

Alyssa and her family—husband Caleb and children Caleb (10), Ella (8) and Will (6)—moved to Pittsburgh five years ago. With her youngest starting kindergarten this past Fall, Alyssa felt especially called to give more time to ministry and outreach and prayed that the Lord show her where she could best serve. He has answered these prayers in many ways as she now serves as Committee Chair for Fox Chapel Young Life and the whole family is loving hosting a monthly home group with our Christ Church family. She tells us about her journey to faith below:

Growing up in a home with a Catholic mother and a Jewish father, I struggled to find my faith as religion seemed more like something you picked based on what you “liked” more versus being based on any one truth. I always believed in God, but I wasn't really sure what that meant or how He felt about me. After attending college at the University of Pennsylvania and then graduate school at Washington University in St. Louis for a Masters degree in Healthcare Administration, I moved to TX to work at MD Anderson Cancer Center. It was in TX that I came to know Jesus at the age of 26, and I realized the “something” in my life that I always felt was missing and had been looking for had been Him all along. I believe Jesus had his hand on me my whole life, and I can look back now and see the cumulative impact all of the big and little moments, both good and bad, had on me. I thank the Lord every day for pursuing me like He did. I met, fell in love with and married Caleb while in TX, and we went on to live in Rhode Island and New Hampshire before making the move to PA to be close to my parents. God has tested and strengthened us along the way, and we are so much better for it.



Catherine Parham,  
*Senior Warden*

## REPORTS FROM THE WARDENS

We have spent the year continuing the process of opening up as the pandemic receded, in ways both big and small. The Vestry's discussions ranged from the various methods of distributing communion, to the possible ways of reviving the choir, to looking at designs for renovating the sanctuary and perhaps the hall.

We focused our attention on responding to the wonderful gift of new members being added to the body. It was clear that many of these people were interested in and signing up for service. We see them each Sunday reading the lesson, organizing the coffee, but we know we do not know each other or our interests/gifts well enough. The new home groups are a great way of meeting and deepening connection with each other.

We have had extensive discussions and prayers about the relationship with Shady Side Academy which needs more space; this will continue to be an issue in the coming year. The Vestry voted unanimously to approve the recommendation of the Parish Discernment Committee that Tami Fire should be referred to the diocese to continue the process for becoming ordained. Please support and pray for her as she discerns a call to the Diaconate.

As well as doing the business of the Vestry, we have determined to focus more intentionally on our spiritual needs and those of the CCFC family, by setting aside meeting time for prayer.

Becky Lowe's time has come, her term is up! We shall miss her, her wonderful suggestions and her keen sense of what's right. Thank you, Becky.

We look forward to welcoming two new members. Please keep us in your prayers as we seek God's wisdom and to do what's best.

Respectfully submitted,  
Catherine Parham  
*Senior Warden*



Matt Beresik  
*Junior Warden*

I will simply begin by expressing my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to serve our church family alongside such wonderful people. As Catherine has stated, CCFC has experienced much growth and many blessings over the past year. We are off to a great start in 2023. I am personally very grateful for the active response to the Men's Group and home groups in our congregation. Our staff leadership and vestry team have approached not only the needs of the church, but those of one another in a consistently prayerful manner. Several significant decisions will need to be made in the coming months. We look forward to seeing God's hand at work. A special welcome to our new members. And, thank you to all who have sought ways to commit, connect, and contribute! Please uphold in prayer all of our CCFC leaders, ministers, operations staff, vestry members, and their families.

In Christ,  
Matt Beresik  
*Junior Warden*

# REPORT FROM THE ASSISTANT MINISTER



The Rev. Ben Hughes

It occurred to me the other day that this was my first year as a fully funded full-time pastor. Although I have been ordained for more than five years, this year I was given the opportunity to lean into my vocation in a way that I never have before. I am deeply grateful.

It seems that 2022 was a year of *growth and grief*, both in our congregation and in my own walk with God. I would like to say something about each.

## Growth

I have enjoyed watching our congregation grow in attendance and in connectedness over the past year. It's hard to believe that roughly a year ago we had no home groups and no service teams, the Men's Group was brand new, and I still hadn't figured out where to put my office furniture. It has been a busy year.

The winter and early Spring saw an unprecedented influx of new families who have been eager to serve and cultivate authentic community. Following our sermon series on membership, we held a new members' class talking about what it means to commit, connect, and contribute at CCFC. Following the class, we welcomed a record 71 new members!

I have never seen this kind of congregational growth before, and I have pondered the meaning of it. Is our growth nothing more than a symptom of a post-pandemic reshuffling that has been happening throughout the American church? Or is there a movement of the Spirit of God underneath all of this? Why have we flourished in a time when so many churches have struggled to keep their doors open?

I have no doubt that God is at work among us, but I want to be careful not to equate numerical growth with revival. We worship a Savior who garnered thousands of followers in his earthly ministry, only to be ultimately abandoned in the end by every last one of them. He referred to the cross – his rock-bottom moment of ministry decline and abandonment – as his glorification (John 12:23).

I am encouraged by the progress that our congregation has seen in the last year, but let's be careful not to worship growth. Gospel renewal means growth in brokenness, repentance, vulnerability, prayer, and trust. It means growth in joy. Numerical growth can and often does accompany this, but obsession with attendance puts the cart before the horse. Let's keep our eyes on Jesus and seek to be a church that does God's work God's way.

Alex had the wisdom and discernment to reinforce this point by leading our congregation through a study of the prophet Joel this fall. Joel is a frequently overlooked in sermons and Bible reading plans. The series helped me to see that God's end goal is not success but joy. He wants to fill us with himself. God used our study of the book of Joel to deepen my understanding of this important truth.

Speaking of sermons, I have really enjoyed preaching and teaching at CCFC. Our congregation has grown in Biblical knowledge, and your commitment to the Word of God has challenged me to dig deeper in sermon preparation. By my estimates I preached 24 sermons and led at least 50 small group Bible studies last year. The intensive work of studying, mapping ideas, praying, and organizing my thoughts has challenged me and showed me the richness of God's Word.

Part of this process has involved our podcast—the fastest growing conservative, evangelical, charismatic Anglican podcast in the entire Fox Chapel area. The podcast has aided me in ways that are difficult to quantify. It has helped to process ideas out loud before writing, and it has set a tone for collaboration on the preaching team. I hope and pray that our work in this ministry of the Word has edified you too.

Aside from the preaching and teaching, my job is divided between leading our youth group, men’s ministry, overseeing home groups and SWAG (a youth Bible study), general pastoral care, and contributing to the staff team. For specific discussion of CCYM, men’s ministry, and home groups be sure to check out the rest of the report.

My family is growing too! Our third child – a daughter – is due in early February. Jenna and I have been busy organizing diaper changing stations and practicing zone defense. With the new baby we will be outnumbered.



*Ben & Jenna with their children, Samuel & Asa*

Largely to make space for our growing army, we bought our first ever home this fall. We now live in Cheswick—much closer to our church community. I was pleasantly surprised to find that several members of our congregation live on my street. Our new home has enough space for our boys, Sam (almost 5) and Asa (almost 2) to run and play, and it has opened the door for us to practice hospitality in a new way. I am excited to see how God uses this new space in the year to come.

## **Grief**

I think it is worth mentioning that both my personal life and my ministry underwent a seismic shift following the unexpected death of my father in early August. My dad was my closest male friend, my role model, my gospel mentor, my mountain biking buddy, and more. I feel the loss of him acutely. I am grateful to the staff team and to the congregation for supporting my family and me in a season of grief.

Only time will tell how God uses this loss for His glory, but in the past months I have seen two immediate fruits: grief has taught me conviction and compassion.

I have a newfound conviction of the weight and urgency of gospel ministry. My father’s death has reminded me that our time in this life is short, and that there is no sense in fussing about meaningless things when eternity is pressing in upon us. Life is short and God is knocking at the door. I am often reminded of the apostle Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 9:16: “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”

I have also been reminded of Jesus’ compassion toward those who suffer. In my season of mourning I have ministered and received ministry from others in our congregation who have known loss and suffering. This is one of the many blessings of Christian community: that you don’t have to suffer alone. A friend of mine used to say that “people come into church crawling on their hands and knees over broken glass.” It sounds dramatic, but it’s an important point. Most everyone we know bears wounds of one kind or another, and our only hope for healing is in the pierced hands of our Wounded Physician.

# MINISTRIES, MISSION & OUTREACH



Josh, Tami & Grace

## 2022 Attendance

Overall: 684

Weekly Average: 13

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Children's Ministry has been GROWING! We have seen consistency as well as growth in numbers and faith. It is such a blessing having Tami Fire to help the students worship God through Music, coloring, and teaching them the value of liturgy. Her ability to meet the students where they are and get them to see where they can be is an amazing gift. Grace Lowe has been a blessing with helping with kids when they are having a tough morning, she can be very caring and compassionate with the students. They respond to her very well and she takes on her responsibilities with gentleness. We walked through the bible a few different times focusing on God keeping his promises from Genesis to Revelation. After that we looked at trusting God on who he says he is since he keeps his promises. One of my favorite things we did with the students was walking through how to share the Gospel, what is the Gospel, why we share it, and what it means to believe in God.

Thank you and God bless,

Josh Gerdes

Tami Fire

*Children's Minister*

*Assistant Children's Minister*



## Missions & Outreach Committee

Christ calls us to serve the poor, hungry, homeless, and imprisoned with our time and money. In addition to all the time that our members spent working with our mission partners, it was also a privilege to help fund the following organizations in 2022:

Church Army (Uncommon Grounds Café)  
Kairos Prison Ministry  
Shepherd's Heart

Trinity School for Ministry  
Urban Impact Foundation

**Urban Impact** is astonishingly effective at what they do, and we are blessed to partner with them through Josh and Kirsten Gerdes who both work there, with Josh fundraising his salary as an urban missionary. Working on the North Side, this year they served 1,875 students, providing 25,331 meals, and seeing enormous gains in literacy and math among 1st-5th graders. In terms of spiritual growth, they had 613 gospel responses, and baptized 13 people. This year, Anna St Jean also joined their team, giving up the opportunity of a well-paid job as a teacher in the secular world. Although our financial support of Anna was just a token of what we'd like to have given, we were thrilled to partner with her as well in 2022.

**Shepherd's Heart** describes the year as "a year of challenges and isolation" as they recover from the effects of so many churches and non-profits being closed in the year before. This led to a significant rise in mental illness and addiction, but Pastor Mike writes that even so, "Shepherd's Heart was open every day providing a safety net for food, transportation, shelter, counseling, love, encouragement, and much more" at their facility on Pride Street.



The team at **Uncommon Grounds Café** had a challenging year with the transition of Herb and Angel Bailey into a more senior role within Church Army. But the café, garden, and women's ministry in Aliquippa are now well-served by Andrenna Williams who was commissioned at St Stephen's Church by our diocese this year. They continue to do amazing work, especially among those with substance addiction in the area.

I'd especially like to thank Jesse for his presentation and Becky O'Connor for serving on the mission and outreach committee; keeping in touch with our major partners and advocating for a bigger, better budget.

Rev'd Alex  
*Committee Chair*

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## Kairos Prison Ministry



The mission of Kairos Prison Ministry is to share the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to impact the hearts and lives of those impacted by incarceration. Kairos Inside brings together inmates for a 3 ½ day Weekend led by same gender Kairos volunteers. The Weekend is based on a series of talks, discussions, chapel meditations, and prayer. The concept is to build the Christian community inside the institution where the inmates pray and fellowship together weekly. Members of the CCFC family serve as volunteers at two men's prisons (SCI-Greene and SCI-Fayette) and one women's prison (SCI-Cambridge Springs). Kairos returned to action in 2022 following 2-year shutdown of all Volunteer Programs by PA DOC during the COVID-19 pandemic. Early in 2022 weekly Prayer & Share Fellowship activities were re-opened and Kairos Weekends were held in the Fall of 2022 at both men's prisons. No Weekend was held at the women's prison in 2022, but a Weekend is scheduled for 2023. Jim Edwards is the newest CCFC Member to volunteer for a weekend. Other veterans active in 2022 were Susan Tusick and Stu & Gail Simpson. CCFC strongly supports Kairos Prison Ministry through commitment to Prayer Vigils, children's art and financial contributions.

Stu Simpson  
*Ministry Leader*

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## Urban Impact Summer Camp

This past year was a blessing. Our Summer Day Camp served 135 students in rising 1st – 6th grades. At camp we walked through the Bible and talked about the different names of God (our provider, our healer, shepherd, King) and walked through the Old Testament, Psalms, and New Testament seeing where God provided, healed, shepherd, was King. We had the blessing of the CCFC Men's Group help us with moving into camp. There was also group of congregants that came together and provided a meal for our summer interns. We also received several snack donations and water donations. This year has been one of growth for our staff and students and I am so grateful for the partnership, love, and prayers of this church body.



**2022 Stats**  
Meals Served: 25,331  
Baptisms: 13  
Youth's Served: 1,875  
Gospel Responses: 613

Josh Gerdes  
*Urban Missionary*



## Music Ministry

Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord, give praise, O servants of the Lord, who stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of God! Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good; sing to his name, for it is pleasant! For the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel as his own possession. *Psalm 135*



Robert Fire

I am struck recently with the idea that, for those of us who claim to be apprentices of Jesus, praising the LORD is not just a nice idea or a suggestion for us to do when and if we feel like it. Instead, we are commanded to praise the LORD. Why? Because God is worthy and deserving of all praise; because He is holy and yet He is for us; because praising Him, worshiping Him alone, is for our good. Worship is a fundamental longing in us. If we don't worship God, we will worship something else, which is not for our good. We worship Him because He is good. He is love. He is faithful. He is gracious. He is just. He calls us His possession! He inhabits our praise and He ministers to us when we worship Him.

I believe that we have been obedient at CCFC in singing with loud shouts, playing skillfully, and singing to His name. We are a singing congregation, and that fact brings me joy! I hope that it brings you joy. We know that true worship brings Him joy. On any average Sunday at CCFC, regardless of how we might feel, we sing and play with energy and passion, and God is present. His presence is changing us individually and in community as a body. Thanks be to God!



I am grateful, as are so many, to Kirsten Gerdes for another year of excellent, beautiful singing and for her gentle leadership. Thank you to Amy Beresik for her willingness to joyfully step in and play so that the Fires can be away a few weeks during the year.

Thank you to Matt Beresik for skillfully playing the trumpet throughout the year. Thank you to the members of the Advent choir who made the commitment to rehearse and provide musical leadership at four services during Advent. Thank you to you, the congregation, who continue to sing with enthusiasm every week, whether we sing old favorites or new songs that we have just learned.

May our musical worship continue to be a glimpse and a foretaste of the eternal worship that awaits us:

And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great. *Revelation 19: 4-5*

## Pastoral Care Ministry

Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you are also in the body. *Hebrews 13: 1-3*

It is a privilege and a joy to serve as Pastoral Care Minister at Christ Church, and I am grateful to Alex and the Vestry for giving me the opportunity to officially represent our congregation through visitation. I give thanks to God, who equips me for this work daily.

Over the past months, I have visited current and former members of our congregation who live at residential care centers in Verona, PA and Cabot, PA. During our visits, which occur two to three times per month, we read the Bible, sing, talk, and pray together, and we also share in ministering to each other simply by being together. Sometimes the person I'm visiting is having a bad day or wants to rest but still appreciates just having another person nearby. This time spent together is a quiet but powerful reminder that God is present with us; that we don't need to always be doing, doing, doing; that there is holy silence and space to simply be His beloved.

In between visits, I send many cards and letters to members of our congregation, and these notes often include colorful Scripture pages that the kids in Children's Ministry created. I help facilitate the delivery of encouraging, Scriptural messages from our Children's Ministry to those in prison, as well. We thank Gail and Stu Simpson for the opportunity to extend Pastoral Care to those in Kairos Ministry and to involve the children in living out Hebrews 13:3.

In addition to my intended visits, I always find that the Lord has prepared additional "surprise" appointments for me. For instance, in December, I got lost in the maze of hallways, and a helpful nurse guided me to the area for residents with memory loss. I had never been there or met those folks before, but we had a great time singing hymns together for a while. On another occasion, I passed a nurse and a resident, who was clearly agitated, in the hallway. I've gotten to know the resident (who is not associated with CCFC) a bit simply by being around, and she seemed to recognize me. The nurse asked if I would sing with her to help calm her agitation, and we did. It was a precious, sacred moment. I do not "sentimentalize" ministry to those in need. I do recognize the power, grace, and love of God that is shared when we simply show up.

It has also been a tremendous joy to open the doors of the Meeting House, which is most certainly NOT a desolate place, on Thursdays for the service of Morning Prayer. As we declare the truth of Scripture aloud and pray together, we are built up and knitted together as the body of Christ and prepared and equipped in the Spirit to serve God.

I encourage anyone who wishes to join in Morning Prayer to come to the Meeting House on Thursdays at 7:00 a.m. Likewise, anyone who would like to be visited or knows someone who would like to be visited is heartily encouraged to contact me at [tami@christchurchfoxchapel.org](mailto:tami@christchurchfoxchapel.org).

I pray that in 2023 God will provide more hours and opportunities to be his hands and feet in the world around us. All praise to him forever and ever!



Tami Fire  
Pastoral Care Minister



## Youth Ministry & SWAG

I have served in one form or another of youth ministry for most of my adult life, and yet I am continually caught off guard by just how quickly students grow. It seems only last year that the members of our youth group were young kids. I towered over them. Oh, the difference a year makes!

I tower no more.

It is a privilege to walk with the young people of our church through their formative years, and I am glad to report that they have grown in more than mere stature. In 2022 I saw our students start fresh at new schools, become gainfully employed, begin to serve in the church, welcome foster siblings into their homes, perform significant roles in school plays, and greet a host of other challenges. Additionally, this year I saw our students grow together as a community.

Our year started with a baptism. One of our students, Trace, wanted to formally commit his life to following and trusting Jesus, so we held a special Sunday evening service to baptize him. Despite the frigid January weather, he was baptized outside in a horse trough full of warm water. It was a beautiful moment. And don't worry; he didn't catch a cold.

Through the winter and early spring months we studied the patterns of the early Christians in the book of Acts, we went as a group to support a few of our students in a performance of High School Musical at Dorseyville Middle School, and we went on a retreat to Laurel Hill State Park. In my time as a youth pastor I have found that weekend retreats have a unique power to form community and provide opportunities for students to decompress and encounter God. Our time at Laurel Hill's Huffman Lodge was no exception. The group stayed busy with snow tubing, hiking, and playing group games, but we also had plenty of unstructured time to build relationships.

In the summer we created the greatest Slip & Slide in the history of Slip & Slides. On a rainy day in July we stretched three hundred foot-long tarps down the hill in front of the church, covered them in dish soap, and hurled ourselves down at astonishing speed. The best part was when students hit a bump at the bottom of the hill and went airborne. Everyone had grass-burn the next day, but thankfully no one was hurt.

Throughout the summer we also had an overnight retreat at the church, served at North Hills Community Outreach, completed a high ropes course, and had a cookout at the Hughes House. Summer is often a more relaxed time in youth ministry, and we try to focus on building relationships and reaching out to new students.

As students went back to school we returned to our regular rhythm of food, games, worship, and study. On a typical Sunday evening students gather in the Meeting House to play a community-building game and have pizza together, before going into "chapel"—our time of worship, study, and prayer.

This Fall we worked our way through the prophet Jonah. Most of our students have encountered Jonah before, but Christian children's literature invariably simplifies the book beyond all recognition. Jonah cannot be reduced to a simple moral lesson about obeying God; it addresses our cowardice, hypocrisy, prejudice, and spiritual apathy. And ultimately, Jonah points to the scandal of grace—that God is merciful when we are not.



As I wrestle over how to disciple our students, teach them the gospel, and usher them into adulthood, I often feel that the odds are stacked against us. The Barna group found that the average 15-23 year-old church kid consumes 2,767 hours of screen media per year, but spends only 153 hours a year on spiritual engagement (reading the bible, going to church, praying, youth group, etc.). What does it take to overcome to the deleterious effects of what Barna calls “Digital Babylon”? I’m not sure, but I have to think it entails more than 153 hours a year.

In a lot of ways I feel that I am back to the drawing board at the beginning of 2023. I am reminded that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable, and that Christ is in the business of calling people out of Babylon. He is not daunted by our cultural moment, and I believe he has powerful things in store for our students. I covet your prayers as we continue the important work of teaching and discipling the next generation.

One final note: I am grateful to the many staff and volunteer leaders who have given their time and their hearts to invest in our students: Catherine Parham, Caleb Campbell, Lou Antosz, Thomas Clement, Mark Fire, Mike Starz, Jenna Hughes, Kat Shuttleworth, Matt Beresik, Corrie Passavant, and others. CCYM could not exist without you.

Yours in Christ,  
The Rev. Ben Hughes      Jenna Hughes  
Youth Minister              Asst. Youth Minister



# SMALL GROUPS & STUDIES



## Adult Forum

The Adult Forum meets in the Meeting House on the first Sunday of every month between the services to study the passages of the day.

This space, with comfortable chairs, good lighting, readable bibles, refreshments served by our ever-growing coffee ministry team and childcare provided, has continued to help the group to grow. In November we actually ran out of chairs in the building, which is a wonderful problem to have.



But for all the little things we've done to help the group to grow, I think the real story is the hunger of our congregation which just seems to be more and more interested in growing in faith and deepening the kind of godly relationships that always develop in a setting like this. I have come to view it as another kind of small group. So, if home groups, or the men's or women's ministries don't easily work with your schedule, the Adult Forum is always a great option: you can come to as many or as few as you like, and no preparation is required.

In 2022, we also held two special sessions on using Bible Software to enhance our study of scripture and a session on the new Book of Common Prayer, its history, successes and failures (as I see them). Part of our vision as church is to continue the Prayerbook and reformation tradition of putting the word of God into everyone's hands so that anyone can become a student and a teacher of scripture for themselves. As much as I loathe many aspects of modern technology, I have to say that the ability to acquire an entire pastor's bookshelf on your phone, for the price of a 2022 tank of gas, is an amazing thing that no other generation has ever had before.



In 2023, we look forward to more time together and to running another special class on the Book of Common Prayer, this time on how to use it for personal devotion or family prayer.

Rev'd Alex

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## Blawnox Bible Study

This is a group of residents of the Blawnox highrise with whom we meet every other week to look into Scripture, get to know each other, pray for one another and occasionally sing carols together. This year we studied the book of Romans and are currently working on meeting and getting closer to the Holy Spirit.

The group has experienced some quite difficult times recently, including the deaths of two of our long time members who will be missed; happily they both firmly believed

they were going to Jesus. There was also a period of hostility and unrest among various tenants within the building that affected people.

Gail Simpson is my faithful, steady comrade in this adventure. I am grateful for her and for Mary Reina's assistance with her laptop!

Many thanks also to Alex and Ben for their support; their presence at a meeting is always a special occasion for the group and for us.

Catherine Parham  
*Ministry Leader*

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## Home Groups

This fall we announced what we called an experiment in home fellowship. To be honest, I really wasn't sure how it was going to go. Fox Chapel has been called an "anti-community" where people go to get away from other people. I have found over the years that Pittsburghers are often reticent to practice home fellowship because of busyness, shame, and a kind of tribal mentality that pushes us into isolation. Throughout past few years, however, I have heard a common refrain in our church: "when are we going to start having home groups?"



To respond to this need/movement-of-the-Spirit-of-God, we launched three Home Groups, each meeting monthly to share a meal, study the Scriptures, and pray for one another. The formula is simple, and the goal is modest: we want to establish groups that are approachable, intergenerational, informal, and Gospel-centered.

So far more than eighty people have attended our home groups, and more seem to be joining every month. We are currently having discussions about starting another group to keep up with the demand. It's a great problem to have.



My hope and prayer is that in the coming year home groups would grow to be an even more central to the culture of our church, and that many would come to know Jesus better by following Him in community.

If you are not yet in a Home Group, I wholeheartedly recommend that you go to our app or website and sign up to attend. You are truly welcome here.

Rev. Ben

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## Men's Ministry

The sustained fellowship, enthusiasm, and spiritual engagement of CCFC's men has surpassed all my expectations over the past year. What started as an experiment in the fall of 2021 has blossomed into an authentic community of men who are willing to be vulnerable, take responsibility in their lives, and apply the gospel their lives.



The group meets monthly on a Saturday evening for fellowship and Bible study. Men of all age groups, temperaments, careers, and socioeconomic circumstances have come and fit right in. It is one of the most welcoming groups of which I have ever been a part.

Though I am the group's leader, several different men have facilitated our discussions and provided leadership in other ways. I have enjoyed seeing friendships and accountability groups form organically as the men of our church take initiative to grow in Christ. Various service opportunities are in the works, and I have even caught wind that they are planning a retreat!

Rev. Ben



MOPS

## Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)

Fox Chapel MOPS (Mother's of Preschoolers) meets bi-weekly on Wednesdays from 9:30-11:30 am. Our group moved to Christ Church over the summer of 2021. The staff at CCFC was fantastic, so accommodating and so helpful. Several of our moms and mentors are members at Christ Church and we are very thankful for their partnership with our organization. We were a small group that first year with around 20 women including our mentor moms, but we are growing having added nearly 10 moms this past year. We are also re-launching MOPS @ NIGHT for working mothers, meeting the 3rd Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:30 pm.

Over the past 45 years, MOPS has expanded tremendously, partnering with churches and organizations worldwide to equip and encourage moms in more than 68 countries. This year's MOPS International theme is We Go Together. "We are declaring it the year of friendship, courage and purpose. Friendships where we aggressively believe in each other, pray for each other and believe the other deserves the world. That is what we do at MOPS. If you're ready for a community like this, then you belong here. Your best days are ahead of you. We are going to be here cheering you on. And what you can't do alone, we can and will do together."

Our meeting content has included:

- a video and discussion about finding friendships through motherhood
- a Dad's panel with Rev Alex and Rev Ben to get a Dad's perspective on marriage and parenting
- A guest speaker from One Whole Heart ministry who shared Marriage and Healing your Child's Heart.
- A video about How to Plan your Day as busy moms of toddlers and a guest speaker who shared how she uses Essential Oils to promote healthy living and connection with her kids.
- Guest speaker Lindsey Gurk shared the meaning behind her new clothing line, Get Your Pink Back—a reference to male and female flamingos losing their pink coloring when they are raising their babies. She has over 725K followers on Instagram where she uses the platform to share her faith, the ups and downs and fun times of parenting and marriage.

We look forward to our next eight meetings before summer break and we are so grateful to Christ Church for being so welcoming and hospitable to our growing MOPS group!



Kat Shuttleworth

## Women's Groups

The CCFC women's groups are amazing! On their face these groups may appear to be nice little "book groups" of "lovely little women" who sit around and chit-chat about spiritual things. But...scratch the surface, and you'll find out the truth.

Yes, we have read MANY books and we drink coffee and share snacks and anecdotes about our families. And yes, we are lovely. BUT, most weeks these "lovely little women" are working, warring and wrestling.

We are working out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). We are warring in the Heavens for the lives and circumstances of loved ones, friends, and strangers. We are wrestling with our faith, with our sins, and with the (old) selves that we are called to put to death when we become followers of Christ. (Ephesians 4:22)



This group of women are not afraid of being honest or vulnerable. They listen, offer advice (when warranted), and support one another in prayer (and often through practicality). These women of God stand shoulder-to-shoulder in seasons of intense struggle, intense joy, and mundane day-to-day meh.

A great theologian once said “If we do not learn to let people in, we will not be able to keep the enemy out.” This little band of sisters—come rain, shine, snow, pain, sorrow, schedule constraints, jobs, kids etc.—have carved out precious time to meet together and have taken the risk of learning to let one another in. Subsequently we are all much stronger, more faith-full, and generally happier; at least most weeks ;).



They are trustworthy and tight-knit and still manage to always provide a warm welcome to newcomers. This is not a clique where only the holiest and most put-together feel comfortable; none of us could attend if that were the case. This is a group of saints who know we are all ragamuffins—to one degree or another—and who desire to explore the things of the faith in good company; free from having to feel guarded about our beliefs or emotions.

We read books and do bible studies that challenge us and allow us to sit with those theological truths that require much of us. Because we desire to be more like our Saviour. And...we drink coffee; lots of coffee with not a little flavored creamer. We love a lot and we laugh a lot.

If anyone is interested in joining please feel free to try it out sometime. We meet every Tuesday at 9:30 am in the church parlor. We won't be offended if we're not for you. We're unoffendable...we read a whole book about it. This year we are resolved to start on time but, as always, we'd rather have you there late than not at all. And...even if you haven't read whatever chapters we are covering that week, that too is not a limitation on being welcomed into the conversation. It's less about the book and more about building the body. Hope to see everyone there!

Kat Shuttleworth  
*Women's Groups Leader*

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## The Service Team

In 2021, when we renewed our membership and our baptismal vows, we agreed to prioritize commitment, connection, and contribution to the life of our church together. As part of this, in 2022 we launched a new Service Team, rebooting, rebranding, combining, or starting several key ministries that are now vital to our worship. So far we've had about 100 people sign up to join one of the five ministries below. Some serving just a few times a year when they're able, and some serving every month, even in multiple different ways.

I am so grateful for all the help. The pastors can do some things ourselves, but some things we could not do without the service team at all. Together, our job is to make this a welcoming place where people can hear the good news of Jesus Christ, worship Him freely, and make deep connections in an environment that is serious and holy, yet engaging and fun.

I'm also excited to see how members of the team often grow in both commitment and connection the more they contribute in this way, and I'd like to thank you all, but especially our team leaders: Bill Gordon & Joe Nawrocki (greeters); Jim Edwards (Readers); Jane Flaherty (servers); Matt Beresik (AV); and Desa Voelker (coffee), for overseeing things.





### **Greeters**

Greeters hand out materials, let new people know where things are, and set the tone of the day. Bill & Joe write:

*As Greeters are often the first people folks see when entering the church, a vibrant greeter team is important to the wellbeing of the church by making visitors feel welcome and comfortable. Our team is blessed to have 22 individuals and/or families who answered the call to serve as greeters. Our thanks to all of them for their service. If you would like to serve on this important team, please contact either of the Team Leaders. All you need is a smile!*



### **Readers**

Readers have a liturgical role in reading scripture and prayers. Because we believe in the priesthood of all believers, and we have very few clergy here, it's important for our congregation to see a variety of people leading worship. In Jim's case, it was wonderful to see him leading an entire service this year as well. He writes:

*"...devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture..." 1 Timothy 4:13 ESV*

*Over 20 women and men have served in reading of the Holy Scriptures during our 9 or 11 am services this past year. From two sentences to two chapters, with and without microphones, live streaming or just in front of the congregation (with a few still finding their seats) all have walked confidently, spoken clearly, and stood tall before us. Thanks to everyone who has already signed up and there is always room for more - with 52 weeks and 2 services this is one of the more flexible and undemanding areas of service at CCFC! Prayerfully consider signing up in 2023 and remember that your pronunciation of any name or place will be completely acceptable; especially when heard alongside Rev. Alex's unwavering British accent:)*



### **Servers**

Servers share in a sacramental ministry serving Holy Communion (also known as the Lord's Supper), as well as helping to prepare and clear the table. Before the pandemic, these were considered to be separate roles, but they really go very well together and I've loved seeing how moving the experience can be for those who do it. The reception of Holy Communion is a special time of openness and vulnerability for us as a church and I think it says a lot when the person serving you is a fellow member and not just an ordained pastor. Jane writes:

*After some initial hesitation, the Server Team has become a vibrant group of Communion Servers. There are currently 15 active members with a strong core group of 8 who are serving on a regular basis. A few of the members were previous Altar Guild members but the majority of the Team are preparing the Lord's Table and serving Communion for the first time!! The process has been simplified allowing us to focus more on serving the Lord's Supper to our church family and focus less on the "pomp and circumstance". The instruction material with pictures is immensely helpful and relieves a great deal of overall stress. The feedback from the Team has been positive on every level.*

New members would be very welcome, particularly any men who would like to serve!

## AV Ministry

Because we amplify the sound in the sanctuary, and broadcast, and record, and provide assistance to those with hearing loss, and even sometimes use sound monitors for our musicians, sound is a pretty big deal. It's also one of the more technical ministries to do well, but I have loved seeing both a committed core of engineers, alongside a group of new people willing to step way outside of their comfort zone and try it. They've done well and we have an excellent team. Matt writes:

*Thanks to all who have worked on this team over the past year. If you have not yet considered the opportunity to sit behind the sound desk during weekend service, we strongly encourage you to give it a try! With a little bit of training / job shadowing, you will find it to be perhaps not quite that intimidating or challenging a task. As with all of our ministry teams, many hands make light work. Please consider joining the rotation and help the Gospel to literally be heard both here at church and by those who tune in online each week. Thank you!*



## Coffee Ministry

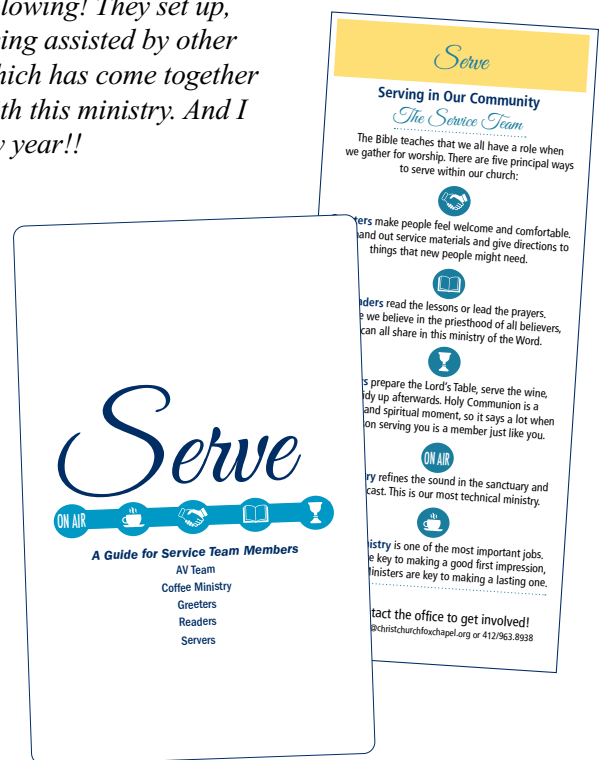
If greeters are key to making a good first impression, coffee ministers are key to making a lasting one. Our simple, but high-quality, refreshments set the tone and create a space for people to get to know one another, share their burdens, or good news, and really grow together. I've loved seeing how, month by month, more people have stayed around for longer and longer after services, and especially how this ministry has enabled members of the two morning services to mix more easily. Desa writes:

*Where do I begin to brag about our Coffee Ministers?! This is one very special group of folks. Women and men participate, and everyone benefits. This group is not scared off by a 3-hour tour. In fact, they embrace the chance to meet and greet with both the 9 am and the 11 am CCFC family. Our age range is from 20s to the 80s and almost every decade in between. The chance to work with this gracious, generous and God focused group has enhanced my Sundays and my life. Rarely is there a cancellation and when there is that Sunday is quickly covered. We have our frequent fliers (you know who they are and their commitment and enthusiasm are contagious. Here we are in December and most of the weeks for the first quarter 2023 are already scheduled. Mind blowing! They set up, host, and clean up without a grumble and often find themselves being assisted by other members of the church with the wrap up. A dream team indeed which has come together with the focus on God and service. I am honored to be involved with this ministry. And I encourage anyone who wants to join in our fun to do so in the new year!!*



## How to Find Out More & Get Involved

Look for the serving card in the lobby which contains information about the Service Team on one side and our mission partners on the other. If you'd like to know more about a specific role, please take a guidebook, or ask one of the pastors or team leaders for more information and then simply give it a try. We are big on experiments here, so if you try something and aren't sure how you feel about it, try something else!



# OPERATIONS



Brian Zimmerman

## Buildings & Grounds Manager's Report

We were able to meet most of the goals for 2022 as outlined in the 2021 report.

### Interior Projects

The kitchen has been upgraded with a new commercial range, exhaust fan and a fire-suppression hood. We also have been certified by the Allegheny County Department of Health as a commercial kitchen.

### Exterior Projects

The main entrance has been re-landscaped. A new fence runs up to Christ Church Lane on the left hand side to improve the appearance as you enter the church grounds.

A dedicated trash area has been built into the hillside. Gates have been ordered and once installed, the dumpsters can be permanently moved. This improves the appearance of the property, is more safe & sanitary, and adds convenience in trash removal.

The courtyard patio has been renovated. The old trees and pavers have been removed and replaced with new pavers, damaged gutters were repaired, the drainage system was improved and the metal roof was cleaned to remove years of sap and grime buildup.

The garden nearest the main parking lot was reshaped and cleaned out; plants similar to the garden on the opposite side of the lawn were added.

The hillside that borders the road across from the Meeting House and main entrance was cleared to improve aesthetics as well as line of sight for safety reasons.

In preparation for paving the road and parking lots in 2023, a new French drain has been installed along the exit road to collect the water run off from the parking lot. In the area before the columbarium, the large tree and retaining wall have been removed so the road can be widened.

Two badly-deteriorated chimneys have been re-pointed and capped, and all seven dormers were repaired.

### Goals for 2023

Our largest project for 2023 will be to repave the road & parking areas and replace the sidewalks to make them ADA compliant and easier to maintain in the winter months. Additional projects include extending the split-rail fence line along the entrance to the Rectory driveway and installing a privacy hedge above the Rectory once the road is completed. Exterior signage will also be evaluated.

Brian Zimmerman  
*Buildings & Grounds Manager*



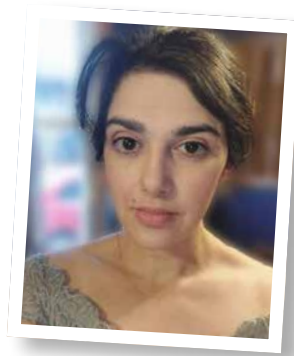
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## Finance Manager's Report

I have continued to work on modifying accounts to streamline reports and accurately reflect how money is spent so that we can budget and allocate money appropriately. Monthly budget and investment reports are being provided to the Vestry, and physical documentation of transactions are kept readily available to be reviewed for accuracy.

To increase efficiency and cut costs, the majority of our checks are processed directly from our bank and most quarterly statements are being sent via email. I continue to process our payroll for all employees rather than outsourcing to a payroll company. Thank you to the volunteers who helped make it so that our lay audit of financial records to the Diocese for 2021 on time, and with very few issues due to procedural changes that had been made during the previous years. Changes to how we request giving information have made it much easier to collect giving commitments, resulting in a more accurate budgeting process, needing fewer revisions.

Niki De Luca  
*Finance Manager*



Niki De Luca

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## Operations Manager's Report

In this “post-COVID” year we all hoped that things would return to “normal.” However, CCFC’s “new normal” has been anything but! We’ve discovered new ways of being together & supporting each other, our faith is growing, and we have welcomed SO many new members. Who could have imagined that so many good things could possibly come from such a difficult time!

2022 was yet another busy year (we keep waiting for the “slow” period!) Much of my focus was in working closely with Brian identifying improvement & repair projects, and with numerous contractors collecting bids & coordinating schedules. Numerous property & facility improvements were completed this year as detailed in both Brian’s & Alex’s reports.

A very different area of focus is keeping our membership informed—or as we like to call it, connected. Our multi-generational congregation accesses information in many different ways, and developing engaging, consistent & clear communication via a number of print and electronic outlets is key. I depend on Alex & Ben to lead me in the right direction to make sure that our sermon series graphics embody the message that they are teaching.

Welcoming the community to our “city on a hill” increased in 2022 as more outside groups utilized our facilities for meetings and gatherings. Many are pleasantly surprised at how things have changed! Being a resource to our community creates new opportunities to share the gospel, not only in words but also our actions.

As I begin my tenth year at CCFC, I can’t believe how time has flown by—God has big plans and he’s keeping me busy. I am blessed to work with a gifted staff team, and to have the ongoing support of a multi-talented and wise Vestry. I am blessed to be a part of this team and what is happening here.

Bridget Michael  
*Operations Manager*



Bridget Michael



*How many staff members can fit into a Honda FIT?*



Joe Nawrocki

## Treasurer's Report

2022 was in many ways a year of sustained growth for our church. With expenses in line with budget, we saw increases in membership, attendance and giving. As a result, we finished the year with a surplus. Capital reserves and restricted assets were used for property improvements without an impact to the operational budget.

Our church's daily operation is funded almost solely by our members. Pledged amounts are helpful to the Vestry for planning purposes because they historically and predictively come in around 95+ percent of target. Actual pledged giving in 2022 was \$495,500 vs. a budget of \$515,000. Donations are defined as monies above one's pledged amount or traceable giving that is not a pledged amount. Donations for 2022 were \$221,200 vs. a budget of \$98,700. As such, our 2023 budget is weighted significantly around pledges.

With regard to expenses, the church continued to operate slightly below budget throughout the year. Bridget, Niki and Alex consistently look for ways to trim costs, renegotiate contracts for office expenses like our commercial copy machine, trash pickup, natural gas, etc. As a result, the church's expenses for 2022 were \$736,000 vs. a budget of \$741,000, resulting in a net surplus of \$144,000.

Although our investments outperformed the market marginally, 2022 was still a bad year. Total assets decreased by \$204,000; approximately 25% of that resulted from market losses, and the remainder being planned spending from restricted reserves as detailed in the report on page 29.

Our 2023 budget is \$813,000 compared to a budget of \$736,000. The net increase is based solely on inflation and is not due to any new operational spending. That said, 2023 pledges are up slightly over last year to accommodate the new budget. In the Vestry's opinion, although there may be minor savings to be found, the 2023 budget is what it costs to run a church our size in this location.

With gratitude,  
 Joe Nawrocki  
*Treasurer*

## ASSETS & FUND BALANCES

<b>Asset Balances</b>		As of 12/31/2022	
<b>Operating Accounts</b>			
Combined Discretionary	\$	657	
Operating Acct	\$	201,374	\$ 176,504
CRF			\$ 283
Columbarium			\$ 2,560
Prepaid Pledges and Income			\$ 14,166
MOPS			\$ 7,861
Electronic Giving	\$	24,645	
<b>Cetera</b>			
Account x50	\$	448,191	
Account x51	\$	105	
Account x52	\$	-	
	\$	448,296	
<b>Investment Fund Breakdown</b>			
<b>Total Unrestricted</b>		\$381,359	
Unrestricted- New		\$298,398	
Capital Reserve		\$37,240	
Pandemic Reserve		\$45,721	
<b>Total Restricted</b>		\$66,937	
Music Interest		\$24,613	
Music Fund		\$17,293	
Settlement Reserve		\$9,302	
New Building Campaign		\$15,729	
<b>Total Assets</b>	\$	674,972	

# SUMMARY OF REVENUES & EXPENSES

	2022	2022 Budget	% of Budget	2023 Budget
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Giving</b>				
Committed Giving	495,543	515,000	96%	32,750
Donations	221,225	98,700	224%	199,500
Crown Castle	47,800	47,800	100%	47,800
Other Income	115,161	82,800	139%	538,937
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>879,729</b>	<b>744,300</b>	<b>118%</b>	<b>818,987</b>
<b>Expense</b>				
Clergy	247,805	260,060	95%	274,014
Music	51,631	51,769	100%	54,274
Office	93,300	91,700	102%	98,318
Education	35,219	34,600	102%	38,784
Building	112,239	109,350	103%	112,950
Grounds	55,818	56,058	100%	61,008
Inside Parish	25,288	27,450	92%	42,650
Outside Parish	100,546	96,550	104%	114,691
Payroll Expense	14,124	13,900	102%	16,300
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>735,970</b>	<b>741,437</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>812,989</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>143,759</b>	<b>2,863</b>		<b>5,998</b>

Capital Reserves Spending	
AED	1,215
Architectural Drawings	1,385
Assisted Listening Devices	2,395
Blinds	2,000
Courtyard	17,943
Fence Glade Run	1,638
Garage Doors- Rectory	4,914
Generator	13,043
Kitchen	26,360
Rectory Repairs	8,089
Roof	16,425
Trash Area	6,204
	<b>101,610</b>

TEC Trust Money	
Roof/Chimney	26,718

Building Reserve Spending	
Furnace	18,078



Bacon Sunday Crew



A Year  
of  
Connecting &  
Contributing



Carswell-Beluk Wedding



CCYM Baptism



New Members Class



Annual Picnic



Summer Children's Ministry



Easter Sunday



Lam Gray's Testimony



Christmas Caroling



Maundy Thursday Meal