

LOVE

GOD &  
NEIGHBOR



 FIRST COVENANT  
CHURCH of Omaha  
Celebrating 140 Years



Annual Report 2022 - 2023  
201 N. 90th Street, Omaha, NE 68114  
fccomaha.org

## LEAD PASTOR Greg Applequist



Annual Report 2023

Friends,

There is something of a theme in this year's annual report, and that theme is change. There are many things different in the life of FCC compared to a year ago, and while some of those changes are difficult, many of them are exciting. I am writing a different report this year as a year ago I was halfway through my sabbatical. Thank you again for the privilege of engaging with God last summer, it was a wonderful gift and something that continues to impact me even today.

Another big change this year is that Pastor Mary, after five years of serving with us, has moved to be the lead pastor at Providence Church in Nederland, TX. It was very difficult for me to receive this news as I have grown to appreciate Mary, and I have always loved working with her. I am excited that she is able to continue to serve God and the church in Texas. She will be greatly missed. I am also excited Pastor Coby is increasing his responsibilities and that Monica Fisher is on board as our Children's Ministry Coordinator.

This annual report looks different. I feel it is important that our annual reports tell the story of what happened in the last year. In order to do that, we have combined all of the activities of the church into something of a 'year in review'. We hope this gives you a sense of what God has done in and through us in the last year.

We have also witnessed great changes in the church at large. COVID caused so many disruptions to all churches, including here at First Covenant. The world cannot go back to the way we were 5 years ago, and the church can't go back either. Instead we need to look forward to what God has in store for us. Where is God moving? What is God inviting us to? How can we better Love God and our Neighbors? These are the questions we need to ask ourselves as a community as we move forward.

I am looking forward to this next year, trusting God to be present with us as we respond to his call on our lives. I hope you will take steps to be more engaged with Jesus, more present to the life of the church, more aware of neighbors and friends who need to know Jesus, and more certain of God's love for all of us!

Pastor Greg Applequist

## PRESIDENT Tammy Swanson-Draheim



December 2022

Hello Covenant Family,

Four months into serving as president I am both grateful and humbled by the gracious words of welcome and affirmation in this new call to serve. Thank you! As you gather in your local churches for your annual meetings, I send each of you greetings and my gratitude for all the ministries of the Evangelical Covenant Church. It has been a particular joy to see how Covenant churches and affiliates are engaged with the many ways we see Jesus at work around the world. What a privilege to be co-laborers with Christ together! Thank you for all of your efforts, prayers, and support both on the front lines and in our larger shared mission.

There is much to celebrate, but we also have challenges that need our care, consideration, and prayers. Transitions are challenging, and we have experienced many transitions throughout 2022, including Covenant Offices staff. I know you feel this on the local level too. As I continue to lean into Jesus, my prayer is to listen well and seek wisdom for this new season of leadership. It is my hope that as God's people, we can move into places of healing, generosity, and kindness with one another, and together move forward to do the missional work of being good news.

I am often asked, "How can I/we/our church be supportive?" My response is always, to please pray. Pray, pray, pray! It is the most powerful way we can connect with the heart of God. I genuinely believe prayer has the power to bridge us closer to God and closer to one another. As I reflect on Mark 4:35-41, I invite you to pray like you are one of the disciples being tossed about in the storm, asking Jesus to help. These prayers of desperation are also prayers of compassion. They show that we care about what happens to us, and that Jesus is the solution to all our challenges. Pray for me and the leadership of the Covenant as we work together to be good news in this season. Pray that we listen well to you and to one another—and especially to what Jesus is calling us to.

For God's glory and neighbor's good,

A blue ink handwritten signature of Tammy Swanson-Draheim.

Tammy Swanson-Draheim,  
PRESIDENT, EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

## SUPERINTENDENT Brian Johnson



December 2022

**For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."  
Galatians 5:14**

Dear Friends,

*Love your neighbor.* What reads as a simple command can often prove challenging in our broken and divided world. And yet, churches and believers throughout the Midwest Conference remain faithful to this call as they take intentional steps to extend the love of Jesus to those both within and beyond the walls of the church.

Last April, in an effort to meet a need for shared community space, the Covenant church of Pomeroy, Iowa, broke ground for an Outreach Center that will be accessible to community groups and allow the church to connect in new ways. Over the summer, New Community Covenant in Kansas City launched Eastside University, a program that trains youth in the basics of community organizing. These Game Changers, as they call themselves, are putting feet to pavement as they discover, connect, and celebrate the gifts of their neighbors and neighborhood. In Colorado, Arvada Covenant partners with the Colorado Safe Parking Initiative to provide a safe, legal parking location with designated meal and shower nights for individuals and families living out of their vehicles. Across the conference, chaplains regularly enter into broken and hurting spaces to minister to our neighbors in hospitals, hospice care, and prisons, as well as to their families. Each of our conference ministries lives out the command to love our neighbor in ways unique to their own context, and each expression is essential to our shared mission to see lives and communities transformed by the love of Jesus.

It is a privilege to invite you to join us April 21-22, 2023, for our Annual Ministry Celebration, to be held at Countryside Covenant Church in McPherson, Kansas. As part of our time together, we will have the honor of welcoming and voting on the Superintendent nominee. On behalf of conference leadership, I am grateful to the Midwest Conference Executive Board for their wisdom and discernment as they identify the best candidate for this next season of conference ministry.

As your congregation gathers for its own Annual Meeting, know that we join you in celebrating all that God is doing through your church's ministry. Thank you for your steadfast commitment to the gospel as you carry Christ's love into each encounter.

Together in Christ,

Brian Johnson  
Acting Superintendent  
17310 Wright St. #101 • Omaha, NE 68130 • (402) 334-3020 • FAX (402) 334-3060 •  
[www.midwestcovenant.org](http://www.midwestcovenant.org)

Churches working together to transform lives and communities by starting new churches, strengthening existing churches, and developing missional leaders.

## ASSOCIATE PASTOR Coby Fisher



In the fall of 2014, I visited First Covenant Church for the first time. I was in town visiting my girlfriend, Monica (now my wife) who had recently moved to Omaha and had begun attending FCC, while I was finishing my studies at Gordon College on the Northshore of Boston. I had previous connections with the Evangelical Covenant Church, and with the purchase of an engagement ring at Westroad's Mall during that same visit, it was apparent to me early on that First Covenant Church would be a significant place for me in the next season of my life.

After graduating the following May, with a BA in Biblical and Theological Studies, Monica and I married in her hometown in West Virginia and moved into our first apartment in Omaha two days later. The following week, I started my first 'real' job working at the Open Door Mission, as well as an internship at First Covenant Church. During that season, I was fortunate to have opportunities to put my studies into practice and to continue learning from the leadership of Pastors Chris Papenfuss, Brad Bergfalk, Lyle Person, and Chris Logan. More significantly, I got to know the students and community of FCC and developed meaningful relationships. I was, and always will be, grateful for the opportunities to learn, make mistakes, and grow while this congregation supported, encouraged, and affirmed my call to ministry.

Six years ago, in the summer of 2017, I was called to this church as the Youth Pastor, and it is a true joy for me to serve the church in this way. In 2018, I received my Ministry License from the Evangelical Covenant Church, and in 2020 I began pursuing a Master of Arts in Christian Formation through North Park Theological Seminary and will graduate in May 2024. Along with continued growth, these six years have been a season of fruitful ministry as well. I have been fortunate to minister alongside Pastor Greg and Pastor Mary, and the lay leadership of the Love Omaha, and Youth Christian Formation teams. Over this past year, the Love Omaha team has continued to support the organizations of Together, and Heartland Hope, while also forming a new relationship with Abide Omaha, committing to participate in their Second Saturday Serve opportunity every other month throughout 2023. Additionally, the team hosted collections of back-to-school items and Christmas gifts for the residents of Maple Crest Health Center, as well as our second annual Trunk or Treat.

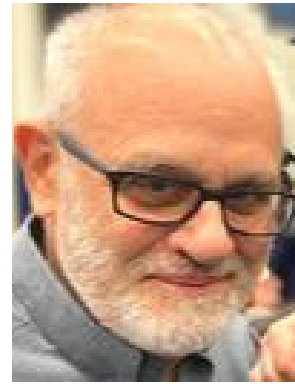
The Youth Christian Formation team kicked off the year on a trip with an amazing group of high school students for Engage 2022 in Arvada, CO, and are making final preparations for our Discipleship Adventure Trip in just a few days. In the year between, Students have gathered weekly for Sunday Formation and Midweek programs, attended Summer Camp and Fall Retreat at Covenant Cedars Bible Camp, and connected with one another through a variety of special events and gatherings.

Looking to the year ahead, I am grateful once again to be affirmed by First Covenant Church and for the privilege of continuing to serve this congregation, now as Associate Pastor. As I take on the leadership of Children's Christian Formation and Love the World, I must express my appreciation for the good work Pastor Mary has done over the last five years and the benefit it has been for me to learn from her experience, leadership, and gifting. I am excited about the ripe opportunities in front of both these teams, along with the whole ministry of the church, and look forward, with hopeful anticipation, to seeing what God will do in and among us.

As I reflect on my time at FCC, I see evidence of God's movement, and I am confident that he has called me to this community. I believe He has gathered each of us in this place and in this season with intention, and I am grateful to walk with each of you as we faithfully pursue God's leading together.

Peace,  
Pastor Coby Fisher

## LEAD TEAM



I believe we can acknowledge that the past year was challenging. We experienced leadership changes on the lead team and formation teams, financial concerns, and Pastor Mary leaving after being called to a church in Texas. Changes. Changes that needed to be addressed.

The primary role of the lead team is building, maintaining and overseeing the spiritual welfare of the church. Article II Section 11 spells out how the lead team is to do this, with prayer being essential. In addition, our vision and mission statements guide us in living into our mission and in our actions as a church. With all the changes we have experienced, we are exploring different ministry approaches. But what doesn't change is that all of us are to be in the Word, be diligent in prayer, practice discipleship, and work to build bridges. One way we can do this by having community conversations, much like our transgender discussions. These were not meant to change minds but provide dialogue with fellow Christians and see different viewpoints even when we don't agree. And we should all remember to encourage each other, especially our staff, formation teams, teachers, and all those who volunteer in helping at events.

We will be having more community meals, so come. When you come, sit with someone you don't know that well. Ask questions and listen. Next you can join a formation group and maybe one that challenges you to get out of your comfort zone and meet new people. These are ways to grow closer to God and each other.

Looking into the next year, we can expect more changes. We have thirteen individuals who have applied for membership, which is great. Also, I'm excited to see what changes will take place with Monica overseeing the children's ministry. Our high school group has a depth that is beyond their years. As an old guy, I find their perspective refreshing. The lead team will also be welcoming three new members, so be praying that they will bring energy, spiritual discernment and humility as they join the team.

What new challenges will arise in the coming year is unknown but whatever happens we will, with God's help, face it together with grace, kindness and gentleness. Romans 12:18 says, "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." Let us strive to live in such a way that we glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Pastor Greg has preached numerous times that the kingdom of God is here now. May we live into that kingdom that is now, but also not yet.

God's peace to you.  
Bob Drake

## PROPOSED BUDGET

### FIRST COVENANT CHURCH Current Budget vs Proposed Budget

	2022-2023 Budget	2022-2023 Projections	2023-2024 Proposed	Year to Year Change
<b>Unrestricted Income</b>				
Offerings	\$ 635,000	\$ 707,150	\$ 660,000	\$ 25,000
Misc Income (reserves, parking lot & rent)	\$ 277,517	\$ 138,842	\$ 182,320	\$ (95,197)
Foundation Income	\$ 10,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 5,000
Adult Christian Formation	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 250	\$ 250
Youth Christian Formation	\$ 2,300	\$ 1,862	\$ 2,300	\$ 2,300
Love FCC - Celebrate	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,976	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
<b>Total Unrestricted Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 925,817</b>	<b>\$ 867,831</b>	<b>\$ 860,870</b>	<b>\$ (64,947)</b>
<b>Unrestricted Expenses</b>				
Personnel Relations	\$ 495,867	\$ 462,335	\$ 399,799	\$ (96,068)
Properties	\$ 125,700	\$ 147,056	\$ 152,500	\$ 26,800
Financial Stewardship (tithe, mortgage)	\$ 256,800	\$ 204,721	\$ 265,621	\$ 8,821
Adult Christian Formation	\$ 1,650	\$ 143	\$ 1,650	\$ -
Children's Christian Formation	\$ 11,000	\$ 2,881	\$ 5,000	\$ (6,000)
Youth Christian Formation	\$ 8,300	\$ 6,761	\$ 8,300	\$ -
Worship & Music Team	\$ 6,800	\$ 3,346	\$ 8,300	\$ 1,500
Lead Team	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -
Love FCC (care, celebrate, connect)	\$ 7,200	\$ 8,575	\$ 7,200	\$ -
Love Omaha	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ -
Love the World	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ -
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 925,817</b>	<b>\$ 847,318</b>	<b>\$ 860,870</b>	<b>\$ (64,947)</b>
<b>Net Gain or (Loss)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 20,513</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>

**Misc. Income will include rent from Regina Caeli, parking lot, Bible Study Fellowship and transfers from reserves to cover the mortgage payments.**

If you have questions, please contact:  
Diane Stoner: 402-391-2747  
Andrew Lieben: 402-639-0350  
Scott Lickteig: 402-515-6721

## NARRATIVE BUDGET

Every year the Financial Stewardship Team is tasked with developing a budget. This shows where the resources of the church come from (income) and where the resources are expended (expenses).

### Income

The majority of First Covenant Church (FCC) income comes from congregational offerings totaling \$660,000. Additionally, we receive rent for parking lot usage, distributions from our Foundations, and other miscellaneous gifts. Finally, as we did in the prior two fiscal years, we will be relying on funds from our reserves in order to balance our budget. Our total income for the 2023-2024 fiscal year is \$860,870.

### Expenses

**Staff:** Our largest expense is for people. The Personnel Relations Team has a budget of \$399,799. This amount pays for salaries, health care premiums, retirement plan contributions, dues and other associated costs to develop and deliver ministry to our church and community. Our staff members work in concert with the Foundational Teams listed below to fulfill the mission of our church.

**Formation:** Our Formation Teams focus on teaching us the Good News, equipping us for evangelism, and helping us understand God's great promises. The Children's Christian Formation Team introduces the story of God to children up through 5th grade. The Youth Christian Formation Team works for the spiritual development of our Jr. and Sr. High students. And the Adult Christian Formation Team pursues the continuing transformation of all adults in our congregation. The combined budgets for these teams total \$14,950; these funds pay for Sunday School materials, group experiences, mission trips, DC (Confirmation), and other miscellaneous items.

**Worship:** Our Worship Team works toward creating a Sunday morning worship experience that is authentic, excellent, invitational, and accessible. The budget for this team is \$8,300 which covers music, technology, and general hospitality for both congregants and visitors.

**Stewardship:** Our Stewardship Teams work behind the scenes to ensure that all other Foundational Teams have the resources necessary to teach and preach the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Properties Team is charged with keeping the building and grounds in good order and operational to ensure ministry can be accomplished. The Financial Stewardship Team works in conjunction with all other teams to see that all income and expenses are appropriately accounted for and disbursed. The Financial Stewardship Team also supports the Midwest Conference and the National Denomination of the Evangelical Covenant Church, and they are responsible for our mortgage with National Covenant Properties. The total budgeted expense for these teams is \$418,121.

**Love:** Our Love Teams work to fulfill our church's vision to love our neighbors. The Love FCC Team focuses on caring for, connecting with, and celebrating alongside all members of our congregation, particularly the homebound and those most in need. The Love Omaha Team is tasked with encouraging members of our church to show the love of God to those in the Omaha metro area through acts of service. Finally, the Love the World Team seeks international engagement, supports our missionary families, and maintains our partnership with Iglesia del Pacto Evangelico el Mana in Pedernales, Ecuador. The combined budgets for these teams is \$14,700.

## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC



### Storm Chasers Outing

On June 8th, 118 of us cheered on the Omaha Storm Chasers. Even though the Iron Pigs prevailed it was a great outreach event.



July 2022



### All Church Bowling

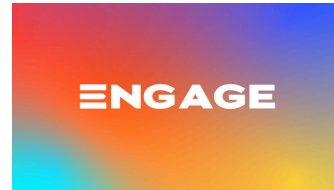
Terry "Kingpin" Johnson emceed the 63 bowlers who burned up the lanes at the Bowlatorium July 17th.



Isabel Headlee & Abraham Walker  
Wedding - July 30, 2022



## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC



### Engage

Pastor Coby, Kari Bulgrin, Maddie Lickteig, Derek Bonin and 15 students spent the week of July 18th in Arvada Colorado participating in a number of service learning opportunities.



### Summer Camps

Twenty three FCC campers learned about overflowing with hope (Romans 15:13) at Covenant Cedars Camp.



### Summer Reading Groups

Sixty people joined in our summer reading groups organized by the ACFT.



August 2022

First Covenant Church of Omaha



Psalm 8:3-4

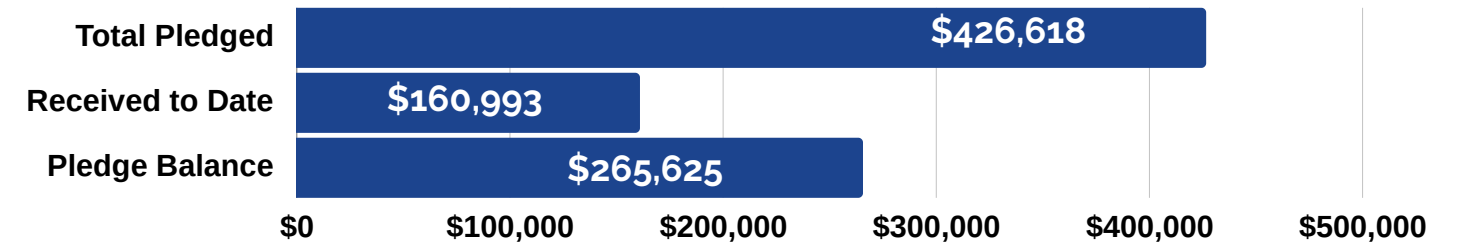
### Wonderful Wild Weekend

Our CCFT partnered with Abide and many FCC volunteers to create a fun weekend for over 30 kids who learned that God made them and the world very wonderful!



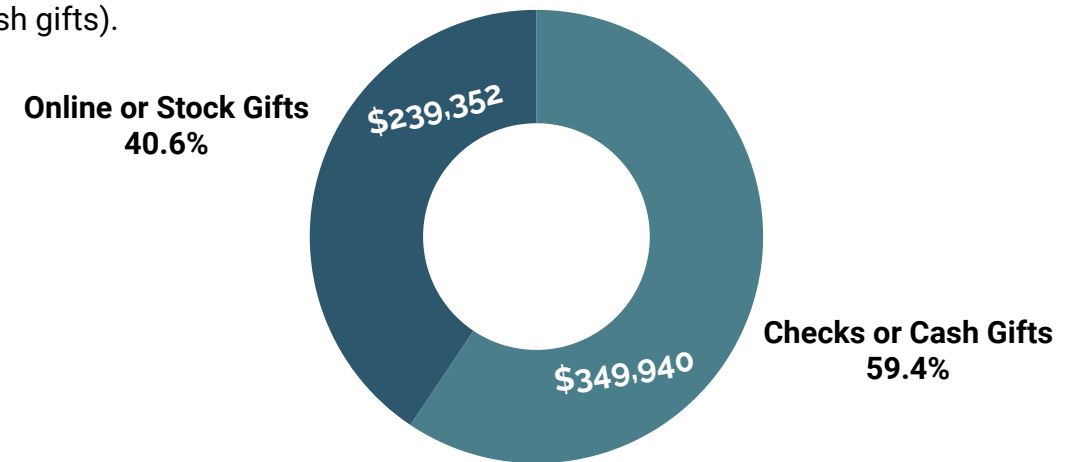
## GENERAL FUND PLEDGES

54 households pledged \$426,618 to the general fund for the calendar year January 1 - December 31, 2023



## GENERAL FUND BUDGET

The budget for the general fund offering totals \$635,000 for fiscal year July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023. Through April, we have received \$589,292 (\$239,352 in online or stock gifts and \$349,940 in checks or cash gifts).



## MEMBERSHIP STATS June 1, 2022 - May 31, 2023

### BAPTISMS

Jack Torson  
Sam Torson



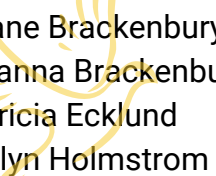
### CONFIRMANDS

Buomkuoth Dak  
Eve Gregory  
Paul Nordstrom  
Kate Sonsthagen



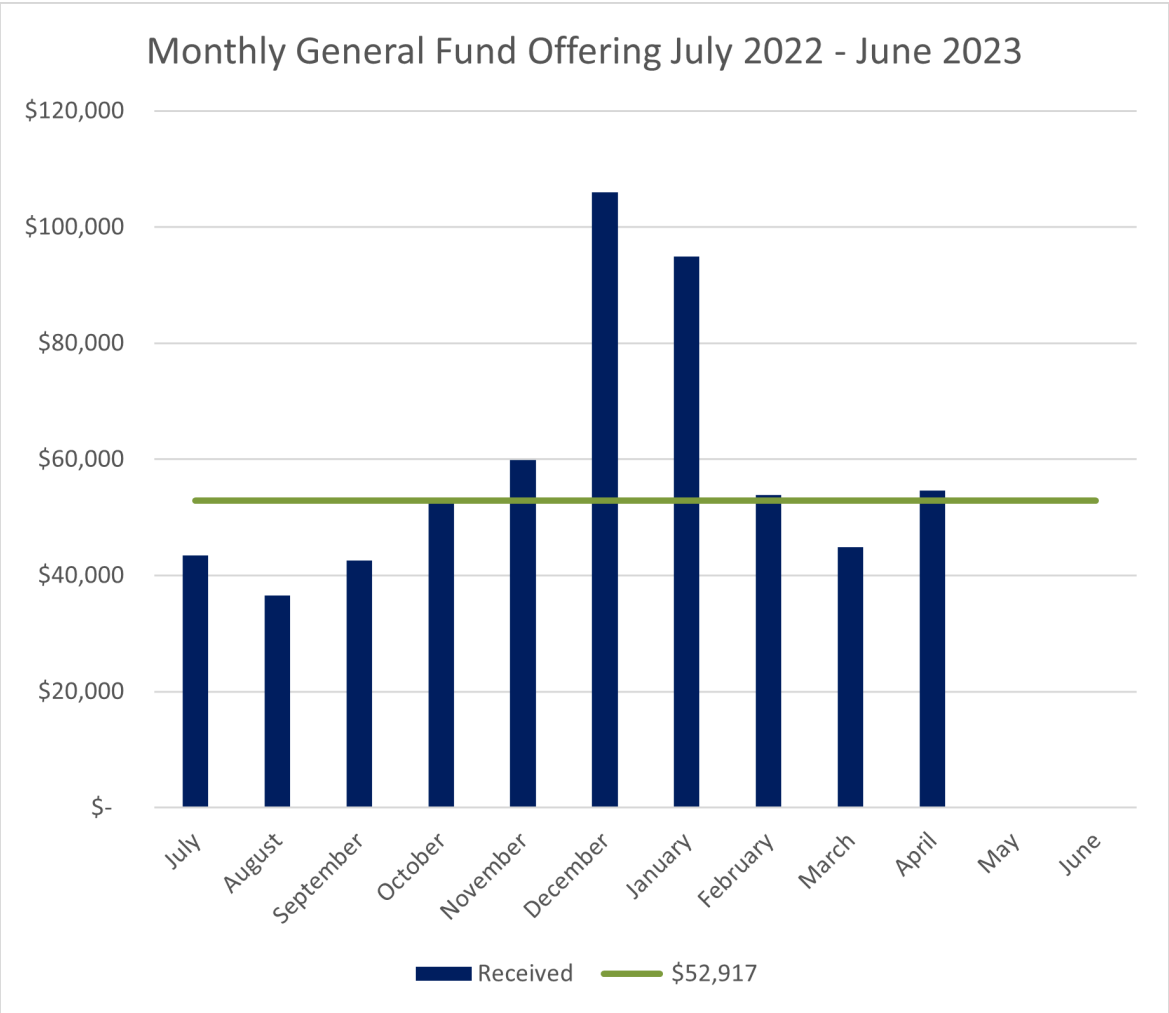
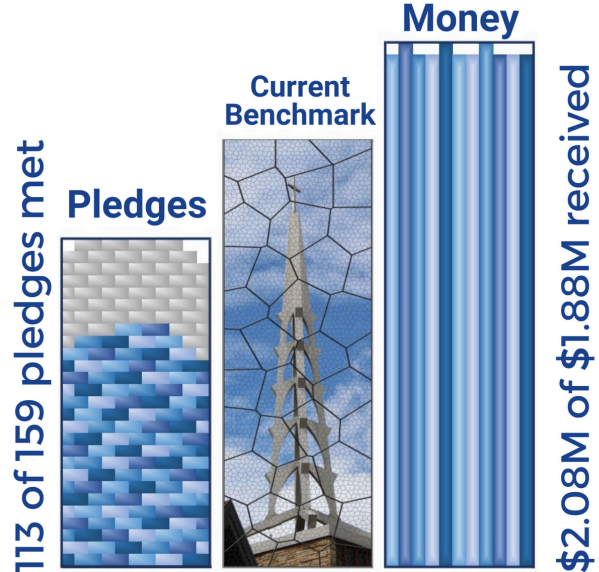
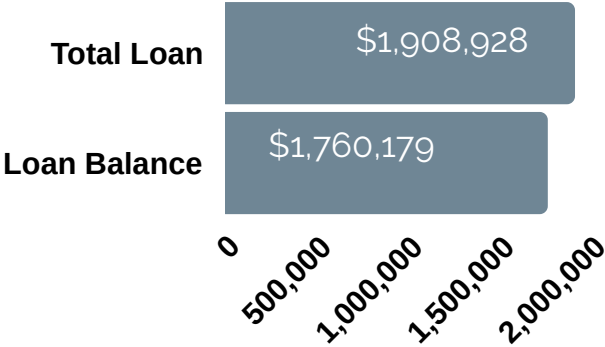
### DECEASED

Duane Brackenbury  
Loranna Brackenbury  
Patricia Ecklund  
Evelyn Holmstrom Helwig  
James Ressegieu  
Linda Shallberg



### FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP TEAM

On January 1, 2022 FCC took out a 20-year loan with National Covenant Properties for \$1,908,928. Our monthly payment is \$11,202 and the current balance is \$1,760,179.



### A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC



**Table Grace Ministries**  
 After sharing about their ministry we had the opportunity to sample some of the delicious food available to all through Table Grace Ministries' food truck.



*September 2022*

**Pastor Greg Returns**  
 Rejuvenated and well rested, Pastor Greg returned from sabbatical and shared with us about his experience.



**All Church Retreat**  
 Over 100 people joined us at Covenant Cedars for a fun-filled end of the summer weekend. Abby Walker was our speaker and Nathan Williamson led us in music.



## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC

### 140th Celebration

First Covenant Church kicked off our fall programming by celebrating our 140th Anniversary. We feasted on pancakes from the Pancake Man, competed in FCC trivia, celebrated the completion of our Building on a Faithful Heritage Campaign and recognized long time members who have been a faithful part of our history.



## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC



### Retired Men

Early each Tuesday our Retired Men's Group meet to work on maintenance and projects around the church.



### Tai Chi

Karen Kraaz leads a Tai Chi group each Tuesday and Thursday helping us improve our balance and mobility.



### Blood Pressure Screenings

Our wonderful healthcare volunteers take blood pressures each month.



### Sisters of the Skin

Working to create prayer shawls, hats, scarfs and mittens our knitters meet each Thursday to create beautiful pieces of needlework to give away to others in need.

## Ongoing Activities



### Choir & Praise Band

Throughout the year our choir and praise band help us engage in worship through their ministry of music.





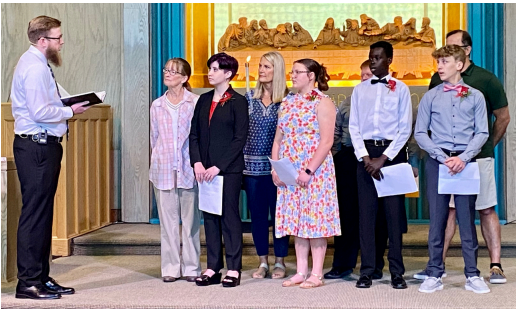
# A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC



**Farewell Pastor Mary!**  
After five years as our Associate Pastor, we said goodbye and farewell to Pastor Mary. Mary leaves to become the lead pastor at Providence Church in Nederland, TX.



**OWLS Brunch**  
The OWLS enjoyed a delicious brunch and listened to Dr. Julie Masters, Professor of Gerontology at UNO.



**Confirmation Sunday**  
May 7th the confirmands led us in worship and communion. Congratulations to Buom Dak, Eve Gregory, Paul Nordstrom and Kate Sonsthagen.



**Kayleen Stanek & Dustin Whitmire**  
Wedding - May 6, 2023

*May 2023*



**Global 6K for Water**  
This year FCC joined with Community Covenant Church to raise money for clean drinking water.

# A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC



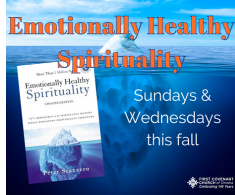
**Wednesday Night Dinners**  
At the end of September we saw the return of dinners at church on Wednesday nights where we enjoyed a time of fellowship.



**Annual Golf Outing**  
It was a beautiful day on the course as FCC headed out to golf.

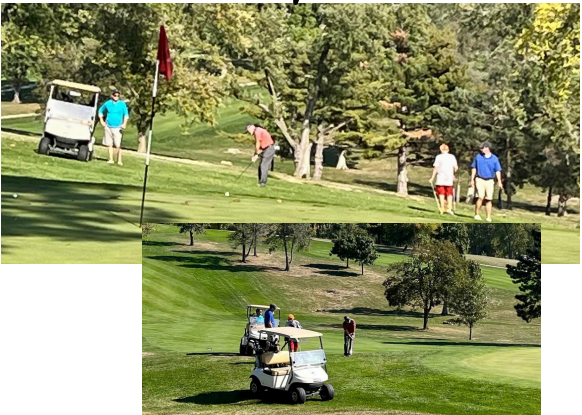


**OWLS - Musical Program**  
Our Older Wiser Loving Seniors enjoyed the music of Kevin and Heidi Chen on September 18th.



**Fall Formation**  
As a church we worked on improving our spiritual maturity by reading through Peter Scazero's Emotionally Healthy Spirituality book.

*October 2022*



**Vala's Pumpkin Patch**  
A fall favorite, our Student Ministries Group ventured out to Vala's Pumpkin Patch.



**Durham Museum Tour**  
The OWLS enjoyed a River City History Tour through the Durham Museum.

## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC

### Love the World

FCC committed to financially support 30 South Sudanese orphans.



### Trunk or Treat

We welcomed 75 people to our second annual Trunk or Treat.

## November 2022



### Service of Remembrance & Hope

We remembered Janet Truelsen, Dale Larson, James Shuey, Dorothy Jenks, Dale Shallberg, Jeannette Horwath, Patricia Ecklund, Linda Shallberg and James Ressegieu at the service of Remembrance & Hope.



### Hymn Sing

Cynthia Copeland led and, with a turkey on his head, John Cooper accompanied a hymn sing to express our gratitude during the holiday season.

## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC



### Good Friday Service

Pastor Greg and John Cooper led this service of scripture and song.



### Easter Sunday

Thanks to the Retired Men's Group for hosting a delicious Easter Brunch. The sanctuary was full of family, friends and flowers as we celebrated the resurrection of Jesus.



### Holy Saturday Retreat

The ACFT hosted a retreat on Holy Saturday where we spent a few hours in silence reflecting on the crucifixion and death of Jesus.



### Baptism of Sam & Jack Torson

We celebrated with the Torson families who brought their sons to be baptized on Easter Sunday.



## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC

March 2023



**All Church Game Night**  
Our Connection Team held a Game Night on March 25th. A fun time was had by all who were there!



**OWLS Barbershop Quartet**  
Hashtag Harmony joined the OWLS for an afternoon of music and fellowship.

April 2023



**Palm Sunday Service**  
We sang loud Hosannas as the Children's Choir led us in song on Palm Sunday.



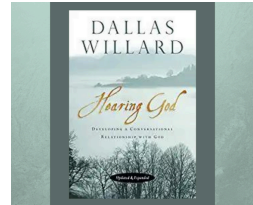
**Cloisters on the Platte**  
On Palm Sunday, 26 people from our congregation walked the stations of the cross.



**Second Saturday Serve**  
Another great turnout to help at Abide.



**FCC Care Team Training**  
Our Care Team provided training for volunteers who visit our homebound members.



**Wednesday Night Class**  
On Wednesday nights in Lent, Pastor Greg led us through Dallas Willard's book Hearing God.



**Maundy Thursday Service**

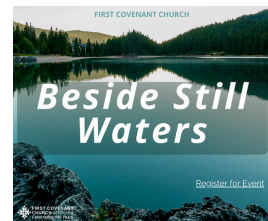
We remembered the Last Supper through foot washing and communion.



**Kayla Harrell & Cameron Kriezel Wedding** - April 15, 2023

## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC

**Fall Retreats**  
Our middle school and high school students spent a weekend at Covenant Cedars enjoying a time of fun and fellowship.



**Besides Still Waters**  
On November 5th the ACFT sponsored a retreat for silence and solitude giving us an opportunity to learn more about these spiritual practices.



**Okra African Grill**  
It was a good turn out to try Okra's African cuisine. Many fried plantains and okra were enjoyed by all.



**Stewardship Sunday**  
On November 20th we took time to reflect on our blessings and consider how we can give back to God this next year through our time, talents and treasure.

December 2022



**OWLS Julbord & Bingo**  
On December 3rd the OWLS celebrated the Christmas season with a traditional Swedish buffet and some bingo too.



**Christmas Concert & Tea**  
The annual FCC Choir Concert & Tea held on December 18th was full of beautiful choral and instrumental music followed by a delicious tea featuring finger sandwiches and holiday cookies.



**Shadow & Light**  
During advent we worked through Tsh Oxenreider's book, Shadow & Light, preparing ourselves for Christmas.



## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC



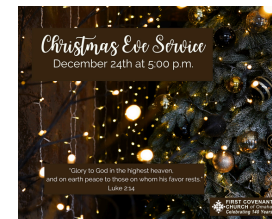
### Angel Tree

We collected gifts for the residents of Maple Crest through our Love Omaha Team.



### Christmas Morning Gathering

As Christmas fell on a Sunday this year we came together Christmas morning and celebrated Jesus' birth with readings and songs.



### Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

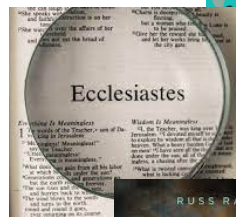
The sanctuary was full on Christmas Eve as we worshiped, sang and lit candles in anticipation of Christmas morning.



### Formation Classes

New formation classes began in January.

Rembrandt is in the Wind, Sharing Faith Stories, Ecclesiastes and the Last Speech of Moses for adults.



Students read through You Need a Better Gospel. Children learned about the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer.



### Midwinter Conference

Pastors Greg, Mary & Coby went to the Covenant Midwinter Conference in Jacksonville, Florida.



### Tree of Books

The Library received gifts from over forty people to support the ministry of the library.

## January 2023

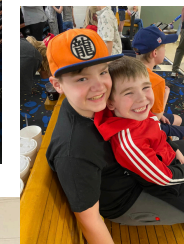


### Community Conversations

In the new year we began a series of five discussions. During these conversations we practiced active listening and open-minded dialogue.

## A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF FCC

## February 2023



### All Church Bowling

It was back to the lanes February 12th for another fun-filled afternoon of bowling.



### Wednesday Night Dinners

Thank you to all our chefs who prepared meals so we could fellowship together on Wednesday evenings in Lent.



### Second Saturday Serve

We had a great group of volunteers for our first Second Saturday Serve at Abide.



### Ash Wednesday Service

We began our journey into Lent with a service on Ash Wednesday.



### Lenten Formation

During Lent students and adults used their reflections from our Lenten booklet to discuss the lectionary texts for the week.

### Lenten Booklet

This was our second year of compiling a booklet filled with reflections from the congregation for Lent.