



BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH
1781 West 38th Street
Erie PA 16508

Making more and better disciples

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Pastor Tim George
Care Pastor Jerry Davis

Lead Pastor's Annual Report - 2023

It's an important discipline to take time and look back and take in what God has done the past year and acknowledge and praise Him for the journey that we've taken. This year we added a song that helped us praise God with this truth: "I'm looking to Jesus, perfecter of faith – my heart set on heaven where treasure awaits. I'll run with endurance to finish the race; I will trust in Christ every step I take." At the end of each leg of the race it is so good to take account of each step it took to get there and credit God with the endurance and strength to run the race he's laid before us. This year I have been reminded that God is never done working and moving. It isn't always dramatic, though sometimes it is, but it is often subtle shifts, adjustments, and nudges as we chase after the prize of faith. I'm encouraged to be a part of a community of believers who desire God to move and work in their lives and who seek to join God in where he is moving and working. It is a joy to chase God alongside those who sacrifice their time, talents, resources, celebrations, and more to join in him the journey. I have been so encouraged this year by the growth of the individual members of our church family and watching God move and work in each of your lives and to see you all join each other in what God is doing.

To begin this year, we surveyed some of the Apostle Paul's major thoughts that thread through his writings and thinking in the sermon series "Thinking Through Paul." After Easter and into the Summer over the course of two practical sermon series, we took a look at the image of God within men and how, out of that image, the lives of believers will be distinctly countercultural. In the Fall we returned to an exegetical series working through the book of Jude and finished the year with a December series on what it took to put Christmas together. Throughout the year we also had opportunities to be challenged by Pastor Jerry as he had occasion to share sermons that God laid on his heart and we were able to hear a message from Kurt Gomez as he and his family candidate for support for their missionary efforts in Mexico.

We continued to pursue relationships with our community, specifically to our daycare families. We've continued our "Belate Your Date" babysitting day to give our daycare parents a break and a few hours out. Due to scheduling we were unable to host our Christmas "Shopping Day" babysitting day, but that will return next year. I have continued, as opportunity allows, to take one morning on occasion to hand out free Tim Horton's coffee, courtesy of the church, to daycare parents as they drop off their kids before work. This year our 8th annual Block Party was able to reach, influence, and build relationships with over 200 people from the community and we were able to give away over \$1,200.00 in gift cards because of the generosity, sacrifice, and participation of our church family. We continue to welcome the local rabbit rescue, E.A.R.S., to use our facility for their holiday fundraisers as well as Lund Martial Arts to use our facility for their fundraisers and tournaments. We also were able to enjoy our Church Family Dinner Meetings and our Fellowship Sundays and utilize those times to invest in our church family relationships and focus on the journey we are each taking steps in.

God continues to bring more guests to Bethel. In 2023 we averaged 4 guests every Sunday. Of those guests, at least 54 were local first-time attenders. Around fifteen of those have become regular attenders. As I mentioned, God is always moving and this year he moved 7 of our brothers and sisters in Christ to make their faith public through baptism! As always, Pastor Jerry's Care ministry is invaluable in our guest connections and continued relationships.

This year we've been offering two youth groups to our students and both have been great for their growth and relationships with each other, the church, and God. We have 8-12 teens meet every other Sunday evening for our FUSE Youth Group and spent the year studying the biblical concept of wisdom and how it practically applies in our lives. We also have 10-12 older elementary kids meet on the first Sunday of the month, after church, for our 213 Youth Group. We have spent this year teaching and investing in understanding Salvation. I have appreciated the help of the volunteers who join me in those ministries: Dan and Sam Eberlin, Katie George, and Tyler and Hannah Zesiger.

On a personal note, I have finished my 18th course in the pursuit of my Master of Divinity through the Rawlins School of Divinity at Liberty University Online. I have 7 classes remaining in the degree, am halfway through the fifth semester of a six-semester course plan. I continue to maintain my 4.0 gpa. I appreciate the church's support and sacrifice to help me pursue this educational opportunity.

With every step of 2023, God has been faithful, and God has moved and is still moving. I look forward to joining him in what he is doing in your lives and the church in 2024 and am so grateful to God and to you all for the privilege to play a role in his plans for each of you.

Pastor Tim
Colossians 1:28-29

Bethel CARES Ministry

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Bethel Baptist Church

We have completed another year, and I am beginning to think about 2024. This past year has brought contrasts compared to previous years, when we experienced so many issues related to the pandemic. But God has given us many positive areas of ministry which encourage all of us of His presence in our efforts here at Bethel. We in leadership are enthused about what God has done here and what He may do through us in the New Year.

CARE treated our shut-ins with fruit baskets and Christmas literature, which was designed to offer them encouragement for the holidays last year. We are primed to continue the tradition in a few weeks. During the year, I visited those from our church, others who were patients, in the hospital, and those in retirement communities and private homes. My goal was to encourage them, but in reality, I was the beneficiary of the visit. I conducted 11 funerals this year from our church and from families in our community. I have had a tremendous opportunity to minister to several families, who had needs. Our major outreach campaign came about, as we organized a mailing to the community. We mailed a flyer designed locally to 2,500 homes. We heard from some recipients who let me know that they were glad to learn of our church and the many faces of ministry for the family. I have taught a Membership Class, and have recently added more Bible material to the curriculum to create a combined discipleship and membership study. We started with 11 students, and from this class will come new members of our church. Six adults have been baptized recently, with several of them attending this class.

For most of this year we welcome visitors to our worship services nearly every Sunday. We have a staff of greeters, who work together to make every attender feel welcome. Many of those who visit are returning, and many are getting involved in our ministry. These visitors are all contacted when they utilize our Communication Card. I reach out to each visitor to offer our CARE program and encourage them to return. Another tool that we have recently started using is the church van. It goes out every Sunday morning as needed, and is operated by two teams of Bethel workers who pick up folks who want to attend and who need transportation.

I am pleased that after 6 years as the CARE pastor, we are seeing some positive moves in the lives of many of our Bethel family. Pastor Tim and I work as a team, as we strive to meet needs of our church family and offer assistance to those who have concerns. I deeply appreciate the spirit of our church family, who support CARE and work with others and myself to keep the ministry going. A big event that has highlighted our fall and Thanksgiving season was our program called "Food for Friends". We teamed up with EUMA here in Erie, and our church provided enough non-perishable food for 80 families. We worked together as a church family to box food, and EUMA distributed the packed boxes to the families they are serving. It was a blessing to our church to be able to reach out with food, including materials sharing the Gospel.

So, what's next is the question I ask myself this time each year. In looking back at the past year I have seen how God has blessed, and I contemplate another year with His guidance.. Then I anticipate what God will do to make the New Year a blessing to others including a plan to reach lost souls. I will have ideas along the way, and I appreciate sharing with those who wish to be a part of what we're doing. I strongly believe in communication, so if you have any ideas or suggestions, please let me know.

May God bless you and help me to develop His work here at Bethel. As John McArthur once said: "Enter the coming year with renewed hope in the power of God to do through you what you cannot."

Pastor Jerry Davis

CHURCH CLERK ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023

MEMBERS

As of December 31, 2022 the total church membership was 72.

BAPTISMS

We celebrated seven people who were baptized on Sunday, November 12.

Sherri DeRosa

Jay & Amy Fohner

Patricia Hancock Leemar Jones, Jr.

Hailey Masone

Aria Shaw

BIRTHS

No births during 2023.

DEATHS

We were saddened by the passing of:

Roger Roae (Husband of Marilyn) on February 18, 2023 Mary Jane Jewell (Husband Don) on March 24, 2023

Ethel Louise Owens Jones (George Family) on April 8, 2023

Art Henry on May 23, 2023

NEW MEMBERS

The following were added to church membership in 2023:

Jorge & Rebecca Chiques

Hannah Clark

Paul McGranor

Tom & Sandy Manna

Mary Riley

MEMBERS REMOVED

As per the recommendation of the church leadership, the following were removed from membership as of April 25, 2023:

Matt & Salina Kennedy

Aimie Rice

Howard Shaw

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Larson, Church Clerk

Deacons Annual Report for 2023

The deacons are part of the leadership team of Bethel Baptist Church. Our tasks consist of creating a budget, approving and recommending new members, upkeep of the church property, and assisting our pastors in various ways.

This year our deacons consisted of Jon Anderson as deacon secretary, Rob Hess, John Gribbin, Dan Eberlin, Mike Myers as maintenance and BCS liaison, Luke Grimes, Wally Staab as budget liaison, and Tom Gribbin as chairman.

Our desire is to see souls saved and growth in the church membership.

We are currently saving funds to repair our parking lot. Our partnership with Bethel Christian School allows us to do many projects like this one with BCS's help. This past year, we added Mike Myers to the paid staff with the help of BCS. Mike was already doing many maintenance projects without pay.

We would like to see more people involved with our Children's Ministries. From nursery duties to helping and teaching in Kid's Worship, the need is there.

We thank God that He is faithful in providing the funds for our budget each year. We ask that all of our members and attenders continue to pray that He will guide us as we continue to serve Him.

In Christ,
Tom Gribbin, Chairman

Missionary Annual Report 2023

In spite of a year of very distressing events in our country and around the world, God's Good News continues to be spread by faithful missionaries sent by the Lord to minister to the lost. At Bethel, we are privileged and grateful to be supporting some of these servants with prayers and financial support.

We do not take our role as a supporting church lightly. We are committed to send, pray for, and support these missionaries. I would love to become better at communication with them regularly, just as they send us prayer letters with their news. Any ideas of how to do that in a way that those in our church can participate would be welcome!

A new list of our missionaries with prayer requests is made available every few months. Letters from them are also available for you to read! Look for them on the foyer Information desk and the missionary picture board. Please keep these items and reference them for better knowledge of our missionaries.

We have started to emphasize a different missionary each month. Their latest letter is read in the service, along with the latest prayer requests.

Our Missionary Budget for 2024 shows a few changes in support levels. We are excited to add Kurt & Bethany Gomez to our church missionary family. They will leave for ministry in Mexico when their support level is adequate. The retirement of the Weimers in Alaska and the home-going of Carl Tegeler made that possible. We were also able to raise support levels for the Allens and the Petites.

Submitted by:
Marcia Gribbin

2023 Music Ministry Report

To the Membership of Bethel Baptist Church,

“We want our music services to unite generations and cultures in the corporate worship of God our Father.”

This year, we have added several new songs, rotated songs regularly, as well as retired some other songs to allow all those who attend our Sunday morning service to hear songs that are familiar to them. Every song we add is thoroughly examined by the team and Pastor Tim to make sure it aligns with what the Bible teaches and with our core beliefs as a church.

Halfway through 2023, we unfortunately lost Tamim, Kelcie, and Josiah Fenton as they began attending a different church. This means that we have a bit less flexibility when it comes to music teams, but we are still blessed to have those who are willing! Currently, Pastor Tim George and Luke Grimes are our lead singers and guitarists. Jon Anderson is our only piano player and Sharon Trevino is our only keyboardist. Mike and Melinda Myers and Sharon provide supporting vocals along with Pastor Tim or Luke. I am the only cajon player.

As of now, we have limited flexibility when it comes to the cajon, keyboard, and piano, so we would love to see more people interested in sharing their musical talents to the benefit of the church! We appreciate your continued support of our music ministry! We love to worship with all of you in person and with those who join us online.

Thank you,

Hayden Trevino – 2023 Music Ministry Lead

Kids Ministries 2023

We have had another great year serving God in the childrens ministries at Bethel. We are blessed with so many fervent, Godly volunteers to love on and teach our kids!

The **Nursery and Preschool programs** are led by Joy Gribbin and Sam Eberlin. They are encouraged by the faithfulness of these families to bring their little ones. They also are really happy with how engaged the kids are with the songs and the Bible lessons. There are 14 volunteers teaching between the two classes on a rotation throughout the year and they are praying God will lay on hearts for 2 or 3 new volunteers in 2024. There are 8 kids regularly attending and we are happy to have a sweet baby in our nursery again and look forward to what God will do in the coming year! This is such an important ministry knowing that the little ones have age appropriate activities while their parents have an opportunity to worship and grow during the Sunday Morning Service.

The elementary **KidsWorship program** is led by Katie George. We are happy to have 8 faithful volunteers in this program. We range between 15 and 22 kids in this ministry and we are so pleased with their eagerness to learn and grow. We have switched to a new curriculum called "the**GOSPELPROJECT**" by Lifeway. We decided to update this after many successful years using the Sharefaith curriculum. It is engaging and full of good resources taking us through the Bible and pointing us to the gospel through each lesson. Several ladies planned a special Christmas party for the kids this year and planned several fun activities that the kids and several visitors enjoyed while their parents worshipped.

We are so thankful for those who faithfully sacrifice and serve in these ministries, the love they freely give to the kids will grow with them as our church continues to serve our community.

In His service,

Katie George

Building Maintenance – 2023

As Christians, we are called to be good stewards of what God has given us. Many of you give sacrificially to the ministry at Bethel and we want to be responsible with how your gifts are used. With a church, school and daycare there is always something that needs to be repaired or replaced. I'm very thankful for the leadership who help us prioritize our current maintenance needs and plan for future projects.

Every year we pick a couple major items that need attention. We made updates to our boiler, put a new roof on the west side portico and added new concrete sidewalks around the hill building. There are also plenty of smaller items that need attention throughout the year, along with basic upkeep and cleaning, inside and outside the building.

In 2024, there are several important items that need attention: roof repair over the foyer, new sidewalks on Allegheny Ave, and most importantly, parking lot repaving. Please pray that God will provide the funds needed for these repairs. I'd like to thank everyone who helps with cleaning and maintaining the buildings and grounds. Katie George and Debbie Shaw do a great job keeping the building clean. And there are many that help out with projects throughout the year. Your help is appreciated.

I look forward to what God will do with his church. If you are ever interested in lending a hand, let me know...many hands make light work!

In His Service,
Mike Myers
Maintenance Chair

Bethel Baptist Church

Treasurer's Annual Report for 2023

Beginning Balance January 1, 2023 **43,443.52**

Receipts

General Fund	246,797.70	
Capital Expense	11,920.00	
Other Funds	19,694.50	
Total Receipts	278,412.20	278,412.20
		321,855.72

Disbursements

Salaries	92,022.75	
Pastors' Benefits	14,729.48	
Social Security/Medicare	1,542.83	
National Fuel	6,723.18	
Electric	13,786.21	
Phone	1,436.04	
Water/Sewer	4,385.51	
Insurance	15,352.47	
Office Supplies	6,192.54	
Pulpit Supply	0.00	
BCS Scholarship	3,000.00	
Christian Education	5,894.90	
Outreach	4,448.52	
Ministry Expenses	6,011.08	
Building Maintenance	25,938.44	
Media Systems	379.48	
Media Licenses	593.00	
Transportation Expenses	1,292.60	
Missions	42,599.00	
Capital Savings Fund	10,000.00 (Transfer to Capital Expenses)	
Other	20,841.92	
Total Expenditures	277,169.95	277,169.95

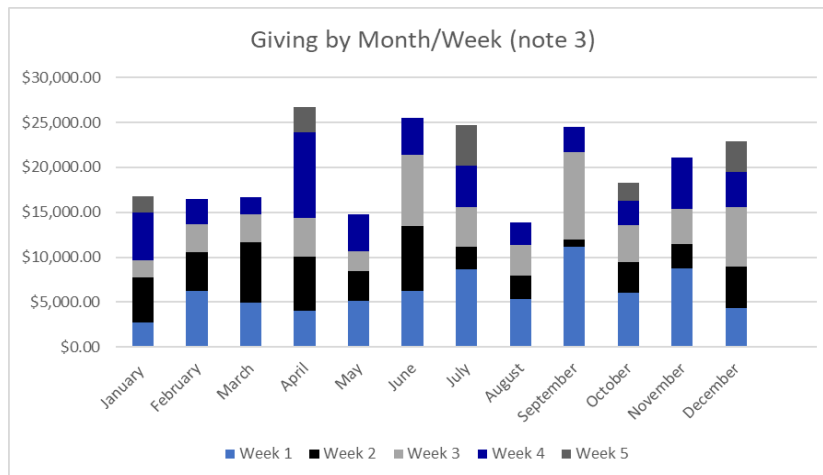
Ending Balance December 31, 2023 **44,685.77**

FUND BALANCES	Begin. Balance	Additions	Deductions	End Balance
General Fund	18,391.15	246,797.70	256,328.03	8,860.82
Capital Expense Fund	18,244.81	11,920.00	0.00	30,164.81
Other Funds	6,807.56	19,694.50	20,841.92	5,660.14
BALANCE	43,443.52	278,412.20	277,169.95	44,685.77

Tom Gribbin, Treasurer

2023 Financial Secretary Report

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u># of Donors</u>	<u>Anonymous</u>	<u>Grand Total</u>
General Fund		(note 2)		
Offerings	\$220,810.06	71	\$9,908.50	\$230,718.56
Offset (note 1)	\$5,666.70	N/A	\$535.00	\$6,201.70
Capital Expense	\$1,920.00	5	\$0.00	\$1,920.00
Deacon's Fund	\$11,563.00	21	\$70.00	\$11,633.00
Specials				
BCS Scholarship Fund	\$2,710.00	11	\$20.00	\$2,730.00
Bethany Camp	\$35.00	1	\$0.00	\$35.00
Easter Offering	\$2,960.00	17	\$40.00	\$3,000.00
Memorial Fund	\$175.00	2	\$0.00	\$175.00
Missionaries Christmas	\$1,700.00	18	\$20.00	\$1,720.00
Missionary Gomez	\$460.00	9	\$80.00	\$540.00
Missionary Allen	\$521.50	9	\$35.00	\$556.50
Pastor's Christmas	\$1,295.00	14	\$0.00	\$1,295.00
Total Giving	\$249,816.26		\$10,708.50	\$260,524.76

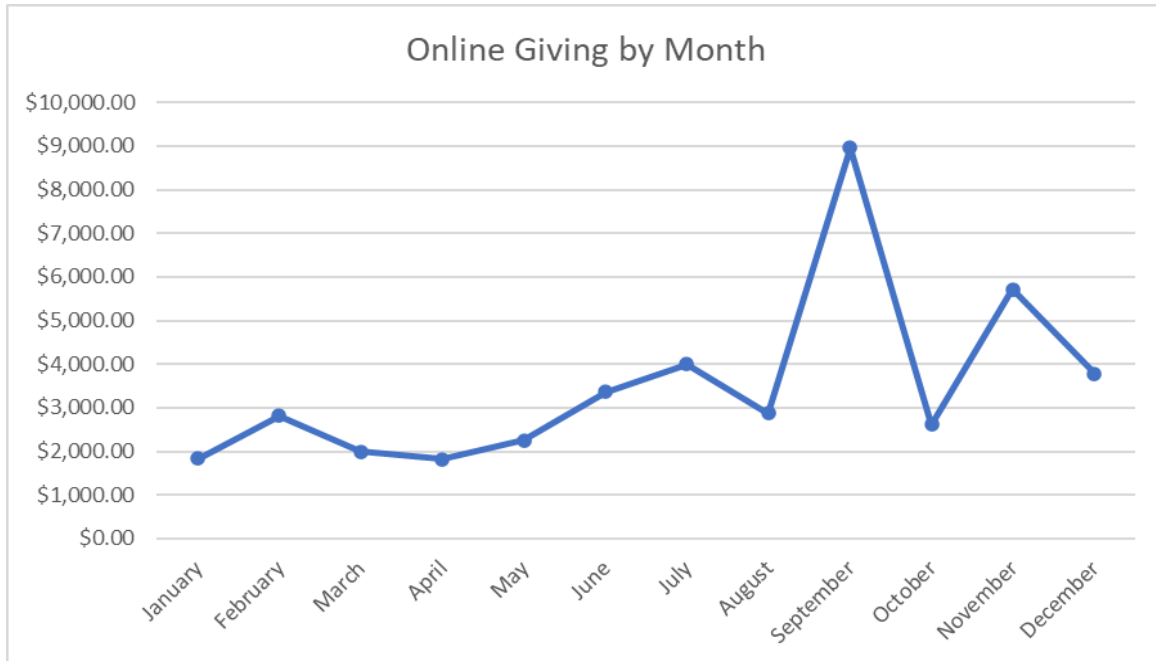


Notes:

1. Offset account money is received for reimbursement of expenses outside of budget and special events. These include but are not limited to study guides, group tickets, and other items.
2. Actual number of donors is unknown as money was received through offering plate collection process.
3. Giving stated in chart does not include specials.

Specials thanks to Pat Larson, Jim Henneman, Hannah Zesiger, Wally Staab, Sydney Grimes and Patricia Hancock for their help with counting the weekly offerings.

2023 Online Giving Totals



January \$1,840.00

February \$2,815.00

March \$1,992.00

April \$1,815.00

May \$2,250.00

June \$3,360.00

July \$3,995.00

August \$2,875.00

September \$8,961.00

October \$2,609.00

November \$5,719.00

December \$3,777.00

Total Online Giving in 2023: \$40,008.00

Online Giving totals included in Total Giving in report on previous page.

Submitted by Erika Trevino

Financial Secretary



I am pleased to present Bethel Baptist Church with the 2023 Bethel Christian School's Annual Report. It continues to amaze me how God works within our walls. I am thankful for Bethel Baptist Church's continued support and oversight of the school. Your vision continues to change the lives of the students we serve.

Bethel Christian School Board Members (2024)

Tim George (Chairman of the Board)	Mike Myers
Andy Gribbin (Vice Chairman of the Board)	Kerry Gleason
Ben Reiter	Erin Layden
Jean Wright	Samantha Eberlin
Luke Grimes	

Bethel Christian School Leadership Team (2024)

Scott Kaufman (Administrator)
Becky Crays (Vice Principal)
Janet Shields (Elementary Lead)
Erin Sinnott (Daycare Director)

Bethel finished the 2022-2023 school year "warrior strong." We had one graduating student, who went on to post-secondary studies. Budgetarily, the school was able to meet the goals of its 2022-2023 budget.

Entering the 2023-2024 school year, Bethel Christian School was blessed with higher-than-normal enrollment. The 2023 summer was spent completing building upgrades and relocating classrooms to accommodate the increased enrollment.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.
Joshua 1:9



- Building upgrades include:
 - Painting all the stairwells in the Andrus Building and in the main school building.
 - Converting school library in a new classroom, main building basement.

During the summer of 2023, Bethel Christian School was blessed to be able to hire two new teachers. God continues to bless our school by providing amazing teachers in the positions we need to educate and nurture our students.

We ended the 2022-2023 school year with 145 and started the 2023-2024 school year with 174 students. Our school verse for the year is , Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go - Joshua 1:9. At Bethel Christian School's kickoff event for the start of the year, we shared this verse and explained to both the parents and the student body that our goal for the school year was for our students to be strong and courageous in their faith. We also have brought in several guest speakers for chapel that have done an excellent job speaking to this verse.

We currently have 171 students and are on track to again meet all budgetary goals for the 2023-2024 school year. Please join me in praying for the spiritual health of our student body so that God will continue to move within their hearts. Pray for enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year, for the leadership team, and for the Bethel Christian School Board as we tackle the issue of classroom space in a growing school.

Lastly please join in praising God for 50 successful years in the Erie Community. God continues to work at Bethel everyday, through our teachers and daycare staff we are sharing the good news of Christ to over 230 students and 160 families.

Respectful submitted,

Scott Kaufman

Bethel Baptist Church

Officers elected for 2024

Treasurer - Tom Gribbin

Financial

Secretary - Erika Trevino

Deacons - Jon Anderson
- John Gribbin

Deacon

Steward - Wally Staab

BCS

Board - Kerry Gleason