

the
gathering

2021 ANNUAL REPORT

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GATHERING IDENTITY

Who Are We?

In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus made it clear why the church exists: The church exists to “go and make disciples...” That is our mandate. That is why we exist. That is Jesus’ call to His church. Therefore, at The Gathering, everything we do as a church must be about *discipleship* and making more and better *disciples* (i.e. *followers* or *apprentices* of Jesus). This document seeks to explain how we desire to do that.



OUR MISSION

Why We Exist

We Exist to Connect People to the Love of Jesus! (2 Corinthians 5:20-21)

We believe that God’s love is irresistible and that as we become more and more convinced of God’s love for us, that we will surrender more and more of our lives to Him. Knowing, experiencing, and sharing the love of Jesus is what discipleship is all about.



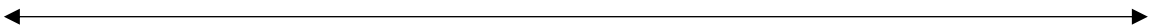
OUR VISION FOR DISCIPLESHIP

Who We Want to Become

We exist to connect people to the love of Jesus...so that they would follow Jesus! (Matthew 28:18-20)

We follow Jesus by:

- *Being With Jesus* (John 15:4)
- *Becoming Like Jesus* (Romans 12:1-2)
- *Doing What Jesus Said* (John 14:15)



MARKS OF DISCIPLESHIP

What Commitment to the Vision Looks Like

Three marks of a disciple who is committed to “Being With Jesus”:

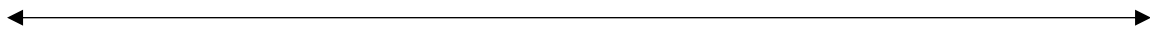
- Hunger and passion for Jesus (Matthew 22:37)
- Learning to hear God’s voice through prayer & Scripture (John 10:27)
- Knowing and increasingly living out of their identity in Christ (Ephesians 1-2)

Three marks of a disciple who is committed to “*Becoming Like Jesus*”:

- Increasing desire and commitment to being led by and filled with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16-18)
- Actively inviting the Holy Spirit to transform their character and to heal their heart (Galatians 5:22-23)
- Leaning in to authentic community and spiritual friendship (James 5:16)

Three marks of a disciple who is committed to “*Doing What Jesus Said*”:

- Increasingly ‘agrees with Jesus’ and commits to obeying His teaching (John 14:23)
- Actively pursues opportunities to share the Gospel and to make more disciples (1 Peter 3:15)
- Actively cares for ‘the least of these’; the poor, needy, and oppressed (Matthew 25:31-46)



CULTURAL VALUES

What’s Important to Us

1. We Value the Bible

We want everything we teach and do to be shaped by the Bible. We believe that all Scripture points to Jesus (John 5:39) and that it’s impossible to truly know Jesus without knowing the Bible. It is the inspired word of God and it helps us to become more and more like Christ (2 Timothy 3:16).

We want to be a people of the book!

2. We Value 24/7 Worship

We want the songs that we sing on Sundays to passionately and honestly reflect our love for Christ. At the same time, we know that worship is so much more than the songs that we sing one day a week. In fact, worship is a *lifestyle* and can be experienced in everything that we think, say, and do every single day of the week (Romans 12:1-2).

We want to be a people who worship Christ in everything!

3. We Value Prayer

We believe that there are things that God wants to do in our world that He cannot do unless His people pray. Prayer changes things (Matthew 7:7)! Church strategy, leadership and plans are all important but ultimately it is prayer that makes room for the Holy Spirit to work.

We want to be a praying church!

4. We Value People

Because we believe that people are God's most prized possession and that He loves everybody (no matter what), we are committed to being as welcoming and as loving a church community as we can possibly be. Everybody needs a church family. So whatever your story - there's a place for you around our table.

We want to be a loving church!

5. We Value Mission

We don't attend church, *we are the church!* And as the church, we are called to live as sent people in our everyday lives; sharing the love of Christ with our friends, neighbours, coworkers, and the poor and marginalized. The mission of God is to drive everything that we do in life (Matthew 28:18-20, Galatians 5:6). The church does not exist for itself, but for our hurting world.

We want to be a people who live on mission!

6. We Value Engagement

While some may treat church as a product to be *consumed*, we strive to be a church that encourages everyone to *contribute*. We believe that the church is not being the church unless everyone is playing their part (1 Corinthians 12:12-26). It takes everyone's time, talents and treasures to accomplish everything that God has called us to accomplish.

We want to be a church of contributors!

7. We Value Authenticity

In a world where people often hide behind their masks and pretend to be something they are not, we want to be a people who are taking our masks off and becoming more and more honest with God and with one another. We believe that 'authenticity' is a great indicator of spiritual growth and maturity (James 5:16), and so we long to be real and honest in everything that we do and say (both from the stage on Sundays as well as in our everyday lives!).

We want to be an honest church!

8. We Value Simplicity

We want to be a *simple church*; A church that focuses on relationships instead of programs. At the same time, we want everything we do to be done with excellence. This requires a laser focus and a commitment to doing only a few things, but doing them well. As a people, this also requires that we avoid the pull to over-schedule our lives, allowing God the space He needs to grow our relationships.

We want to be a focused church!



OUR THEOLOGY

What We Believe

We believe in God as eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God created and sustains the universe. The eternal purpose of God the Father is to create a people who will bring glory to God forever. God alone is worthy of worship.

We believe that God became human in Jesus Christ. Jesus came to restore the world because humans have rejected God in disobedience. Jesus taught and modelled the way of God's kingdom. He died on the cross, making it possible for us to accept a renewed relationship with God. He rose from the dead, broke the power of sin and death, and frees us to live in obedience to God's will.

We believe that God the Holy Spirit invites all people to be reconciled with God and to join the global family of faith. Believers confess their faith, are baptized, and join in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Through the power of the Holy Spirit and guided by the Bible, members of the church seek to live as followers of Christ and invite others to experience this new life.

As Christians, we look forward to the day when God will once again send Jesus to bring all things under God's eternal rule.

OUR LEADERSHIP & MEMBERSHIP

OUR STAFF:

Jeff Jantzi – Lead Pastor
 Kristyn Weatherbee – Church Administrator
 Dan Chook Reid – Church Planter

OUR ELDERS:

Noah Grossman – Board Chair
 Craig Cudmore
 Lori Dobson
 Michael Kirkwood
 Matt Oderkirk (Resigned effective October 14, 2021)
 Susan Peyton

OUR MEMBERS:

As of February 16, 2022 we have 42 active members at The Gathering:

Braden Bailey	Tracy Jackson	Julie Oderkirk
Paul Bussey	Jeff Jantzi	Matt Oderkirk
Rebecca Bussey	Kim Jantzi	Moti Nano
Dan Chook Reid	Brenda Kirkwood	Liam Peyton
Melody Chook Reid	Michael Kirkwood	Susan Peyton
Craig Cudmore	Matthew Koop	Jason Pierosara
David Dobson	Melanie Koop	Christa Ramsay
Lori Dobson	Roger Linton	Angela Richardson
Bob Duncan	Suzanne Linton	Charlene Rivet
Kim Duncan	Carole Lutes	Kevin Scott
Lara Dyer	Dennie Lutes	Mary Scott
Holly Grossman	Linda MacMillan	Kristyn Weatherbee
Noah Grossman	Nicole Meekin	Stewart Weatherbee
Rob Jackson	Colin Miller	Shawn Whalen

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF ELDERS

Dear Gathering Family,

Greetings on behalf of the Board of Elders. As you're reading this, we hope you and your families are in a healthy spot, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Like any other year, 2021 was full of highs and lows. As we settled into year 2 of the global pandemic, I think it would be safe to say we all suffered our share of COVID fatigue. The good news is that we have also seen signs of light at the end of the tunnel. Lockdowns, while cumbersome and inconvenient, came and went, and for the first time in over a year, we were able to start meeting as a congregation face-to-face this past summer. While initially starting with outdoor services, we were able to move successfully indoors when the weather started to turn this past fall. I know for me and my family, being able to be back together in person was a highlight of the year, culminating with live services on Christmas Eve. If you have not yet been able to return to in-person worship services on Sunday mornings, Jeff and the team have done a great job ensuring virtual services continue to the high standards we became used to in 2020. While we understand and respect that everyone will have different comfort levels in this season, our desire remains to continue in-person services, and we hope to see everyone return, when the timing feels right for you.

In Board news, we unfortunately had to say goodbye to Matt Oderkirk this year when he resigned from the Board in order to start a career with the RCMP. Matt has served faithfully for many years in our church, not just on the Board of Elders, but also in other ministries. Losing him has been a significant blow to our church family, and while we are sad to see him, Julie and the kids leave us, we're extremely excited for him and his new career opportunity. We pray that God continues to bless and take care of the Oderkirk family as He guides them on their new path.

This past year also marked the end of Lori Dobson's final term as a sitting Elder. Lori joined the board six years ago, and has been an invaluable member around our table, bringing thoughtfulness and incredible insights as we've navigated these last few years. We're thankful for Lori's commitment and dedication, but all good things must come to an end. Lori has earned a well-deserved break from the board, but we look forward to continued fellowship with her and the Dobson family on Sunday mornings and beyond.

Please read the Elder Nominations Report on pages 21-23 for updates on new board member nominations.

I encourage you to read from Jeff's and other's reports to hear what incredible things God continues to do through The Gathering. I would also like to acknowledge some incredible people in our congregation that have kept our church afloat, operationally. Jeff and Kristyn continue to serve faithfully and at a high skill level. I am continuously amazed and thankful to God for the team He has put around us to take care of us. I would also like to acknowledge my fellow Elders. It is an easy thing to serve on a board like this when everyone involved works as cohesively with each other as this team does. I would like to acknowledge our volunteers who have made in-person gatherings on Sunday mornings possible. Susan Peyton, Braden & Carrie Bailey and James Rowlandson have continued to

share the load in leading us in worship. Karen Prytulak has continued to lead our Kids Church on Sunday mornings, which I know first-hand is a highlight for all the kids who have been coming out. Finally, thanks to everyone that has continued to serve The Gathering with your time and finances. Volunteerism is the backbone of our small community church, and nothing would continue without the support of everyone who contributes.

Please continue to hold each other in prayer. Our church family has dealt in the past year with various ailments, while some continue to even now. Please pray for those in need of God's healing intervention. Continue to pray for Jeff, Kristyn, Dan and the Elder board, as we continue to faithfully seek God's direction for The Gathering. And please continue to thank and praise God for how He has continued to take care of us over the last year.

2022 will no doubt be filled with more highs and lows to come. As we continue to venture on together, may we continue to lean in and rely on God to sustain us individually and as a church family, and may we continue to lean into each other, our brothers and sisters in Christ. To borrow an oft used quote that we should all be used to hearing, "We're not meant to do this life alone."

I look forward to seeing everyone on Sunday mornings and beyond.

God bless,



Noah Grossman
Chair, Elder Board

LEAD PASTOR REPORT

Prepared by Jeff Jantzi

2021 IN REVIEW...

2021 started with lots of hope. Hope that the pandemic would 'end' (or at least 'slow down') by the summer or fall and that we could get back to 'normal' at some point in the year as a church. While things did open back up a bit and we were able to resume in-person services, it has been a much slower process than I imagined. Many people, understandably, have not been ready to return and reengage in in-person ministry. Volunteerism has been a challenge. Outreach events in the community were not able to happen. Giving did not quite bounce back the way that we had hoped and prayed that it would. And yet, through it all, God's still proved himself to be faithful. Our church continued to adapt, and God blessed and grew our ministry in some exciting ways. Even though things looked different than I had hoped, God still did some great things.

Here's just a glimpse into some of those things:

WORSHIP SERVICES

After 15 months (or so) of being online only on Sunday mornings, we were finally able to gather again (outdoors @ St. FX) in June 2021. I remember how emotional that first Sunday was. Seeing and talking to many of you again for the first time in forever, worshipping together with live music, preaching to actual people instead of a camera... it was a great moment and such a joy to be together again.

This particular Sunday in June marked the beginning of a new weekly rhythm for us and our worship services. Prior to this Sunday, we had been 'online only' each week, with the sermon portion of the service usually being livestreamed from my home. As we moved to being in-person each week, we wanted to continue to have a strong online presence as well. We knew that many people would not be able or comfortable joining us in-person for the time being, and that it was important that we maintain the same level of quality in our online services that we had become accustomed to over the past 15 months. (It's also a great outreach method, as many people now watch us online several times before ever joining us in-person!)

So, after considering our options, we decided to go 'hybrid' and to have both an *online service* (which would be pre-recorded and premiered on YouTube on Sunday mornings) and a live *in-person service* at the school as well. Same content (sermon, announcements, etc.), delivered twice for each audience. This has meant having to adopt a bit of new routine for the week for Kristyn and me, as we both record content for the online service on Friday mornings (which Kristyn then edits and publishes on YouTube for Sunday morning). For me specifically, this has meant completing my sermon prep earlier in the week (Fridays used to be a big sermon prep day), which truthfully has been a welcomed change.

All of that said, being 'hybrid' has worked well for us so far. We usually have between 50-80 people in-person and another 30-80 views on YouTube throughout the week (with anywhere from 5-15 unique streams live on Sunday via our online.church platform and YouTube). Obviously, being in-person allows us to do some things we can't do online (singing together, connection time, communion, kids ministry, etc.), but we are so grateful to be able continue to be able to reach people through our online services as well (including people from well outside of Ottawa!).

Now, some have asked, *“Why not just live stream the in-person service?”* It’s a good question, and something we used to do prior to the pandemic (though, admittedly, it was pretty poor quality). The short answer is that we want to continue to be very intentional to reach and to speak directly to people online. Livestreaming is fine and good, but it’s not the same as having the preacher/speaker looking directly into the camera and speaking to people in their homes. Also, livestreaming can be expensive. To do it well would mean having to upgrade cameras and equipment (and having volunteers operate it on Sunday mornings). And then there’s the internet, which isn’t all that reliable at the school. For us, pre-recording our online services just seems to make the most sense and is something we will do for the foreseeable future.

Over this past year, I have really enjoyed digging in to a couple different books of the Bible. In the Spring, we worked through the book of Ephesians. What a rich little letter! We also worked through several Psalms in the summer. And then in the fall, we started our journey through the book of Acts (which we will continue to work through into 2023). I love preaching through books of the Bible. It’s good to address different topics from time to time (like “community” and “the church” as we did in our “Better Together” and “The Church Defined” series), but getting into a book of the Bible and just letting God speak through it is so important. We will continue to do this moving forward, for the majority of the time.

I’ve also been quite encouraged to hear about and then meet some new people in our church. It amazed me how God continues to use us to reach new people, even in this season!

Finally, I do want to say “thank you” to everyone who has helped make our services happen throughout this past year. From our worship leaders (Susan, James, and Braden & Carrie), to band members, to the Prytulak family, to Craig Cudmore and Jason Pierosara who have helped us sort out the tech, to everyone else who has sent in videos and contributed in some way... you have all been instrumental in helping us “connect people to the love of Jesus” through our in-person and online services this year. Also, a big thanks to Kristyn who has been a rock star and helped to pull it all together. Well done everyone! I’m so grateful to be a part of such an amazing church full of amazing people who are committed to “connecting people to the love of Jesus!”

HOME CHURCH

While many of our Home Churches have done some things in-person over the past year, all of them decided to remain online for the weekly meetings throughout 2021.

There are a few reasons for this:

1. COVID – Obviously, the most significant reason groups remained online was due to the pandemic. While many are comfortable being in person, some are not. And so remaining online prevented groups from excluding people.
2. Child Care – Meeting online is much more convenient for young families.
3. Focus – Meeting online provides groups with structure to their meetings and can help them to stay focused on the topic at hand.
4. Comfort – Meeting online is easier for most people. Not having to leave home and being able to stay in comfortable clothes is always a plus.

Obviously, there are many challenges with being online as well. Screen/Zoom fatigue is real, it can feel

awkward at times (as much as we've all grown accustomed to this), and some people (many men, it seems) do not seem to enjoy engaging with others in this virtual way. This has led some to disengage from Home Church over the past year. For the most part though, we have still had **50+** people participating in a group each week throughout 2021. I am grateful to see many leaning into community, even if it's still only happening online.

In the fall, Dan Chook Reid and I attempted to launch an Alpha Group, but there were only a few who expressed interest at the time. We are hoping to launch again this Winter/Spring instead, if there is enough interest.

At The Gathering, we believe that Home Church is where 'real church' takes place. It's great that we can connect for worship and teaching on Sundays online, but it is in our Home Churches where we can truly connect and grow in life with God. I am encouraged by how God seems to be at work growing our church together in this way!

I want to thank all of our Home Church Leaders for all their hard work over this past year. It has not been an easy year, but for many people, Home Church has been a lifeline. Thanks for all you do, and for the ways that you commit to helping people grow as followers of Jesus.

OUTREACH

Outreach looked very different for us again this year. Once again, we were not able to host a Big Give, or a Movie in the Park, a Summer Soccer Camp or other events but we were, surprisingly still able to do quite a bit as a church family:

- **Virtual Bible Camp** – We had more than 70 children participate in our second ever Virtual Bible Camp via YouTube! This was a great way for us to make some new connections with families. Thanks to the Prytulak family for pulling this together! We had hoped to do an official in person VBC as well, but did not get enough registrants. Hopefully this year we will be able to do that.
- **OIM Sleeping Bag Initiative** – Together, we were able to send **17** sleeping bags (valued at over **\$2700**) to Ottawa Inner City Ministries as they minister to the homeless. This was a great, tangible way for us to partner with a vital ministry in our city!
- **Compassion Collective** – Together, we were able to contribute significant dollars to the work of Compassion in Guatemala! Thanks for sponsoring kids and for giving over-and-above to this amazing ministry.
- **Year End Giving** – We were thrilled to be in position to bless some of our partner ministries at end of the year (Jericho Road, First Place Options, OIM, Compassion Canada, and Bytown Community Church). See the financial report (on pages 24-28) for details.
- **Christmas Eve** – While attendance was significantly hampered by Omicron, it was great to be able to reach out to our community this Christmas. We had over 110 people attend a Christmas Eve service in 2021, with most of them being guests to The Gathering. We also had several people watching online.

KIDS MINISTRY

After 18 months of Kids Korners and virtual Kids Ministry, we relaunched in-person Kids Ministry on Sunday mornings. Karen Prytulak and her family have been leading the charge and I am so grateful for their leadership! We are so blessed to have them in our church and leading in this way. Thanks for all you do, Mrs. P, Steven and Daniel!

YOUTH MINISTRY

Our Youth Ministry partnership with Parkway has remained strong throughout 2021. Pastor Gavin and his team of volunteers have done a fabulous job connecting with our students. You can read Gavin's report regarding youth ministry on pages 19-20. Thanks to Gavin and our Youth Ministry volunteers!

ELDERS

I am so grateful for the support of a great board of Elders. I sometimes hear from pastor friends about their dysfunctional or unsupportive boards, and I am so thankful that this is not the case at The Gathering! Our board is great, and I am beyond thankful for them.

One of the key tasks that our board worked on this past year (through a subcommittee of the board) has been a revision of our by-law for the purpose of setting the church up as an incorporated not-for-profit. Craig Cudmore wrote a report about this which can be found on pages 29-30.

We also spent significant time in the summer/fall discerning a way forward for us as a church as it relates to vaccine passports. This was a challenging issue to work through given how divisive this issue has become, but I am grateful for the healthy way in which we engaged in this conversation with each other. In the end, keeping our church services open to the public (regardless of vaccination status) was very important, but asking that our in-person volunteers attest to being vaccinated or agree to being rapid tested prior to serving seemed to be the safest option for our people. I believe the board led us well through this issue.

We were sad to see Matt Oderkirk go in the fall of 2021 as he left for Saskatchewan to pursue a career with the RCMP. As exciting as it is for him and the Oderkirk family, Matt cannot be easily replaced. Matt, Julie and their girls have been key contributors in our church for years now, with Matt bringing very helpful perspective to the Elder Board. We pray God's richest blessings over Matt and the Oderkirk family as they pursue God's call on their lives! (Hopefully they don't have to move!)

Finally, I want to thank Lori Dobson as her term as an Elder comes to completion after serving as an Elder for six years. Lori has brought invaluable perspective to the board and I am so grateful for her voice and leadership around our table. Well done, good and faithful servant!

While replacing Matt and Lori is no easy task, the Elders are excited to be welcoming three new Elders to the board at our AGM in March 2022 (pending membership affirmation!). More on that in Noah's report from the Nominating Committee on pages 21-23.

SUMMER STUDENT

We were thrilled to have Steven Prytulak on staff as our summer student for the summer of 2021! He worked with Kristyn and Mrs. P to film and record our Virtual Bible Camp, volunteered with our Youth Ministry, helped out on Sundays, and supported Kristyn with various administrative tasks. Thanks Steven for all your hard work!

FACILITY COMMITTEE

Earlier in 2021, the board struck a committee (consisting of Matt Oderkirk, Michael Kirkwood, Stewart Weatherbee, and Richard Arulpooranam) and asked them to explore facility options for our church. This included looking at potential permanent spaces for our church, office space in the community, and other rental spaces (i.e. other schools) for Sunday morning worship services. While permanent spaces do not seem to be available in Riverside South and surrounding areas at this time, the committee did give a good look at other options (i.e. schools) for Sunday gatherings. While only the OCSB was renting out to churches through COVID (until other school boards opened up recently), the committee was intrigued by some of the newer schools in our neighbourhood as potential options for Sundays. While moving locations for Sunday morning is far from imminent, we will continue to explore these options in the event that it would make sense for us to make a move.

CHURCH UNITY

As we all well know, we live in a very challenging and polarizing time. Between opinions about lockdowns and masks, vaccines, government mandates, etc., there is no shortage of issues that the enemy could use to divide us (and IS using to divide other communities of faith). Thankfully, our church seems to have been well insulated from that thus far. While different opinions are present for sure, I am proud to say that (for the most part) our people have been quite mature in how we express them. Church unity – uniting around Jesus and what really matters – has been our goal and has shaped the way we have talked about issues where there may be disagreement. I am so thankful to be part of a church community that is committed to ‘keeping the main thing the main thing’ (of course, that’s Jesus!) and not allowing other issues to tear us apart!

One way we have tried to foster church unity is by having regular Town Hall Meetings online, so that we can pray together and provide important updates. Moving forward into 2022, we will continue to offer these every few months, as needed.

FINANCES

You can see a full report on pages 24-28, but I am so grateful for God’s provision in 2021. While giving is down and there are some question marks moving forward, God continues to provide all that we need through YOUR generosity. Thank you so much for being faithful with your finances and for believing in the ministry of our church!

ONMB

As a church, we have continued to be quite involved with our denomination, “The Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches.” Personally, after having sat on our denominations board for seven years (five as Chair), I stepped down at February 2021’s convention in order to focus more fully on family and ministry here in Ottawa. Noah Grossman will be stepping on to the ONMB Board in 2022, pending convention members vote of affirmation at the ONMB’s AGM in February 2022.

BYTOWN COMMUNITY CHURCH

Finally, I do want to mention how excited I am for Dan and Mel Chook Reid and the work that God is doing through their church plant, “Bytown Community Church”. Planting a church is very hard, and planting a church virtually during COVID is even more hard. But God is faithful, and slowly but surely He will build a great church community in the Downtown core of Ottawa. I am so glad that we at The Gathering get to be a part of it! Brenda Kirkwood and I both sit on Dan’s Task Force, and our board continues to provide oversight to Dan’s work.

See Dan’s report for more information on page 18.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022...

While things remain somewhat ‘uncertain’, it does seem as though we should be able to get back to some semblance of normalcy in 2022. (Though who knows for sure!)

Here are a few things that we are excited about:

SUNDAY WORSHIP

We will continue to hold both online and in-person services at St. FX on Sunday mornings, so long as COVID restrictions do not prevent us from doing so. We will likely move outdoors again for the warmer months, as we did last year.

We will continue in the book of Acts through to the end of May (while taking a break for Easter in April), and will pick it up again in the fall once I am back from sabbatical.

No doubt, attendance will continue to be impacted by COVID (and the social anxieties and mental health issues that have emerged as a result), but I am hopeful that we will return to our post-pandemic numbers (110-130 people on Sundays) at some point this year. Pray our church will reach more people in 2022!

VOLUNTEERISM

One of our greatest needs right now is for more volunteers. Kids Ministry, Nursery, Youth, Sound, etc... We need you! As you re-engage in in-person ministry this year, consider stepping into a role once again, or perhaps for the first time. (And a HUGE thanks to those who are already serving!)

HOME CHURCH

We will continue to encourage people to connect in a Home Church this year. This is the best way to connect and grow in our church. Hopefully, Home Churches will be able to engage in more in-person ministry again this year. Time will tell. Dan and I also hope to offer the Alpha course this Spring.

SABBATICAL

The board has graciously agreed to give me a 3.5 month Sabbatical, happening from May 31-Sept 14. Dan Chook Reid has agreed to cover for me on Sundays while I am away. Please pray that this will be a time of rest and renewal for me and my family! I am looking forward to spending lots of time with Jesus and with my family. We hope to be able to travel out West and spend some extended time out there while I am off.

OUTREACH

Throughout 2022, we will continue to look for opportunities to reach out and serve where we can.

This will include things like:

- **Connecting Streams** – This is a ministry that our own Linda Cudmore works with. They help churches find outreach opportunities that fit with the churches mission and vision. We will be engaging with Connecting Streams in a process to help us do this. Stay tuned for more details!
- **Respond Ottawa** – We will remain ready to respond to needs that present themselves to us through this important ministry (as we have the last two years through the pandemic).
- **“Vacation Bible Camp”** – We are planning on hosting an in-person VBC this summer! Pray that God provides us with a great Summer Student again.
- **Soccer Camp** – We are considering also offering a soccer camp, as we have in years past. This will depend on who our summer student is and the volunteer power we can achieve.
- **The Big Give and other events** – It’s our hope to be able to do a Big Give at the beginning of June (which may just be a movie) and a Movie at the Park in September. Of course, this will largely depend on what restrictions are and are not in place at that time.
- Blessing **Partner Ministries** like OIM, Jericho Road, Compassion Canada, First Place Options and Multiply.
- **Alex Suderman** – I will be engaging with a church planter friend in Germany this year, and will be working with our board to determine what a partnership with him could look like.
- **Other?** We want to remain as agile and flexible as we can, ready to respond to needs as God presents them to us!

ELDERS

I am excited to be adding three new Elders this year (pending membership affirmation): Colin Miller, Rebecca Bussey and Linda McMillan-Whalen. Noah Grossman has also decided to serve another year despite initially planning to step down. Craig Cudmore, Susan Peyton and Michael Kirkwood also remain on the board. Can't wait to work with this group this year!

SUMMER STUDENT

We are looking to hire a Summer Student this year – ideally someone who can help us with our plans for VBC, a potential soccer camp in August, Kids Ministry on Sundays, Youth Ministry during the week, and video/tech as it relates to our Sunday Services. Please let us know if you (or someone you know) might be interested!! Keep your eyes open for the Job Posting soon.

CLOSING COMMENTS

There is much more I could say – but this report has gone on long enough! If you're still reading, thanks for making it to the end ☺.

Once again, I want to thank every one of you for all the ways that you have served our Church Family in this season. It's been somewhat of a tough year, but we made it through together. Thanks for giving of time, talents and treasures in order to see our Church be more and more effective in "connecting people to the love of Jesus."

And thanks too to Kristyn and to Dan, who serve our church so faithfully. Kristyn in particular – the work you do for our church is so huge! We'd be lost without you. Thanks for all you do.

I love our church family now more than ever, and can truly say it is a joy being your pastor.

Our best days are ahead!!

Grateful for you, and Grateful to HIM,



Pastor Jeff Jantzi

CHURCH PLANTER REPORT

Prepared by Dan Chook Reid

2021 was a significant year. It marked the beginnings of Bytown Community Church! We saw many individuals and families begin to join and the community began to take shape.

At the beginning of the year, Bytown met online on Wednesdays and Sundays, studying the word together, encouraging each other and riding out the lockdowns. We encouraged deep spiritual formation through practices in Lent and studied Ephesians after Easter. Week after week people gathered, shared, and were encouraged.

As the warmer weather drew near, we shifted gears and began to meet in the park. This experience was amazing for our community. We were able to easily pivot to meeting in person while creating a safe and inviting atmosphere. Throughout the summer we discussed Jonah and Malachi on Wednesday evenings. Our discussions were full and rich. In addition, different members of the community took turns sharing from a Psalm on Sundays. It was a great rhythm for the summer, and it was powerful to hear from one another.

This fall, a small group of us went away together for Bytown's first retreat. We had a multi-generational group and a laid-back schedule. We sang goofy kids songs by the fire, followed by a Lectio Divina for the adults after the kids had gone to bed. It was really lovely. Relationships were deepened, and people found that the time away gave them the opportunity to try out different spiritual disciplines that get pushed to the side when we are in our regular routine. It is my hope that we can do something like this again.

Rich Villodas' book *The Deeply Formed Life* shaped our sermon series that started in the fall. We gathered in the basement of St Giles and talked through spiritual formation and contemplative rhythms and how they help us become more like Jesus. In addition, we discussed the practices of racial reconciliation, sexual wholeness, and emotional health. I have received really good feedback and am grateful that we could engage through these topics together.

The work of church planting is slow, and the transformation can take a long time. However, I am amazed how much our little community has grown over the past year. We have had some people check us out and not stick around, but a dedicated core group is forming and growing.

Some of the people we are walking with have had a hard time with church. They are hurting and have negative associations towards Christians and the politics of American Evangelicalism. However, somehow in our little community they are finding space for growth, healing, and hope. For these things I am deeply thankful.

Thank you so much for all your support. It means a lot to have the opportunity to do this work in partnership with a fantastic church community.



YOUTH MINISTRY REPORT

Prepared by Gavin Pedder, Family Ministries Pastor at Parkway



[re]UNION

2021 was another year of flux for our Junior High Ministry. With restrictions fluctuating, we had to manage the online versus in-person event balance. We ended up sticking with the view that if classes are in person, then we are in person, and if they are online, then we are online as well. That system has worked well for us in both Junior and Senior High, providing room for meaningful connection and preparation for both online and in-person events.

Our focus this year has been pursuing Christ with all that we have. That has been displayed in our teachings on Spiritual Habits such as Bible reading, meditating on Scripture (memorising), prayer, serving, and more. We have also reflected this in how we approach reading the Bible and teaching on it, seeing it as a unified story that points us to Jesus. The point being that all these habits, including Scripture, lead us to a meaningful relationship with Jesus. The fruit of this focus has been a closer community as we have sought God together.

There has been a much more consistent crowd this year, enhancing the community that already existed and leading to more meaningful relationships with each other. The ups and downs of the year have brought the youth together even more. The group is heading in a great direction together, and my prayer, which I hope you will join with me in praying, is that this group will grow together in their love for God and their love for others, becoming a source of encouragement, comfort, and accountability for one another for many years to come. We grow best in community.

MOSAIC

Much like [re]UNION, Mosaic (Senior High) has endured the same hardships and grown together through them. This group has done an exemplary job of inviting friends to be part of our community. Much like the Junior High group, this group has grown together throughout the year, particularly in their small groups, leading the way to deeper relationships and deeper wrestlings with important topics and struggles. This fall we took part in a series called, Not A Fan, which encouraged students to be fully committed followers of Jesus. Not just cheering Him on, but being part of His mission and being in relationship with Him. The students took this mission seriously and the group has been growing.

This year we've adopted a new model that helps us grow in our faith, grow in community, and reach those outside of our community. Every five weeks we have three weeks of teaching with games and small group time to discuss what we're learning and grow together. Then we have one week of just guys and girls groups where we break down what we are learning further and bring up any questions we may have, as well as participate in a fun activity as a group to grow in community. The

last week we have one big event where we encourage students to invite their friends to participate with us and introduce them to the group. This five week cycle is a new development, so we will see how it progresses, however it is more of an outgrowth of the intent I have seen in the youth over the course of this year. They are taking the call to grow together seriously, and they are reaching out to others to be part of this community of faith.

If you would like to reach out to me, please don't be shy, I'd love to chat! You can send me an email at gavin@parkwaychurch.ca.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Prepared by Noah Grossman, Board Chair

The members of the 2022 Nominations Committee were Noah Grossman, Susan Peyton, Stewart Weatherbee and Jeff Jantzi.

Working in accordance with The Gathering's constitution, the mandate of the Nominations Team is to assist the Lead Pastor and Board of Elders in the identification of Active Members suitable for appointment as Elders.

As part of its discernment process, the congregation was invited into a season of fasting and prayer for discernment and direction from the Holy Spirit, and was encouraged to submit confidential nominations to Pastor Jeff between November 14, 2021 and January 16, 2022.

Each nominee was given the opportunity to discern personally as to whether they wished to allow their name to stand and were asked to submit nomination response forms. Once the time for nominations had closed, the Nominations Team formally met with each candidate.

After meeting with three nominees, the Nominations Team was able to recommend all three candidates to the Board of Elders upon completion of the discernment process. The Board of Elders, in accordance with the constitution were given the opportunity to affirm the Nominations Team's recommendations.

This year the Lead Pastor, with the support of the Board of Elders and Nominations Team would like to recommend that Rebecca Bussey, Linda MacMillan-Whalen, and Collin Miller be acclaimed to the Board of Elders.

The Nominations Team wishes to thank the candidates for their willingness to let their names stand and wishes to thank all the board members for their past year of service: Noah Grossman, Lori Dobson, Michael Kirkwood, Susan Peyton and Matt Oderkirk. Matt Oderkirk resigned from the Board of Elders in the fall of 2021 and Lori Dobson will be stepping off the Board of Elders after completion of the Annual General Meeting on March 9, 2022.

Recommendations (Motion):

(1) That Rebecca Bussey, Linda MacMillan-Whalen, and Colin Miller be affirmed to the Board of Elders.

SLATE OF CANDIDATES TO THE BOARD OF ELDERS

Rebecca Bussey, Bio

Rebecca and her husband Paul have attended the Gathering since 2008. They have 3 children Ethan, Charlotte and Ryan.

Rebecca grew up in St. John's, Newfoundland. She and Paul moved to Ottawa in 1998 and to Riverside South in 2001.

Rebecca is a Registered Nurse and has worked in the Intensive Care unit at the General Hospital for the past 22 years.

Rebecca grew up in a Christian family, attending the Anglican Church. Rebecca likes to spend her days off walking in the woods with her dog, sewing, making soap, attending her children's games and competitions, and camping with her family in the summer.

Rebecca is looking forward to being a greater support to the people of The Gathering as a Church Elder.

Linda MacMillan-Whalen, Bio

Linda and her husband, Shawn, have attended The Gathering with their three children (Willow, Isaac, and Elias) since the summer of 2016. Active members of the Sandy Hill Housing Co-operative, they were looking for a church in their downtown neighbourhood. After their first visit to The Gathering though, they fell in love with the people, the community, and above all, the tangible presence of God at work in this suburban church. Since then, they've remained committed to and active in both communities, traveling between Sandy Hill and Riverside South to be present and "do life" with the people God has blessed them with as neighbours and friends.

Linda was born in Oakville, Ontario, but grew up in Moncton, New Brunswick, the daughter of a pastor in the Church of the Nazarene and a teacher-turned financial planner. She moved to Ottawa to pursue a degree in journalism and political science at Carleton University, and stayed to accept a position in communications with the Canadian Human Rights Commission shortly before her graduation. Over more than 25 years as a federal public servant, Linda has worked in six departments and agencies in a variety of roles in communications, policy development, and program delivery.

Through her career, her family life, and her engagement in the communities God has led her to, Linda strives to serve God by building deep relationships and meaningful connections with the people she encounters, knowing they are the people He created for fellowship with Himself.

Colin Miller, Bio

Colin, his wife Michelle, and their children, Laura and Daniel, have attended The Gathering since 2012, shortly after their arrival from the Halifax area. Upon their arrival, they tried a few local churches and decided on The Gathering due to its sound doctrine, friendly atmosphere, and commitment to the community.

Colin was born and raised in the Halifax area, attending both Saint Mary's and Dalhousie University for his post-secondary education. After graduating, Colin joined the RCMP, serving in various roles and is currently an adjudicator in its internal discipline regime.

Colin is a sports enthusiast; he loves playing, watching and conversing about various sports and looks forward to the time when he can spend most of his days golfing. Colin also has a strong interest in the development of our youth and has combined these two passions for many years, coaching soccer and basketball through local community organizations.

Colin was raised in a Christian home, regularly attending church with his family and attending various youth groups. During his time at The Gathering, he has volunteered his time fulfilling a variety of roles and has taken an interest in men's ministry.

Like all of us, Colin has experienced his share of highs and lows in life in general and in his walk with Christ. However, he has come to realize that God uses the low moments to draw him closer, build his reliance upon God and then use those experiences to achieve His purpose.

Colin looks forward to sharing his experience, engaging the local community and contributing to The Gathering's goal to build a diverse and inclusive church, where everyone can experience the overwhelming love of God.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Prepared by Michael Kirkwood

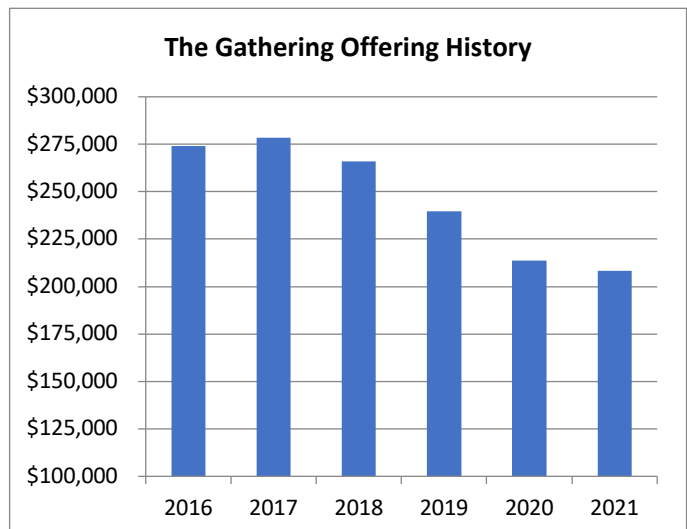
Statement Of Operations - Year Ended December 31, 2021:

Statement of Operations	2021			2020	
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Actual	Variance
Offering	208,012	226,000	(17,988)	213,687	(5,675)
Partnerships & Special Government COVID-19	0	0	0	11,315	(11,315)
Subsidies	22,567	4,800	17,767	16,786	5,781
Other Income	6,252	6,200	52	2,648	3,604
Total Revenue	236,831	237,000	(169)	244,436	(7,605)
Operating Expenses	33,306	39,100	(5,794)	31,829	1,477
Staff Expenses	139,553	143,500	(3,947)	135,050	4,503
Ministry Expenses	17,569	22,400	(4,831)	15,594	1,975
Outreach Expenses	1,456	5,000	(3,544)	2,581	(1,125)
Partnerships	22,690	22,000	690	24,450	(1,760)
Total Expenses	214,574	232,000	(17,426)	209,504	5,070
Net Ordinary Income / (Deficit)	22,257	5,000	17,257	34,932	(12,675)
Less: Depreciation Expense	3,817	3,500	317	3,560	257
Surplus / (Deficit)	18,440	1,500	16,940	31,372	(12,932)

Statement of Operations Commentary:

God provided for our financial needs in 2021! Despite the uncertainty of 2021, I am pleased to report that we finished the year with a **surplus of \$18k**.

When we set the budget for 2021, we did not know what the year would look like with respect to in-person worship services and ministry events and many other elements that impact our financial planning each year. We set a revenue budget for 2021 of \$237k and expense budget of \$235k, resulting in a small planned surplus knowing that results could vary significantly. While the results emerged differently than planned, our total revenue was almost exactly as



planned and our expenses were well below plan, resulting in a sizeable surplus of \$18k to end the year!

While the overall revenue was in line with plan, our Offering was below budget by \$18k (and \$6k below 2020). This offering shortfall was offset by higher than anticipated Government subsidies through the Covid-19 Wage and Rental Subsidy programs.

On the expense side, our expenses were below budget across multiple different budget line items, primarily due to reduced expenses from fewer than budgeted in person worship services and ministry events. Total expenses were \$17k below budget (and \$5k higher than 2020).

We are celebrating that God provided a surplus in 2021! At the same time, 2021 saw a continuation of the declining offering trend that we have seen since 2017, which is a concern as we plan for 2022. With a return to more in-person worship services and ministry events in 2022, we are expecting a corresponding increase in our expense base. To support the increased expenses, we will need to see a return to higher offering levels seen prior to the onset of Covid-19.

Balance Sheet - As At December 31, 2021:

	31-Dec-21	31-Dec-20
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Chequing/Savings	94,609	51,581
Other Current Assets	5,807	15,601
Total Current Assets	100,416	67,183
Fixed Assets		
Cotton Candy Machine	112	140
Furniture & Fixtures	2,727	3,408
Media Equipment	3,228	3,464
Computers	1,840	4,089
Music Equipment	438	548
Total Fixed Assets	8,394	11,648
TOTAL ASSETS	108,810	78,831
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
Current Liabilities		
Credit Card	8,625	1,604
Accounts Payable	5,848	1,330
Total Current Liabilities	14,473	2,934
Equity		
Retained Earnings	75,897	44,525
Net Income	18,440	31,372
Total Equity	94,337	75,897
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	108,810	78,831

Balance Sheet Commentary

The Balance Sheet reflects our overall financial health at the end of 2021, which has **improved** from the same time a year ago. Our 2021 operating surplus has increased our equity position to \$94k, providing some additional cushion and financial flexibility for the church.

Most significantly, our current assets (cash and receivables) have increased from the same time a year ago, while our debts remain low.

Multiplication Fund (incl Bytown Community Church)

Financial results presented throughout this report represent results for our General Fund, and exclude revenues, expenses and balances for the Multiplication Fund (Bytown Community Church).

During 2021, the Multiplication Fund received \$78,401 in revenue and incurred \$82,896 in expenditures, for a net deficit of \$4,195 in 2021. The cumulative balance of the Multiplication Fund at December 31, 2021 was \$34,139.

The results we report to Canada Revenue Agency, and which are available publicly, consolidate the Multiplication Fund into our General Fund to present our overall results.

Notes to Financials:

- All reports are produced and all bookkeeping is entered using the accrual method.
- The depreciation on capital assets is taken using the prescribed rates set out by the CRA.
- These statements are for review by board and members.
- The production of these statements does not constitute an audit or an engagement review.

2022 Proposed Budget

	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	Change
Revenue			
Offering	208,012	225,000	8.0%
Government Covid-19 Subsidy	22,567	0	
Other Income	6,252	6,000	
Total Revenue	236,831	231,000	-2.5%
Expenses			
Insurance	1,911	2,000	
Office Rent	12,000	12,000	
School Rent	7,044	20,000	
Mileage Expense	0	1,000	
Office Expenses	4,697	5,000	
Bank Fees	1,482	1,500	
Telecommunications	1,854	2,000	
Professional Fees	3,819	4,000	
Total Operations	33,306	47,500	+43%
Staff & Student Salaries	118,887	127,600	
CPP, EI & Benefits	19,796	21,300	
Other	896	900	
Total Salaries & Compensation	139,553	149,800	+7%
Ministry & Services			
Supplies For Services	3,125	4,000	
Video's & Multimedia	482	600	
Honorariums	605	900	
Worship Supplies	589	750	
Youth Ministry	5,685	5,900	
Kids Ministry	2,281	2,400	
Conferences	0	2,000	
Resources & Curriculum	1,880	3,000	
New Attender Luncheons	0	300	
Elder Meetings	51	300	
Benevolence	166	1,000	
Staff Ministry Expenses	2,704	3,000	
Total Ministry & Services	17,569	24,850	+41%
Community Life & Outreach			
Advertising & Marketing	1,394	2,500	
Events Expenses	62	4,000	
Total Community & Outreach	1,456	6,500	+340%
Total Partnerships	22,690	16,000	-29%
Total Expenses	214,574	244,650	+14%
Net Ordinary Income / (Deficit)	22,257	(13,500)	
Less: Depreciation Expense	3,817	4,000	
Net Income / (Deficit)	18,440	(17,500)	

Budget Commentary

As we establish a budget for 2022, there are two general changes from 2021 which will put pressure on our budget, as follows:

- A (welcome) return to weekly in-person worship services and ministry events throughout the year, which will mean an increase in our expense levels versus 2021 (when we only met in person during the late summer and fall months).
- We do not anticipate receiving any further government Covid-19 subsidies in 2022.

Revenue

An increase in offering levels would be necessary to offset the impact of higher expenses and lower subsidies. For 2022, the Board is recommending an **8% offering increase versus 2021 results**. This increase, while quite large year-over-year, would result in a total offering of \$225k, which would bring us approximately half-way back from the 2021 results to pre-Covid offering levels (\$240k in 2019). Including Other Income of \$6k, we are budgeting for total revenue of \$231k.

Expenses

We are planning for **total expenses of \$245k**, plus depreciation costs of \$4k.

This level of revenue and expenses will result in an **annual deficit for 2022 of \$17.5k**. This is obviously not desirable, but we believe that the surplus accumulated over the past two years puts us in a position to withstand a short-term deficit as we return back to pre-COVID levels of activity and offerings.

Expense highlights

- **Ministry and Operation expenses** increasing due to higher costs associated with return to weekly in person gatherings.
- **Salary & Compensation** expenses increasing by 7%, driven by a 4-5% cost of living adjustment for staff, as well as funds budgeted for both a Summer Student and temporary support during Pastor Jeff's planned sabbatical.
- **Events** expenses increasing to provide financial capacity for outdoor worship services or events through the summer.
- **Partnership** donations to external ministry partners / organizations of \$16,000 – decreased from prior year due to budget constraints.

The Board proposes this budget for the 2022 fiscal year.

INCORPORATION AND BY-LAW SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT

Prepared by Craig Cudmore

Since its inception, The Gathering has operated as an unincorporated charity. This meant that, although we had charitable status, we did not have the protections afforded to a corporation. Corporations enjoy special status under the law that provides protection to the members and the directors. However, corporations have some extra reporting requirements.

In 2021, the Government of Ontario brought into force the new *Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, 2010* (ONCA) that greatly simplified the process for not for profit and charitable organizations to incorporate. In 2020 the Board formed a subcommittee to examine the requirements and benefits of incorporation. The subcommittee reported back to the board with a recommendation to proceed with incorporation.

The incorporation process has several steps including choosing a unique name, creating a new By-law that is in line with what's required by the ONCA and filing all the documents. In 2021 the paperwork was filed to form a corporation named **The Gathering Ottawa Church Ministry Corporation**. The directors of this new corporation are the members of our Church Board, and it has sat dormant until we were ready to start using it. That time has arrived.

One of the biggest tasks in the preparation has been creating a new By-law to replace the existing Constitution of The Gathering. We wanted the new By-law to respect the fundamentals of how The Gathering has operated over the years, to clean up areas that weren't clear, and to be compliant with the ONCA.

After lots of hard work, we have a draft By-law for the new corporation. Most of the By-law comes either directly from the default ONCA By-law, or from the text of the existing Constitution. This By-law has been reviewed by an outside expert in Church by-law, who felt that it accurately represented our goals. It has also been circulated to the congregation for review and feedback. After its own review, the Board is recommending its adoption. The new By-law is meant to be both a legal and a spiritual document and as such contains legal text, a prayer and scripture references to back up the content.

There are a few changes in the new By-law from the old Constitution. Some notable changes are:

- The preamble has been replaced with a prayer blessing the reader.
- The number of classes of membership has been reduced to 1 ("Active Member").
- All meetings can now be attended in person or electronically.

The day-to-day operation of the Church is not impacted by incorporation. A few areas that will change are:

- The Directors of the Corporation/Elders will be elected directly by the membership instead of being appointed by the previous board.
- As long as the Church's annual budget is under \$500,000, we can pass a resolution at each Annual General meeting to do a financial review instead of a full (and costly) audit.
- Elders/Directors will have a 2-year term with a maximum 3 consecutive terms.

- There will be some additional government filings required after each Annual General Meeting to update the list of Directors.

To move from the unincorporated organization to a corporation there will need to be several motions at the Annual General Meeting.

- 1) Motion to transfer membership. There will be a motion to accept all existing members as members of the Corporation.
- 2) Motion to adopt the new By-law as the governing documents of the Corporation.
- 3) Motion to transfer assets and liabilities from the unincorporated organization to the Corporation. This will ensure that the assets and liabilities are now owned and protected by the Corporation.
- 4) Motion for a financial review. This motion will allow us to do a less-expensive financial review instead of a full audit.
- 5) Motion to dissolve the unincorporated organization. This will put in motion the process to wind down the unincorporated organization as the Corporation will now be the legal entity in use.

The members of the subcommittee will be happy to answer any questions related to these motions at the Town Hall Meeting on March 2, 2022 or at the Annual General Meeting on March 9, 2022.

We would like to thank all that have taken time in the past 2 years to offer assistance. We pray that this new structure will serve the Church well into the future.

*** The new By-laws can be found at thegatheringottawa.com/bylaws.

FINAL COMMENTS

By Jeff Jantzi

First, let me say “thanks” to everyone who contributed to this report (Noah, Gavin, Dan, Craig, Michael, Rebecca, Linda and Colin)! Each of you play a significant role in the life of our church and I am so grateful for each of you.

Secondly, as we conclude this report, I also want to say thanks to each and every one of you who serve and contribute to the life of our church in whatever way you do. We need each other to be all that God has called us to be!

I am reminded of the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:27 (NLT): *“All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.”*

I'm so grateful to have you as a part of THIS local expression of the Body of Christ, especially in this challenging season.

Keep leaning into Him and trusting Him for the future of our church, knowing that He has great things in store!

- Jeff