

2023

milestones &
momentum

ANNUAL
REPORT



GRACE CHAPEL

LEXINGTON

WATERTOWN

EAST LEXINGTON

WILMINGTON

FOXBORO

ONLINE

Milestones

2023 Marks the 75th year since a group of families first met together in a home in Lexington to share teaching, worship, and community. Over the span of several years, this gathering of families met regularly for Bible study in homes, eventually forming a new non-denominational church that incorporated and became Grace Chapel.

KIDSTOWN AT HOME
YouTube Channel launches

ORIGINALS
A night of original worship music,
written and preformed by Grace
Chapel's Worship Team

First Annual **VISION WEEK**

29 Children Dedicated

Mission partners hosted
authentic Middle-Eastern dinner
during Global Awareness Week

51 Baptisms

Over 3,400 attended our in-person
Christmas Eve Services 🕯️

75 Bibles Presented

Grace Chapel **ISRAEL TRIP**

Over 4,000 attend in-person
Easter services - highest since 2019

474 Kids Attended Kidsweek

316 Middle- and High School
Students Attended
Overnight Retreats

Our Christmas Eve services,
SILENT NIGHTS, lit up a
historic theatre marquee!

Do you have a milestone or
momentum story of your own?
Share it with us! grace.org/story

WINTER WARMERS
Social Gatherings Launched

**LET'S
CELEBRATE
WHAT THE
LORD HAS
DONE!**

"Give thanks to the LORD, call on His name. Make known His deeds among the peoples; make them remember that His name is exalted." Praise the LORD in song, for He has done glorious things; let this be known throughout the earth."

— Isaiah 12:4-5

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From our Senior Pastor

■ **Milestones & Momentum**

After a year or two of “fits and starts” coming out of the pandemic, it feels like we finally found our groove again this year. I remember standing in the lobby on Vision Sunday back in the fall, watching all the activity and connections happening in the lobby, and saying to myself, “Now that’s church!” And so it has been week after week in every area of ministry this past year. Once again, we’ve been celebrating milestones – Bible presentations, child dedications, baptisms, 5000 YouTube subscribers, etc. – and gaining momentum. Week by week people have been finding their way back to in-person services, and our online and in-person Easter services reached over 8,000 people!

■ **Disciple-Making: With God, With Others, For the World**

Our ministry theme shaped our teaching journey this year.

Exodus: Scenes from a With-God Life – Looking into the example of Jesus and other biblical teaching, we discovered beauty and order in everyday practices like rest and work, gathering and scattering, thinking and acting, and many more.

Silent Nights – During Advent, we explored the spiritual practices of silence, solitude, and stillness as demonstrated in the arrival of God’s Son to our world.

One Another: Risking a With-Others Life – Considering the one-another teachings of the New Testament, we discovered that you cannot be a disciple or make disciples alone. We need each other.

I Am – During Lent, we discovered the goodness and impact of a With-Jesus life by considering the seven “I Am” statements of Jesus in John’s gospel.

Revelation for the World – The mysterious and challenging final book of the Bible sends us out into the world, on mission, with courage and confidence in Christ’s victory over evil and the restoration of all things.

■ What's New?

As we continue to innovate, we're trying new ways of doing ministry and being the church. We expanded *Vision Sunday* to *Vision Week* as a way of bringing new energy and clear vision to our fall kick-off, and introduced the idea of *Campus Sundays* to allow each campus to celebrate and cast vision for what God is doing uniquely in and through their congregation. Our *Originals* nights provided us with opportunities to worship and be inspired by the creative and collaborative efforts of our worship leaders. *Gratitude Sunday* invited us to pause and give thanks for God's faithfulness through the pandemic, and to give generously toward a new future. *Winter Warmers* gave us an opportunity to make new connections and were so well-received they inspired us to try *Summer Coolers*! Our Community Engagement initiatives saw 200 people participating directly with **The Boston Project**, and helped ten **Afghan families** get settled in greater Boston.

■ Strategic Priorities

Re-launching after the shutdown prompted us to focus on two strategic areas of ministry: Discipleship & Equipping.

Discipleship became our ministry theme for the year, inspiring much of our teaching, and the building of new discipleship platform, The Journey, beginning with more than 50 curated resources supporting seven spiritual practices, reformatted Life Groups, and a personalized Discipleship Planning Tool that over 500 people utilized.

Our **Equipping** priority focused on recruiting and training a new wave of volunteers across all our ministries. The initiatives included a personalized GPS Tool (Gifts, Passions, Story) and a monthly ministry focus inviting people to serve in some non-typical ministry areas, e.g. IT, Facilities, HR, etc., along with Kidstown, Student Ministry, and Welcome Teams.

■ Financial Ups and Downs

Most of the year saw a slight increase in giving over last year, and the over-and-above gifts to the Digital Ministry Initiative continued to fund that aspect of the ministry. We were also able to give \$147,232 away in special offerings including Middle East Earthquake Relief, Global Awareness Week, and Christmas Eve. The slowing economy caught up with us toward the end of the fiscal year in April, and we ended up falling 7.5% below last year's giving. While we were able to meet all our expenses, and remain financially sound, growing our General Fund giving must be a priority for next year.

■ Pastoral Residencies

Our continuing partnership with the Made to Flourish organization enabled us to launch Sharon Dhavale, who was a pastoral resident on our Watertown campus, to a new permanent post at Tenth Presbyterian Church of Vancouver, BC. David Morreale spent the second year of his residency serving the Foxboro campus, was ordained to the gospel ministry here on May 21, and has accepted our offer to become our Pastor of Connections and Young Adults! Our new resident, Josiah Kish, will join us in June to serve on our Wilmington campus.

■ Personally Speaking...

This has been an eventful year for me, as both my parents passed away in February, leaving behind a legacy of faith, family, and Kingdom service for which I am deeply grateful. Sharing that journey with all of you, and experiencing your care and support, has been a deeply moving experience for me, and I find myself more grateful than ever for all the years and milestones we have shared together as a church family.

And with the announcement of my final year as senior pastor at Grace, I find myself cherishing every opportunity to worship and open the Scripture with all of you, to collaborate with our vibrant staff and engaged elders, and to watch in amazement as the Lord works through all of you to build His church and extend His gracious Presence in our community, city, and world.



Bryan Wilkerson
Senior Pastor



Letter from our Elder Board

In a year marked with milestones and with a renewed sense of momentum, we stand at a crossroads.

June brings the end of the school year, graduations, weddings, the arrival of summer, and Grace Chapel's Annual Celebration. While we have so much celebrate this year, we look ahead to a year of change, a year of transition.

Jeremiah's words are as relevant in 2023 as they were when he sat down to write them. He tells us to stand and look, to reflect on the many ways God has been faithful and guided us through both turbulent waters and calm streams, to ask Him where He wants us to go, then walk with confidence in the way He has laid out for us. Our reward will be peace, rest for our souls.

And so, as we stand at these crossroads, with Pastor Bryan entering his 24th year as our Senior Pastor and preparing to step into his new role as Pastor Emeritus, we do so with confidence that God will lead us in His good way.

Yet it's still a lot to process.

For a journey like this, structures provide great support. In Grace Chapel's earliest days, our founders wisely put in place the Board of Elders. In the New Testament, 2 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 define the qualifications necessary to serve as an elder: committed men and women who are solidly grounded in their faith and serve with humility and grace. Elders guard the doctrinal and fiscal integrity of our church, and guide our ministry staff and congregation in fulfilling our mission. Elders provide pastoral care to our congregation and are an important and vital part of our prayer ministry.

Our board is currently made up of 14 elders: 12 volunteer leaders from our congregation, and Pastor Bryan and our Executive Pastor Mark MacDonald who represent the Office of the Senior Pastor. We meet approximately 21 times a year, serve on a variety of committees, develop high level strategies and policies, and make decisions on issues that affect the entire church body. It is a joy to serve with these very committed and capable men and women.

This year we have focused on reviewing our Articles of Faith, connecting with staff members who have updated us on their particular ministry's joys and challenges, and partnering with Pastor Bryan in preparation for his - and our - transition year.

Our Articles of Faith, the foundation on which Grace Chapel was built, are current, and we are grateful to our founders for compiling such a remarkable and God-honoring document. The meetings with our ministry teams have been rich in relationship building, information sharing, and a time of encouragement, discipleship, and prayer. A Transition Team, made up of a subset elders, has been meeting throughout this year in preparation for Pastor Bryan's announcement. They worked long and hard to bring us to such a strong place right now. Thank you for your commitment to do this well.

An important part of our elder work is prayer. We commit each Sunday evening at 5:00 to meet via Zoom to pray for the needs of Grace Chapel, those in our church family who are struggling, our world, and each of you by name. It is a joy to lift you before the Lord.

As a member of Grace Chapel, you have the opportunity to serve – to find the place to serve that fits you perfectly, to be part of a Kingdom movement, to see God at work in your own life and the lives of others, and even make lifelong friends. If you are currently serving – thank you! If you are looking for a place to volunteer, don't wait any longer. There are great opportunities awaiting you – be part of the momentum moving forward.

As my term as elder, and chair, comes to a close, I want to thank you for the privilege of serving you, serving Him, and being part of the incredible Milestones and Momentum that makes up the Grace Chapel story. And as we stand at this crossroad, let us link arms and hearts and move forward into the remarkable future that has been built on a sure and solid foundation.

Blessings and Gratitude,
Cynthia Fantasia
Chair, Grace Chapel Elder Board





 3 NEW MEMBERS FROM OUR ONLINE CAMPUS	 15 STORIES PRODUCED	 10 ONLINE CAMPUS EVENTS
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35,624 WATCHING
HOURS GRACE CHAPEL
CONTENT

THAT'S OVER
1,485 DAYS!

Thinking Like Missionaries

Reaching and ministering to people in online spaces requires us to think like missionaries who creatively bring God's good news of hope to the internet in new ways.

In addition to our weekly online services, we've had a vision to tell more stories, using digital media to celebrate the diversity of people, personalities, and gifts that makeup the Grace Chapel community. We've shared stories of people experiencing freedom and healing because of Jesus, being empowered to give their time and serve, and take a step to explore and deepen their relationship with God and their community.

Every week we hear from and meet people who share the hope, inspiration, connection, and sense of God's presence our online ministry has brought them.

We heard gratitude from a family who was unable to attend an in-person Easter service because of their immune-compromised daughter. A family in the midwest in the midst of a really challenging season in life sent us this note: "I just got done with your Easter service and found myself praising God, worshipping Him, and also sobbing my way through it. It touched my heart so much...I was really down about many things in life but brought me back out of all of that, and focused on God, the only way my family will get through any of this."

We regularly meet and hear stories from local families who find their way to one of our in-person campuses for the first time after feeling connected through our online service.

Human stories are powerful and can transcend differences and create connection, and we hope to share even more stories this coming year. We are eager to expand our content strategy this next year to reach people who may not be looking for church but who may be looking for help or hope!

Pastor Leah

Leah Knight Breton
Pastor, Digital Ministry



Digital community
is real community.



1,982
FOLLOWERS ON INSTAGRAM

13,319
MOST VIEWS

54
MOST SHARES

358
MOST LIKES

@WEAREGRACE



Facebook Page Followers

331 LEXINGTON	1,204 WILMINGTON	835 WATERTOWN	512 EAST LEXINGTON	566 FOXBORO	4,530 ONLINE
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Facebook Group Members

922 LEXINGTON	314 WILMINGTON	196 WATERTOWN	82 EAST LEXINGTON	105 FOXBORO	112 ONLINE
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5,867
SUBSCRIBERS ON YOUTUBE

614
ADDED THIS YEAR

YOUTUBE.COM/
GRACECHAPEL



1,907
AVERAGE WEEKLY
ONLINE ATTENDANCE

ONLINE WORSHIP

Website



120,594
NEW VISITORS

500,00
TOTAL PAGE VIEWS

GRACE.ORG

App Users



1,533
TOTAL DOWNLOADS 2022

2,702
APP USERS

DOWNLOAD

Sharing the Kingdom
through all our *platforms*.

DIGITAL + ONLINE



Over 525 people created a personalized discipleship journey using our Discipleship Planning Tool.

Looking for a plan to help you on your own journey?

Try our Discipleship Planning Tool! This tool generates a customized plan for your discipleship journey over the next few months and coming year.



Click to hear Pastor Tim Ghali share about The Journey.



"...my small group took up listening to the Bible Project around Exodus. That's been fits and starts. And now I find myself in a place of great opportunity at work and thinking through how Jesus would have me act."

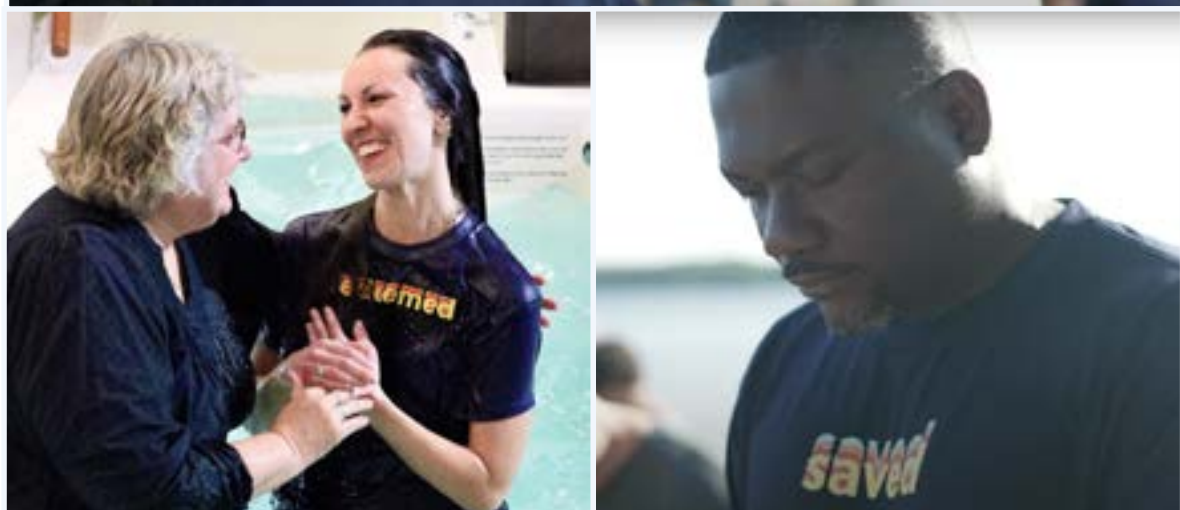
– The Journey Resource Library User

Start your journey at grace.org/journey

51 Baptisms

26
YOUTH

25
ADULTS



Baptism is an **outward expression** of an **inward decision** to follow Christ, and a **powerful response** to His call on our life.



Here are some words about the meaning of baptism from some of the people who were baptized this year at Grace Chapel:

"I was always scared of not being a good enough Christian, that I would have to do this or that to be worthy of being baptized. But then over the past month I learned that is not what it is about, and that Jesus loves me unconditionally. I want to live my life with Jesus, for Him. I repent of my sins and turn to Him. That's what it's about." – Fee

"Today is the happiest day of my life, I couldn't wait for the sun to rise this morning. From today onward is the greatest opportunity for me to serve my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ more and get to know Him more, and Him getting closer to me through the Holy Spirit of God." -Edward

"God is not done with me. I've got a purpose, and I know that sharing the love of God with others is what I need to be doing." – Cindy



Ongoing & Short-term Groups



Meaningful, rewarding relationships start with authentic and honest conversation.

In addition to our Sunday worship services, we offer smaller gatherings that make it easier to get to know people and build friendships. These smaller connection opportunities happen midweek and on Sundays, at church or in homes, and are open to everyone. We refer to them simply as Groups.

The purpose of smaller gatherings is to practice the way of Jesus together through growing spiritually, growing in relationships, and growing in serving those around us in our communities. We meet to listen to what God is doing in our lives, to listen to each other's needs, to the needs of those around us, and to pray together.

From short-term groups on a specific topic, to ongoing groups for men, women, and families, there's a place for anyone to belong here at Grace Chapel!

Toddlers and Preschoolers learn about the love of Jesus through music, crafts, play time, and video Bible lessons.



Kids Served per Campus

729	176	64	27	59
LEXINGTON	WILMINGTON	WATERTOWN	EAST LEXINGTON	FOXBORO

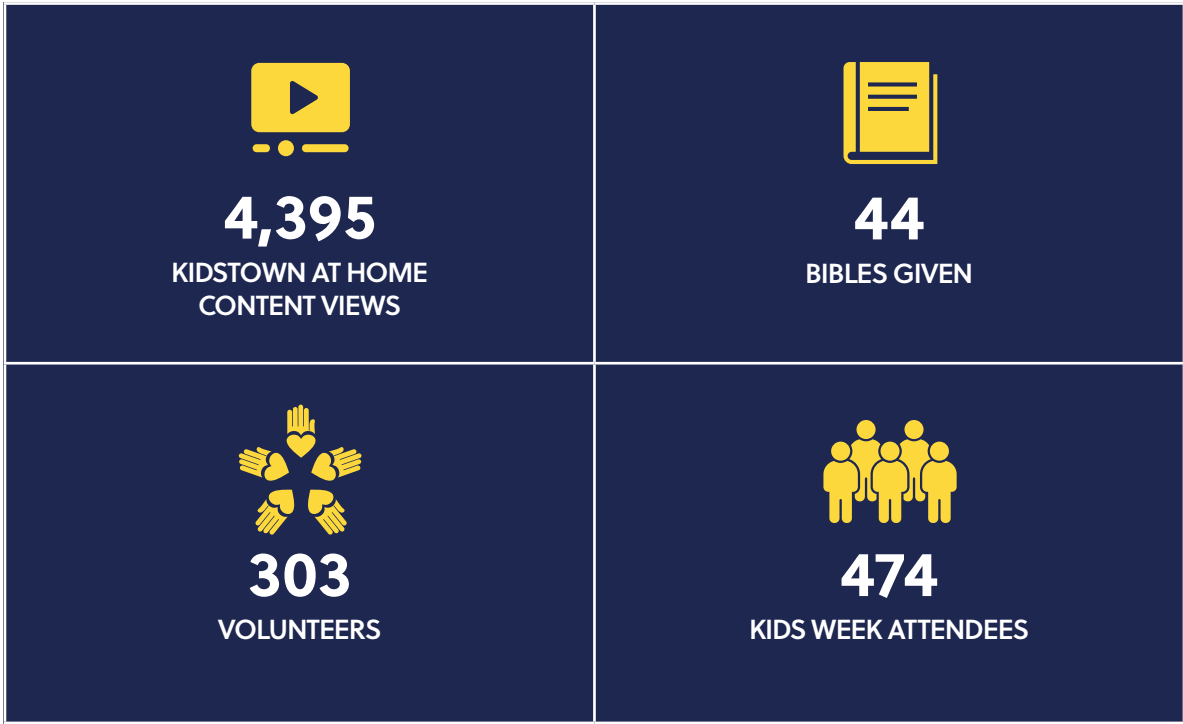
Our mission is to help children develop a relationship with Jesus.

Building a strong faith foundation in a child is a challenge every parent faces, and we’re here to help! Our Kidstown children’s ministry partners with parents to help grow and nurture the faith of their child through all the stages of their young life.

Sunday mornings, our Kidstown children’s ministry is designed to teach your child about God in a fun way, and allow them to see God in action each week. Kids will learn that the Bible stories we read are not just accounts of the past but can be applied to our lives today!

Elementary kids participate in large group skits and table discussions, worship with fun dance moves, and play games to learn about and build Biblical character.





Kidstown at Home

Kidstown at Home upgraded from a playlist to its own YouTube Channel this year! It’s designed to help preschool, elementary, and pre-teen kids learn about God, Jesus, and the Bible.

The channel has over 120 curriculum videos and over 35 original content videos from our very own Kidstown team! If you want to see your favorite Kidstown director dance and be silly all while teaching kids about Jesus, check it out and subscribe. It is a great resource for kids to have fun while they learn about Jesus on the go or at home.

There is also an accompanying monthly resource library on grace.org/kidstown-at-home with activities and discussion topics to go along with the videos to create an interactive, fun, and engaging experience for families.

Kids Week

Kids Week is a weeklong, half-day camp that happens for one week on each campus over the summer. Kids Week helped kids make friends and learn about Jesus through live story performances, meaningful crafts and activities, and lots of crazy silly fun! Last summer kids learned that when you put your trust in Jesus, you can “MAKE WAVES” and change the world around you because of His Spirit living inside you.





Students Served per Campus

281	62	19	27	35
LEXINGTON	WILMINGTON	WATERTOWN	EAST LEXINGTON	FOXBORO

Our mission is to lead students to discover, develop, and own their faith.

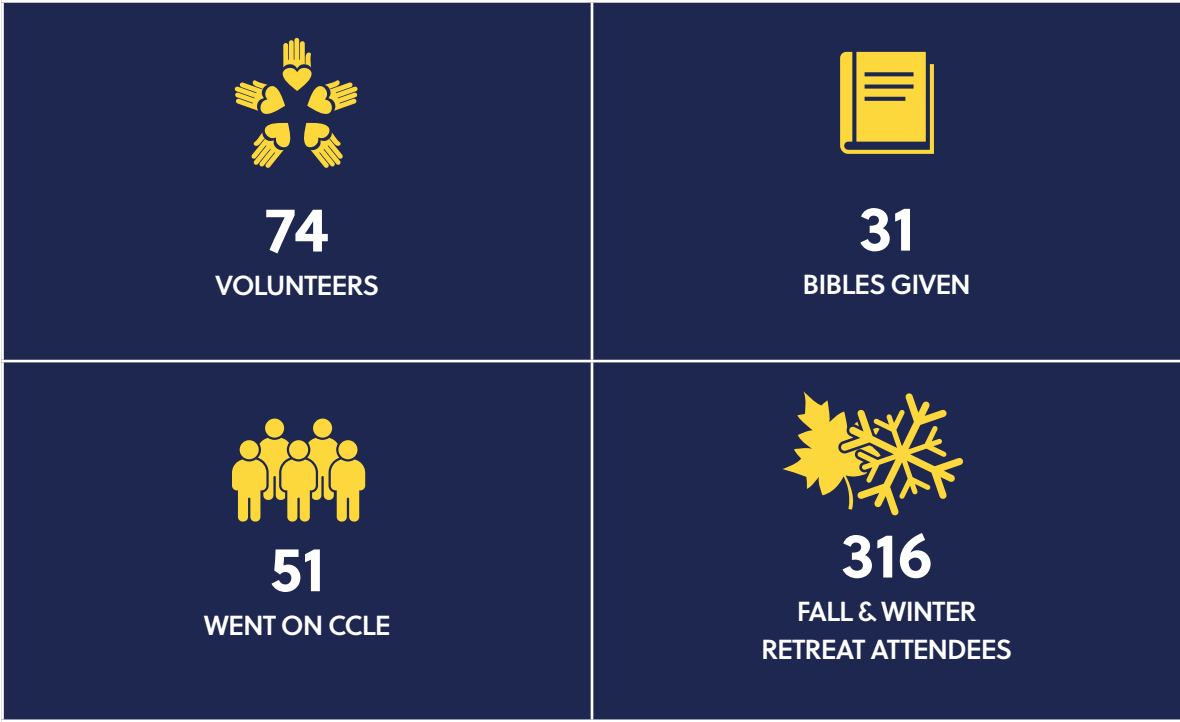
Our Student Ministry for Middle and High School Students helps young people grades 6-12 understand how much God loves them, and how to integrate faith into all aspects of their lives.

Through fun and meaningful experiences, students build friendships as they encounter Jesus. They have the opportunity to ask questions, stay curious, and experience faith and life together. Students feel known and cared for as they develop relationships with Jesus, each other, and adults who are investing in their lives.

Through our in-person small groups for students, middle and high-schoolers built relationships with each other and with Jesus as they explored and discussed relevant Bible topics.



Student Ministry (cont.)



Student Ministry Events

Students grew in their faith and deepened their friendships this year while having lots of fun learning about Jesus through a variety of small group and large group experiences. They discovered who they are in Christ through a variety of different series, including a student favorite: Humans of the Bible. In this series, they learned about God’s infinite love chasing after them through the eyes of some lesser-known Bible characters. They had a great summer full of events including Color the Night and beach trips and kicked off the fall with a thrift shop homecoming. Students were excited to participate in the overnight retreats this year, they got to escape all the stresses of school and daily life, put away their phones and hang out with their friends for uninterrupted weekends. All the students across all campuses got together in February and went to camp Spofford for the “Forever Now” winter 2023 retreat and learned how their hope in God is forever, and how that hope impacts their lives now.

Cross Cultural Learning

27 Middle School students participated in a Cross Cultural Learning Experience (CCLE) serving alongside Boston Project, a Grace Chapel ministry partner located in Dorchester, MA. They learned about food insecurity and food injustice, served alongside a food bank, worked in community gardens, and painted signs to draw local attention to fair food opportunities and access. Our students also partnered with Boston Project’s own middle school group, learning from one another, and serving together.

The High School students returned to the Philadelphia Project for their first in-person CCLE in three years. 24 students served alongside Philly Project repairing and painting walls and ceilings, running a church camp for neighborhood kids, and serving local non-profits. They also prayed and committed to dedicate their lives to listen to where God is sending them to share His love.





It's a blessing to minister to people who need care and to witness how God moves in their situation.

-Bill, Stephen Minister

When I needed someone to pray with me I thanked the Lord Jesus Christ for the opportunity that Grace Chapel provides Prayer Ministry.

-Tamara, Prayer Ministry Team Member

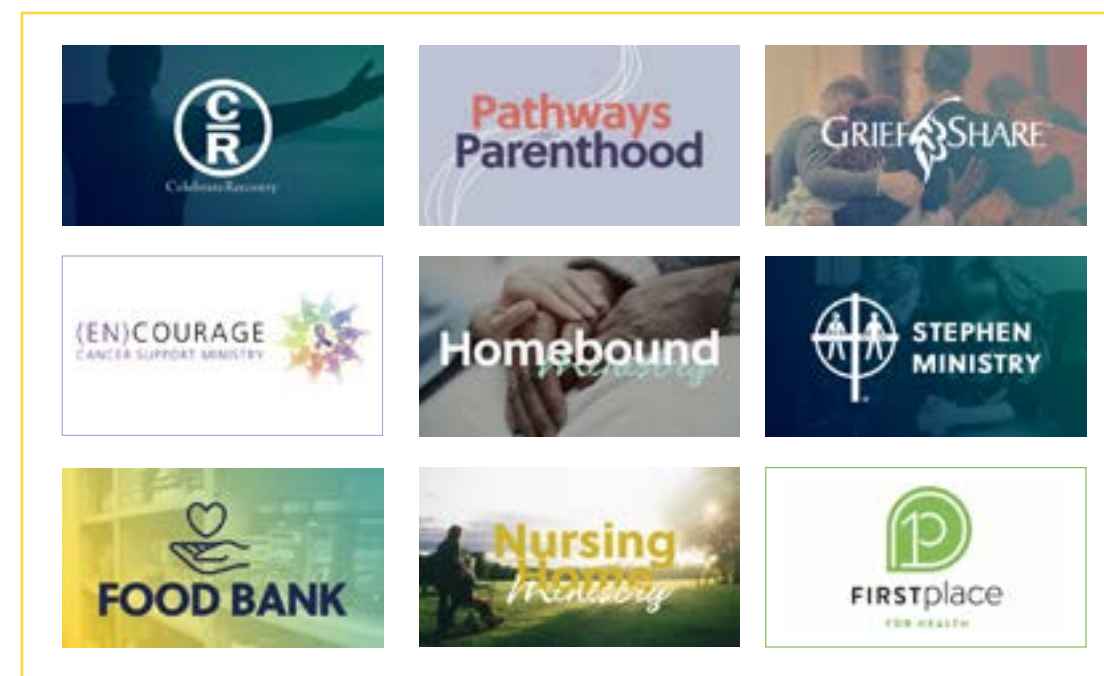



66
VOLUNTEERS IN
CARE & SUPPORT MINISTRIES

|| Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. ||

— Galatians 6:2

Scripture encourages us to bear one another's burdens, and Grace Chapel's Care Ministry programs provide opportunities to listen, pray, encourage, and support one another during these seasons of difficulty.





Baptisms May 1, 2022 — April 30, 2023	51
Church Membership as of April 30, 2022 New Members May 1, 2022 — April 30, 2023	1,800 <u>+101</u> Subtotal = 1,901
Transferred/Dropped Deceased	28 23
Total Membership as of April 30, 2023	1,850

Membership is a personal, practical, and public commitment to the ministry of the local church... your local church.

Becoming a member of Grace Chapel is more than just a public declaration of commitment to the mission and vision of our church. Membership is a deep meaningful commitment to each other: to caring for one another as we all strive to bring God's love into the neighborhoods and communities we share.

Membership is also practical. Grace Chapel is a church with a long history of congregational governance, where members approve key decisions that affect the future of our church. Members approve nominees for church offices and our annual operating budget, as well as strategic decisions like opening new campuses. Members at Grace Chapel are leaders.

This year we celebrate the 102 new members of our church!

Members Gone Home To Be With The Lord

Mark Hemenway	Claire Parks
Linda Frizzell	Jean Willets
Madeline Favaloro	Anna Majeed
Gary Gabrielson	Ruth Chu
Irene Hagenian	Lorraine Salto
Marion Woodard	Harriet Sutfin
Doris Nardone	Judy Brock
Fred Benkley	Harold Marciano, Sr.
Janet Lowther	Stan Fottler
Joan Butler	
Joseph Freni	
Richard Pulkkinen	
Robert J.Magee	
Raymond Nickerson	

New Members Added

Mark Allen	Tim Jackson	Marsha Mellon	Kayla Rodriguez-Barbosa
Sharon Allen	Nithila Jeyakumar	Cameron Mercer	Maritza Sanchez
Clarise Amoah	Preethi Jeyasekaran	Hovhannes Mesropyan	Catielly Santos
Ellen Amoah	Elka Johanes	Debbie Miller	Riny Saptari
Annie Athyal	Roby Johanes	Doug Murphy	Vidi Saptari
Jeffrey Bettencourt	Eric Joseph	Kyung Murphy	Kevin Schworm
Donald Bettencourt	Caroline Kalanzi	Grace Mutooni	Marah Snoeyink
Elizabeth Bettencourt	Kwanga Kawesa	Elim Na	MeerYoung Song
Janice Bettencourt	Sibeso Kawesa	Tim Nelson	Wanda Teimouri
Adefolarin Bolaji	Katie Krystyniak	Marlene Noel	Lorraine Tingley
JoAnn Botte	Bob Kuecker	Jacqueline O'Neill	Caroline Waweru
Ron Brinker	Pat Kuecker	Adebunmi Elizabeth Odefunso	Cheryl Wells
Jack Chan	Tony Kwong	Christine Oginz	Henry Wen
Doug Cogswell	David Last	Kaleb Pan	Iris Wen
Kim Cogswell	Grace Lee	Kate Pedersen	Dennis Williams
Jonathan Dahmer	Esther Lee	Diego Pena	Anna Wong
Juliana Dahmer	Jae Lee	Julie Pena	Abrielle Zinki
Jackie Dejean	Rafael Leonor	Carl Peterson	Justin Zinki
Kimberly Eggleston	Levina Lim	Linda Peterson	Alexandra Zubialde
William Eggleston	Jeevan Mathew	JR Polson	John Zubialde
Tina Fan-Seto	Divya Mathew	Kendra Polson	
Glenn Gutierrez	Mani Mathew	Donna Poynton	
Theresa Haenn	Talene McCarthy	Peter Poynton	
Daehee Han	Nancy McDermott	Lisa Presti	
Allison Hutchinson	Sade McFadden	David Prince	
Jason Hutchinson	Jennifer McMahon	Sue Reardon	
Patience Jackson	Kristina Meduna	Juan-Carlos Rodriguez-Barbosa	

Each Campus has a Campus Community Engagement Team which continues to work alongside vibrant organizations in their communities.

LEXINGTON

LexRAP
(Refugee families)

Assisting Lexington Refugee Assistance Program (LexRAP) with tutoring, finances and support of refugee families in the area to make them feel welcome.

WATERTOWN

Watertown Boys & Girls Club

Building relationships and tutoring students at the Watertown Boys and Girls Club to make a positive impact in their lives.

EAST LEXINGTON

Arlington Eats

Financially supporting and delivering food through Arlington Eats to ensure sufficient and nutritious food for the community.

WILMINGTON

Fostering Hope

Financially supporting and working alongside Fostering Hope and the DCF to help local families through the process of fostering and adoption.

FOXBORO

LYNN Ministries & Hockomock Area YMCA

Supporting the events of the Foxboro YMCA including the Town Christmas Tree Lighting and Founders Day, to partner and serve the local community.

CHURCH-WIDE PARTNERSHIPS

Boston Project in Dorchester
Emmanuel Gospel Center
Afghan Family Resettlement

Serving our local communities, because we're all in this together.

It has been a strong year of Community Engagement.... reaching outside the walls of Grace Chapel to meet the physical and spiritual needs of our surrounding communities. There are currently 100 volunteers working to resettle Afghan Families by building relationships, helping the men to find employment, getting the kids enrolled in school, teaching English, and sharing the love of Jesus. Our ten Family Teams have taken families to multiple museums, enjoyed the Swan boats, and had cookouts.

We also have nearly 100 volunteers serving alongside our Partner Boston Project Ministries and the Neighborhood Church to support Tech Boston Academy and bring Shalom to Dorchester. 50 Grace Chapel folks accomplished several key projects during Spring Serve. We also have helped host several Tech Boston Teacher Appreciation Lunches, and our students have written notes of appreciation to them.

The Community Engagement Team worked with the Neighborhood Church and Boston Project to show the new documentary Juneteenth: Faith and Freedom on June 3rd. The Art Gallery Team hosted the Mural Artist, Alex Cook, who has painted eight murals for Boston Project, and about 70 folks helped him paint his 102nd YOU ARE LOVED mural, which now hangs in the Lexington Campus Lobby.

Alpha continues to reach out to introduce those in our communities to Jesus. We had ten Alpha Courses over the year, with over 150 participating.

Pastor Richard Rhodes served this year as the President of LICA (Lexington Interfaith Clergy Association) with clergy representing Jewish, Christian Science, Sikh, Muslim, Unitarian, Congregational, Episcopal, Baptist, Non-Denominational, and Catholic churches and synagogues. He also led these Clergy on a two-day Retreat this spring.



Global & Local Outreach (cont.)



Partnering with ministries and being the hands and feet of Jesus, here in Greater Boston and around the world.

Mission Partners

43 ACTIVE PARTNERS			4 RETIRED PARTNERS	
22 LEXINGTON	9 WILMINGTON	4 WATERTOWN	4 EAST LEXINGTON	4 FOXBORO

Here are some of our mission partners, listed by region:

NEW ENGLAND

- Hagar's Sisters
- New Life Home for Women & Children
- Alpha New England
- Boston Project Ministries
- Place of Promise
- Emmanuel Gospel Center
- Boston Rescue Mission

MULTIPLE REGIONS

- PEER Servants
- Posture Shift Ministries
- World Relief

AFRICA & MIDDLE EAST

- Cedar Home for Girls, Lebanon
- World Relief, Malawi
- Wycliffe Bible Translators, Chad
- Bible Society of Egypt
- Grace Church, Jordan
- ISTEEL, Angola
- Bridges of Hope (Jossour), Egypt

LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

- Hope for the Children of Haiti
- Potter's House Association, Guatemala
- Life Giving Water International, Ecuador

EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

- Horizons International, Thailand
- NBCBS, Nepal
- YWAM, Thailand
- Bethel Church Ministries, Nepal
- Youth for Christ, Sri Lanka
- Good News for India
- OMF International, East Asia
- Prison Fellowship, Nepal
- Nepal Ebenezer Theological Seminary

EASTERN EUROPE (Moldova)

- Jesus Savior Church
- Little Samaritan Mission
- Invest Credit (PEER Servants)

GLOBAL AWARENESS WEEK

The 2022 GAW theme was "Listening: Keeping in Step with God's Spirit in Missions." We learned from our partners about ways we can be more prayerful and attentive to the Holy Spirit's leading in missions, in our church, and in our lives. It was our first in-person GAW since the pandemic—how good it was to be with our partners again!

This year's Global Awareness Week provided many opportunities for folks to listen to and connect with the 11 visiting partners from seven different nations: events like a Middle Eastern dinner served while hearing updates from Lebanon and Egypt, a virtual CCLE to Malawi, a home-cooked Guatemalan meal served while learning about Potter's House, and informal times of talking to partners at various church gatherings or at the tables they set up in the hallways.

Our partner, Karim Anayssi, director of Cedar Home for Girls in Lebanon described how their work was filled with challenges from the long-term impacts of COVID, economic and political instability, and the disastrous explosion in Beirut in 2020. Banks were closed. Security was lean. Food was scarce. Yet, the Lord graciously provided for the girls and staff at Cedar Home. They never went hungry and were kept safe and close to Jesus throughout these tumultuous years. In fact, through the leading and provision of God's Holy Spirit, Cedar Home is well on their way to establishing a home for boys. How encouraging it was to hear about the ways the Lord has been laying a firm foundation amid adversity!

Our keynote speakers, David and Jackie Ro of OMF International, gave messages of encouragement to our church, challenging us to trust God in all things, while sharing stories of how God has proved Himself faithful to their family through "small" and "big" decisions.

Thank you for participating in and supporting Global Awareness Week and our visiting partners. The sharing that occurs during GAW cultivates our understanding of what God is doing through us and our partners locally and around the world. It's a small taste of how God is using all our partners to help reach the nations.



SRI LANKA

SRI LANKA & LOCAL PARTNERS

MIDDLE EAST EARTHQUAKE



\$36,041

SRI LANKA
GLOBAL AWARENESS WEEK

\$31,043

SRI LANKA
& LOCAL PARTNERS
CHRISTMAS EVE

\$78,201

MIDDLE EAST
EARTHQUAKE
WINTER 2023

Local generosity, global impact.

We are so fortunate at Grace Chapel to have developed over many years strong, enduring partnerships in Greater Boston and around the globe. In a world that can sometimes seem discouraging, numerous challenges arose this past year, some continuing from previous years, some new. In all cases, our partners, with prayer and financial support from Grace Chapel continue to be God's hands and feet in many difficult places and trying conditions.

World Relief and Jesus Savior Church, two of our partners in Moldova, continued to step into the tragic Ukrainian refugee crisis serving hundreds of Ukrainian mothers and children by providing shelter, food, warm clothing, educational support, and counseling.

In Sri Lanka, an economic, societal, and food crisis impacted the ministry of our partner, Youth for Christ Sri Lanka, resulting in huge challenges in meeting salaries and dealing with day-to-day living. Through your generosity during the special offering taken during GAW and Christmas Eve, Grace Chapel provided resources that helped fill needs not only within the Youth for Christ Sri Lanka community, but also in the wider population.

The earthquake in Turkey and Syria caused much devastation. With support from Grace Chapel and other organizations, our partner, Jossour ("Bridges of Hope" in Arabic) was used by God to provide support for many local churches as they offered food, clothing, shelter, counseling, emotional support and spiritual food for many of those in Syria affected by the earthquake. Thanks to Grace Chapel's special offering shortly following the earthquake, we were privileged to be able to join our partner as they came alongside church pastors and leaders who were offering practical love, support, and tangible care to their neighbors.

Not only in dealing with challenging situations, but in so very many places and in so many ways, the love of Christ was shared with people across many cultures, languages, and faith backgrounds. One highlight was a very successful Cross-Cultural Learning Experience (CCLE) in March for a team of eight from EPIC to our partner in Guatemala, Potter's House. In one week, they gave workshops, taught ESOL classes, made prayer visits, and painted classrooms in Guatemala City before moving on to Chiquimula, where they built a much-needed hygiene station, participated in more prayer visits, and even did some gardening alongside a local family.

Through your support for our Missions Partners, Grace Chapel was able to be used by the Lord to provide faithful, Spirit-breathed relationship and encouragement to people in our region and around the globe.

Financial Update

Your steadfast love, O LORD,
extends to the heavens, your
faithfulness to the clouds

–Psalm 36:5

Incredibly Faithful Despite Uncertainty

In keeping with the theme of this year's annual report – Milestones and Momentum – I would like to highlight one noteworthy milestone. This year we celebrate 75 years since five Lexington families began meeting for worship in Nate and Jewel Hubley's home in Lexington. That is, for sure, a very significant milestone in the life of our church. And we can say that our great God has been with His church – Grace Chapel – throughout those 75 years providing people who have given of their time, talent, and resources.

Expecting that we would still be emerging from the consequences of the pandemic last year, we set a modest 4% increase to general fund contributions over the previous year's actual results. Our thinking was that as we made our way back to pre-pandemic levels of ministry, the level of giving would cover a return to our full ministry. However, as we have all experienced, emerging from the pandemic has been a long, rough, and bumpy road with a whole host of twists and turns thrown in. Pre-pandemic we were comfortably operating with a revenue goal of a little over \$9.5 million for our general fund and it is important to note that our goal for FY23 was \$8.96 million – \$579K below FY20, just three years prior. And our pre-pandemic levels of giving did not include the added operational costs of our Digital Outreach Ministry. All those costs related to the online campus and digital outreach which had been covered by the Digital Ministry Initiative now land in our operating budget. All this in an economy that continues to impact all of us.

It is also important to note that we are navigating a paradigm shift in the big "C" Church as well as our church – Grace Chapel. Today we are miles ahead of where we were, and are truly now a church embracing all that our physical and digital capabilities offer. We have returned to our in-person services in our sanctuaries while continuing to offer a dynamic online service as well. We also do a significant amount of our outreach through digital stories, sermon summaries and program invitations. The online service and digital outreach efforts are now professionally produced by a dedicated team who take all kinds of things into consideration for the viewer – many things that we never thought about before.

With the help of 421 new first-time givers, contributions totaled \$7,992,717 in fiscal 2023. This included gifts to support regular church ministries and staff at all campuses, as well as funding to support our global and regional mission partners. Praise be to God and with gratitude to you – the faithful and generous people of Grace!

Beyond that, we are grateful to God, to you the congregation, and the Grace Chapel Ministry Staff that we ended the fiscal year having aligned our FY23 expenses to meet giving levels. Remarkably, the congregation also provided \$485,337 in special gifts including Digital Ministry, Benevolence Fund, and special offerings that were over and above General Fund giving, to help meet the critical needs of people in our congregation, our local neighbors, and those serving Christ around the world (more detailed information on our special offerings and impact is covered in our Global and Local Outreach Report). The faithful and generous giving of our congregation especially in these uncertain times is an incredible testimony to God's faithfulness and the faithfulness of God's people of Grace.

What Does This New Fiscal Year Look Like?

We are cautiously optimistic that we are making our way beyond the consequences of the pandemic. As Pastor Bryan mentioned in a letter in the spring...

"We reminded ourselves, early in the pandemic, that God could and would use this season to refine, renew and reform His big "C" Church, and our church as well. We believed that if we persevered and innovated that God would meet us where we were and do something new and beautiful in and through us."

We are seeing new faces in the pews, new members joining every month and we have new staff members bringing a fresh perspective and new skills to our ministry. New ministries and new events have been added that are enabling us to fulfill our mission in this new cultural landscape we find ourselves in these days. It does feel like we have a new energy in our ministry and a fresh wind of the Spirit in our worship services and gatherings. This gives us great hope for this new fiscal year. Now we need to focus our efforts on raising General Fund contributions to match the ministry opportunities that we feel are right on our doorsteps.

We have always carefully and prayerfully planned year over year, but I must admit: through these last three years we have become even more aware of our dependency on God to show up through His people and for that we are grateful. With that in mind, we have set our giving goal at 5% above actual results from FY23. That increase corresponds to a giving goal just under \$8.4 million for FY24. As we pray to achieve more than this 5% increase in giving, we hope to continue to address the new ministry opportunities we see before us, as we also deal with the increasing costs across all our ministries.

We remain committed to our stewardship goals that address these budget challenges by:

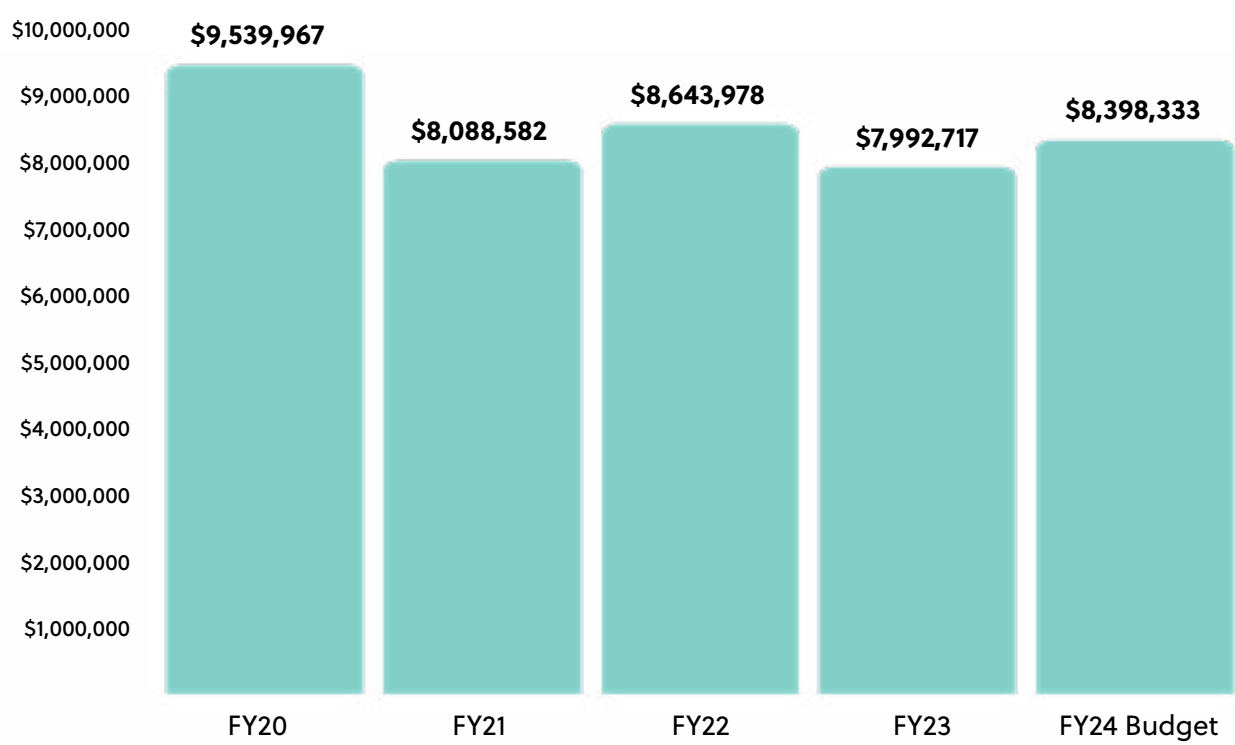
- Continuing to encourage people to take steps of faith on their giving journey.
- Continuing to embed faithful stewardship more meaningfully in the life of the church.
- Carefully watching our expenses to keep them in line with actual giving throughout the year.

We always remain positioned for growth in every aspect of the ministry even as we walk through this year of significant leadership transition. The Board of Elders is proposing an operations budget for FY24 based on \$8,398,333 in General Fund contributions. It is our deep desire and earnest prayer that more and more people in greater Boston will discover life with God, for the good of the world. We feel like God has answered our prayer and has given us a renewed sense of where He is leading and taking us. We have the opportunity before us to serve in ways we never thought we could, and to reach more people than we ever could have hoped or even imagined. Our prayer is that God continues to show favor to us as a church that is called and committed to serve greater Boston and beyond – for His Kingdom purposes and for His glory alone!

Respectfully submitted,


Mark MacDonald
Executive Pastor

General Fund Giving

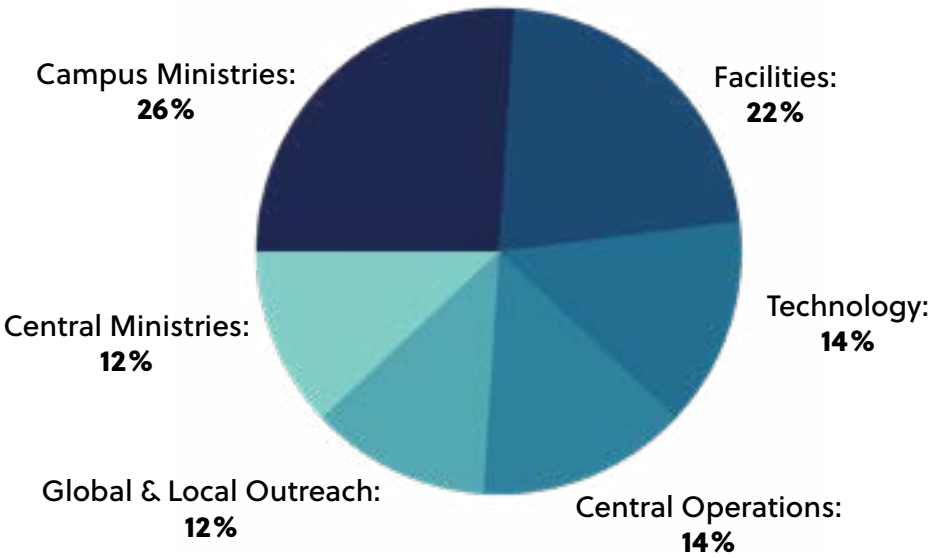


FY24 Proposed Budget

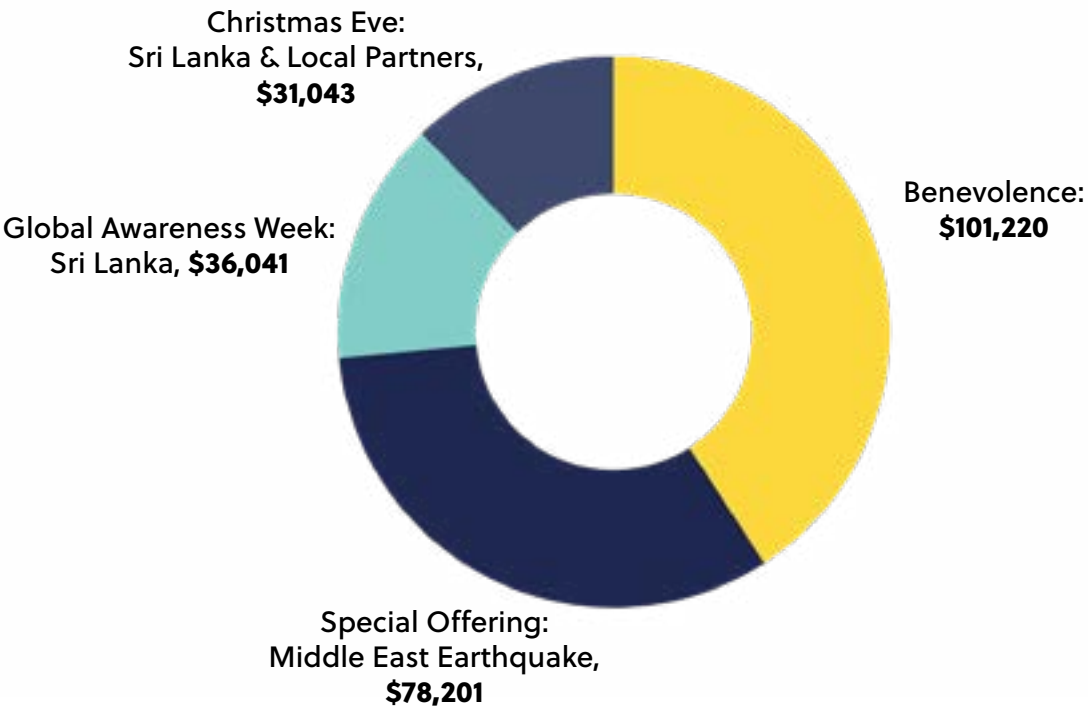
Grace Chapel Inc UNRESTRICTED ¹ Financial Summary	FY24 Budget	FY23	FY22	FY21
Contributions	8,398,333	7,992,717	8,639,585	8,088,582
Total Contributions	8,398,333	7,992,717	8,639,585	8,088,582
Program Income	95,336	79,896	44,137	24,515
Other Income	670,991	425,741	204,877	75,892
Rental Income	580,178	352,985	175,136	54,034
Sales (Lexington Café, Grace Chapel Shop)	59,253	39,501	23,936	0
Interest income	31,560	33,254	5,806	21,858
Total Income	766,327	505,637	249,014	100,406
Total Contributions and Income	9,164,660	8,498,354	8,888,599	8,188,988
OPERATIONS	8,194,966	7,479,596	7,544,808	7,058,238
Facilities	1,388,681	1,306,767	1,345,689	1,047,052
CENTRAL MINISTRY	894,107	901,263	888,031	875,767
Global & Local Outreach ²	829,051	829,984	844,051	839,664
CAMPUS MINISTRY	303,674	267,539	254,889	195,756
Total Ministry Expense ³	9,392,747	8,648,398	8,687,728	8,129,761
Net Operating Gain/(Loss)	(228,087)	(150,044)	200,871	59,227
Mortgage (Debt) Repayment ⁴	(325,419)	(314,129)	(375,471)	(304,363)
Covid-19 Relief Programs	386,250			988,100
Cash Reserves Support			600,000	
Net Retained Earnings/(Losses)	(167,256)	(464,173)	425,401	742,964

¹ Unrestricted Financial summaries exclude Restricted Funds results including Digital Ministry Initiative Fund and all Outreach funds.
² Global & Local Outreach is a summary of the Benevolence, Missions, Outreach, Celebrate Recovery, and Alpha ministries.
³ Breakouts under Ministries are not all inclusive of sub-ministries rolling into the total Ministry.
⁴ Mortgages exist on Grace Chapel's Lexington (59 Worthen) and Wilmington properties.

FY24 Budget by Ministries



Outreach Offering FY23





2023 NOMINEES



FIRST TERM ELDERS

David O. Ochi, *Lexington*

Marie Marchesseault, *Wilmington*

SECOND TERM ELDERS

Andrea Dacayanan, *Lexington*

Carrie Tibbles, *Lexington*

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Andrea Dacayanan, *Co-Chair, Lexington*

Daniel Mitchell, *Co-Chair, Wilmington*

Joan Christel, *Watertown*
(second year of two)

Ginny Clapp, *Wilmington*
(first year of two)

Barb Herrmann, *Foxboro*
(first year of one)

Geoffrey Lum, *Lexington*
(first year of two)

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Tofunni A. Ochi, *Lexington*
(second year of three)

Timothy Nelson, *Foxboro*
(second year of three)

B.J. Poppe, *Watertown*
(second year of three)

MODERATOR

Robert Williams, *Lexington*
(first year of three)

CLERK

Alethea A. Yates, *Lexington*
(first year of three)



Annual Meeting Notes | June 12, 2022

CALL TO ORDER & PRAYER – The meeting started at 12:30 pm with the showing of a year-in-review video. Joan Christel then opened the meeting with procedural instructions and prayer at 12:37 PM. The meeting was held in person at the Lexington campus and was also livestreamed and recorded. A recording will be available on www.grace.org by June 15, 2022. Participants can ask questions in person or submit questions via email at questions@grace.org, or from the Grace Chapel app. Elders will assess the meeting input, finalize the motions, and post them on the website by June 17, 2022.

VOTING PROCESS – Members can access a voting ballot online at grace.org/2022annualmeeting. Voting must be completed by end of day, June 26, 2022. Voting results will be posted on the website by June 29, 2022. Paper ballots or a link to the electronic ballot can be requested via email to officeofseniorpastor@grace.org or by calling the church office.

2021 MEETING MINUTES – Minutes from the June 6, 2021 annual meeting are included in the annual report and are available at grace.org/2022annualmeeting.

SENIOR PASTOR REPORT – Pastor Bryan Wilkerson presented the Senior Pastor Report. The ministry theme this year was *Living Well, Loving Well*.

The Grace Chapel Vision: To be a growing community of seekers and believers discovering life with God for the good of greater Boston and the world. Discovering Life with God for the Good of the World.

Teaching Journey (sermon series):

- ✓ Rhythm: Bringing Beauty and Order to Everyday Life
- ✓ Peace and Prosperity For Neighbors Near and Far
- ✓ LOVED (Advent & Christmas)
- ✓ Promiseland
- ✓ ChangeMaker (Lent & Easter)
- ✓ The Good and Beautiful Life

The Great Reshuffling: There's been a lot of shuffling in the church in general post-pandemic. Many people have found their way to other faith communities. The pastoral team is following up with people who haven't returned to Grace Chapel since our reopening. That said, new people have found us during the pandemic, many through our online ministries. We're back to 60-70% of pre-pandemic numbers on Sunday mornings.

Grace – Anywhere, Anytime: We now have a hybrid ministry, both in person and digital. To do this well, we've hired professionals to help with our digital presence and purchased needed equipment. We are able to do worship, discipleship, care, evangelism, and connection both online and in person.

The Gathering: We've initiated a new Sunday evening service at the Wilmington campus. It's open to all, and attendees are encouraged to ask tough questions. We see it as an investment in future leaders and emerging generations.

Goodness and Beauty: In a challenging year, being able to come together to worship has brought goodness and beauty to our lives. Each campus is finding ways to serve their community using their unique set of resources.

A Grateful Heart: Pastor Bryan expressed gratitude to executive pastor Mark MacDonald, the elders for their leadership, and to the staff for their faithful service during this time of upheaval. Recent and ongoing efforts of the board have included:

ELDERS' REPORT: Cynthia Fantasia presented the Elders' Report. She reflected on the past year as we trusted God to navigate us through uncharted waters through his faithfulness. She thanked the elders for serving. This year they focused on strategic planning, building relationships within their membership, and creating liaison relationships with staff members. The elders pray for each of us by name.

The Board of Elders for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023

- ✓ Eric Bergstrom, Treasurer
- ✓ Keith Cerci, Vice Chairperson
- ✓ Andrea Dacayanan
- ✓ Matt Doremus
- ✓ Cynthia Fantasia, Chairperson
- ✓ Rebecca Li
- ✓ Mark MacDonald, Executive Pastor
- ✓ Tim Min
- ✓ Dan Mitchell
- ✓ Priscilla Seuss
- ✓ Sandy Shen
- ✓ Rob Stutzman, Secretary
- ✓ Carrie Tibbles
- ✓ Bryan Wilkerson, Senior Pastor

Cynthia recognized the newly-baptized this past year (21) and new members (54). A video of baptisms over the past year was shown and celebrated.

Annual Meeting Notes (cont.)

TREASURER’S REPORT – Eric Bergstrom presented the Treasurer’s Report & FY23 Budget. A digital edition with full financial report can be found at grace.org/2022annualmeeting. FY22 giving was at 96% of budget. This was 7% above FY21 actual giving. Staff watched expenses carefully and came in below budget.

The FY22 proposed budget is \$8.9 million, a 10% increase in giving; this is still 7% below the FY20 giving level. To operate at pre-pandemic levels, we need to work our way back to FY20 levels of giving. Breakdown of the proposed budget: 70% to ministry and ministry support, 13% to missions, 11% to buildings, 6% to mortgage principal and interest.

In addition to general giving, the congregation gave \$947,786 in special offerings during Global Awareness Week and Christmas Eve services for Afghan Resettlement, to a special COVID Fund, a special Ukraine Fund, the Digital Ministry, and to the Benevolence Fund. Pastor Jeanette Yep introduced a video showing the impact of our giving to three Moldovan partners who are serving Ukraine refugees.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT – Priscilla Seuss presented the Nominating Committee Report, identifying the nominating committee and presenting the slate of nominees for Audit Committee, Moderator, and Clerk. The list includes the campus that nominees identify as their primary campus.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – Mark MacDonald celebrated some of the unique ways Grace Chapel members have served their communities over the past year.

PROPOSED BALLOT MOTIONS AND VOTING – Mark MacDonald reviewed the process for voting. Voting ballot can be found at grace.org/2022annualmeeting. Voting will begin on June 15 and must be completed by end of day, June 26, 2022. Voting results will be posted by June 29, 2022. Paper ballots can be requested at all five campuses on Sunday June 19 and June 26. A paper ballot or a link to the electronic ballot can be requested by emailing OSP@grace.org or calling the church office (781) 862-6499.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS – Joan Christel moderated a time of Q & A.

- 1. **The budget for missions is 9%. Are there missions-related expenses that aren’t represented in that number?** Yes; 9% is specifically just what we give to our partners (done this way for accounting purposes). Not included in that number are related expenditures such as missions’ staff, Global Awareness Week, special offering gifts.

Other Nominations

Audit Committee (one-year term)

- ✓ Jim Citro, Chair, Lexington, 3rd year of 3
- ✓ Tofunmi Ochi, Lexington, 2nd year of 3
- ✓ Tim Nelson, Foxboro, 1st year of 3

Moderator

- ✓ Bob Williams, Lexington, 3 years

Clerk

- ✓ Susan Maina, Wilmington, 3 years

- 2. **Why are there no new elders nominated this year?** In this unique year, none of the elders have terms that expire this year. Since no one is leaving, no one new coming on.
- 3. **The missions amount allocated this year is a decrease from the amount spent last year. Where do missions fall in priorities? Why this decrease when other things are increasing?** The way we report total missional spending (see question above) shows a more complete picture. Also, we set our budget before we saw our strong numbers at the end of the FY.
- 4. **Going forward, what are we doing to support adult discipleship opportunities, as the program significantly decreased with the pandemic?** Even though in-person classes have been slow to return, the church is deeply committed to discipleship. Our digital presence is now strong, and we’re hoping to do some weekday evening classes in person in the future. Discipleship is a strategic focus.
- 5. **What is included in the increase in the building budget?** Some buildings need their roofs replaced, which is an added expense. In addition, we anticipate facility costs to be going up, such as an increase in heating and air conditioning systems and security.
- 6. **Are there plans to build out more hybrid meeting spaces?** We anticipate hybrid to be with us for the foreseeable future. We have begun looking at space and budgeting for building out more of this.
- 7. **Pre-pandemic, FIRE ministry was an active ministry. What has happened to that young adult ministry?** There are several young adult groups meeting in person or online, so even though they don’t meet as a large group on Thursdays, the ministry is active. The new Sunday night Gathering is not a replacement of FIRE, but we are seeing a number of young people active here.
- 8. **When do you hope to announce a new LEX campus pastor?** A search is currently underway. If we’re not able to find a candidate through this process, someone will be appointed as an interim and a more extensive search will be done.
- 9. **Does being baptized automatically make me a member?** No, but it’s a step on the way. The steps include taking a membership class and having an interview with elders.

CLOSING – Senior pastor Bryan Wilkerson closed the meeting with prayer at 1:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandy Smith
Clerk



Access 2023 Annual Report

