



ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION

PRESENTED JUNE 23, 2024



**ARVADA
COVENANT
CHURCH**

COUNCIL

EVELYN SIMMONS AND SUSAN PALMER

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As a leadership team, the Council worked well together this past year. In this spirit, the group studied the book “Pursuing God’s Will Together: A Discernment Practice for Leadership Groups” by Ruth Haley Barton, making a conscious effort to more fully embrace a model of collaboration with God and with each other for discernment, idea-generation and decision-making. A well-functioning team became better.

Three major issues—constitution, property sale, and Council values—were the focus of much discussion this year. After it was decided to postpone ratifying a new constitution last June, the document was reworked incorporating suggested improvements as well as refined detail and structure. Then the Council spent several meetings carefully reviewing each section prior to presenting the Constitution to the congregation in January. The Council worked with the Property Task Force (PTF) to determine parameters, aligned with congregational input, for any proposed projects. For example, it was decided not to include in the sale the area of land that could obstruct the sanctuary view. The PTF was given the go-ahead to engage a commercial real estate broker and begin the sale process. Regarding Council values, serious time was spent on this process and discussion. The outcome was a determination to operate out of the following values: Kingdom-minded-leadership, community, discernment, listening, and transparency.

Throughout the year, the Council dealt with the following ongoing business:

- ACC’s budget and financial health
- Personnel issues/job descriptions/evaluations

- Pastoral encouragement
- Conversations with pastors regarding: ministry initiatives
- Safety policies and procedures
- Transparency – Meet a Council Member, FAQs, Town Halls, etc.

Endeavoring to be a vital part of ACC, Council members engaged with other ACC ministries. Some participated in the LMDJ activities including the Learning Hour class, others with the Serve Globally Team, the Safety Team, the Finance Committee, and the Next Gen Team, etc. Strengthening partnership with the staff, both groups went together on an escape room adventure and attended the fall all-church retreat. Council, pastor, staff, and congregation all being on the same team is an important value for the Council.



“Council, pastor, staff, and congregation all being on the same team is an important value for the Council.”



CO-LEAD PASTORS

PASTOR JODI MOORE AND PASTOR BRIAN RHEN

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Staffing

We are so grateful to have stability on our staff team this year! Brian Rhen and Jodi Moore have enjoyed their first year as Co-Lead Pastors. Throughout the year, they have adjusted their responsibilities to better serve the staff and maximize their giftings. They supervise the ministry staff together and prepare a preaching plan as a team. Jodi continues to oversee pastoral care, operations and the welcome team. Brian oversees adult formation, local and global missions, and safety team. The new Co-Lead Pastor model brought with it new approaches to onboarding, goal setting, mid-year and annual evaluations, along with a specific staff and volunteer development model.

In September 2023, Cheryl Meakins resigned from her role as Associate Director of Congregational Care.

We celebrated with her upon receiving a full-time call to chaplaincy which was always the intent. Cheryl's primary responsibility was ministering to ACCers who reside at Covenant Living and John Martz, Director of Congregational Care, has accepted those responsibilities.

In October 2023, we welcomed Maureen McKay and Megan McKay to our staff to share the role of Nursery Coordinator. They are each responsible for two Sundays per month and provide care and consistency for our youngest people.

In November 2023, Sherry Nagel retired after helping ACC transition to Church Center, a mobile app the congregation uses to give, check-in their families, participate in groups, and sign up for events. As one of our Contributions Coordinators, Sherry was



instrumental in transitioning all our donors to the new system.

In February 2024, Cordelia Lee resigned as Next Gen Coordinator to pursue more responsibility and more hours in a school setting. We are thankful for her abilities to organize and execute Children’s Ministry plans.

Finances

We ended FY22/23 with a surplus of approximately \$370,000 due primarily to faithful and consistent giving, lower personnel expenses and our existing staff containing costs. General fund giving has remained steady and we anticipate ending FY23/24 even with our budget thanks to the congregation’s consistent giving.

The Finance Team recommended investment CDs to supplement tithes and offerings. The interest income amounted to \$15,000 and more money was invested recently.

The Property Task Force (Ken Boggs, Scott Brown, Ben Moore and Luke Ringenberg) has met regularly throughout the year. They are advisors to the Council and congregation on the sale of land to eliminate our mortgage debt and provide an endowment for future mission and ministry.

Building

The Properties Team provides wisdom and expertise in building related areas. Volunteers have maintained the landscaping through the year and participated in a spring work day cleaning out storage spaces, trimming trees and regular care for the building. The parking lot was resurfaced and re-striped, new parking lot lights were installed and roof leaks were repaired.

Organizational Structure

Our current membership at ACC is 472 with weekly average attendance of 300. We anticipate moving from the council model of governance to the ministry team model of governance for more flexibility in how we operate as a congregation.

New Steps & Direction

With all the transition from 2017-2022 and with new pastoral leadership in place as of April 2023, we have taken very deliberate steps in the following areas to help us head in a new direction together.

- In April of 2023, from a communication standpoint, Jodi and Brian committed to provide a weekly update on the most important things that we felt our congregation needed to know through our Friday email forum.
- In August of 2023, staff began the arduous process of converting to one database platform called Planning Center. The intent was to alleviate multiple platforms and subscription expenses for giving, groups, events, worship planning, and volunteer engagement. This provides a more streamlined process and coordination between varying ministries while also lowering our subscription costs. By September, the congregation was invited to move to an app called Church Center.
- In September of 2023, we held our first intergenerational church retreat called THE FEAST at Golden Bell Conference Center in Divide,

CO. ACCers in attendance ranged in age from 2 to 89 with 77 people participating. It was a joy to worship, play and gather around the table together enjoying God's presence in nature and in the people around us. Our speaker, Todd Slechta, specializes in the Old Testament and Jewish thought which helped us to see two Scripture lessons with new eyes and he challenged our ideas about ACC in the future following post pandemic trends. The best part of the weekend was the connection among the varied ages.

- In January of 2024, we began to experiment with an 8:45 Learning Hour prior to the 10 a.m. worship service. The goal was to provide opportunity for all generations to connect in community and engage in greater discipleship. We will continue to experiment with this concept throughout the end of this calendar year. Meanwhile, we continued with some key ongoing support groups (GriefShare, Connected Hope), along with starting some others including DivorceCare and Caring for the Caregiver.
- In June 2024, a subcommittee made up of staff, council and a few safety team members completed the task of reviewing, updating and rewriting the overall ACC Safety Policies and Procedures and specifically for the Safety Team.
- In June of 2024, we held six Vision Desserts. We celebrated what God has done at ACC and declared the direction we were headed. In doing so, our intent was to give a clear understanding of our destination and congregational expectations, while hearing more of the specific needs of each life stage.

Meanwhile the intent of our preaching on Sunday has been to help people grow in our common knowledge of the Old and New Testament while also challenging people to live into our Purpose and Practices. Specific message series we offered over the last year included: "At the Table," "Deepen: A Call to

Prayer," "Unwrapping the Names of Jesus," "Renewal: Our Purpose and Practices," "Flawed but Faithful: A Study of Peter," "Emotions: Integrating our Faith and Feelings," "The Holy Spirit" and "What is Justice: The Book of Amos." Meanwhile, we began to provide weekly reflection questions based on the message for individuals and groups to help all integrate more of what we hear on Sundays.

Throughout the year, we were blessed to experience the following guest speakers during our Sunday worship services:

- Tammy Swanson-Draheim, ECC President
- Grace Shim, ECC Executive Minister of Serve Globally
- Theophile Duale Langba, President of the Covenant Church of Congo (CEUM), and his wife, Josephine
- John Martz, Former ACC Lead Pastor

We look forward to continuing to grow into our role as Co-Lead Pastors. Thank you for the opportunity to work together in equipping you for the work of ministry.

MILESTONES

IN THE LIVES OF OUR ACC FAMILY MEMBERS

BELIEVER BAPTISMS

Jerry Street, 1/14/24
Adleigh English, 1/14/24

DEDICATIONS

Andi Finizio 4/21/24

CONFIRMANDS

Reese Ames, 5/5/24
Hannah Hubbard, 5/5/24
Jack Hubbard, 5/5/24
Elaina Moore, 5/5/24
Claire Schuetz, 5/5/24
Michael Shelton, 5/5/24
Penny Thomas, 5/5/24
Seth Thomas, 5/5/24
Eli Vander Laan, 5/5/24

IN MEMORIAM

2023

Marge Houlton, 6/11*
Jeanne Solum Perry, 6/15**
Kim (Blackburn) Hull, 6/20
Merry Whyman, 7/9
Violet Burns, 7/13
Jackie Bembenek, 8/9
Dick Henke, 10/18*
Marilyn Hill, 10/23
Jack Middleton, 11/24*
David Noreen, 12/28*

2024

Dick Bergh, 1/29
Mike Caskey, 2/8*
Stan Edin, 3/10*
Gracelee "Lee" Palmer, 4/11*
John Hohnstein, 4/19*

**Member of ACC*

***Former member of ACC*

NEW MEMBERS

KaLee French, 1/28/24
Jane Goleman, 1/28/24
Aaron Lu, 1/28/24

Esther Lu, 1/28/24
Cristin Street, 1/28/24
Jerry Street, 1/28/24

Awaiting Congregational Vote on 6/23/24

Kevin Carney
Karinn Kasbekar
Marcella Saxton
Kay Sorvik

Kaleb Waite
Gary Wiebel
Heather Wiebel

TRANSFERED MEMBERS

Luke and Julie Peterson,
8/24/23
Mary Veeneman
11/14/23

Dale and Bonnie Book,
11/14/23
Barbara Krayenhagen,
5/28/24



STUDENT MINISTRIES DIRECTOR

JDREW MCGOVERN

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God has been present and working in our student ministry at Arvada Covenant Church. Amid a transition season for church staff, there are still plenty of reasons to celebrate how God has been moving in our student's lives.

This past year, we fostered a strong sense of community and belonging, demonstrating our intentionality toward becoming an intergenerational body of believers. All students (6th-12th grade) remained in the gathering on Sunday to worship and learn together, creating a shared experience. Several families also joined us in THE FEAST, an all-church retreat at Golden Bell Camp, further strengthening our bond. We've incorporated our intergenerational values in many ways during Sunday gatherings and special services, and we continue to dream of ways we can be disciples of Jesus together.

Our student programming over the past year centered on the personal growth and spiritual development of

our students. It included youth groups, confirmation classes, fun events, classes during learning hours, and retreats. Eight middle school students participated in our annual Faceplant retreat at the YMCA of the Rockies, and five high school students participated in our annual Powderburn retreat at Quaker Ridge camp. All students worshipped God together, learned together, discussed in small groups, and played with one another. These retreats were impactful experiences for our students and leaders to see God in their lives and build relationships with other Christian peers.

Weekly youth groups were great experiences for our students to build relationships together, learn more about Jesus through teachings, and dive deeper into small groups. We also played plenty of large group games to build relationships and create a space and culture that is inclusive and inviting for our students to bring their friends.

In the Fall semester, we journeyed through the narrative of Scripture from Genesis to the early church in Acts. The goal of these teachings was for students to understand how the Old Testament story connects with the story of Jesus and the church in the New Testament. The following key themes that show up throughout the whole biblical story were taught: we are all created good and reflect the image of God, sin is brokenness in the world and relationships with God and others, God has abundant grace for His creation and creates in us a posture for growth, Jesus is the model for how to live, Jesus dies for all of us and sets us free from sin.

“It has been such a gift to pastor our students, and we are incredibly excited about what’s to come in student ministries.”

In the Spring semester, we focused largely on the Kingdom of God and formation (the becoming of who God created each of us to be). Through different spiritual practices, reflections, and having students create a rule of life, students learned how to be with and listen to Jesus. We also taught about the most

common theme in Jesus’ teachings in the Gospels: the kingdom of God. Students learned about what the kingdom is, and where the kingdom is around us. As Jesus taught his disciples to pray, “Your kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven,” we held the question together of how we can participate and be a part of what God is doing in bringing the kingdom forth.

We had fifteen confirmands in our confirmation class this year, and nine confirmands completed the class and were confirmed on May 5, 2024. Confirmation class consisted of a two-year journey, each year doing a deep dive into teaching the Old Testament or New Testament. Confirmands also completed a confirmation project, sharing their testimony and expressing their faith, and interviewed their prayer partners who have modeled how to be faithful disciples for our students.

It has been such a gift to pastor our students, and we are incredibly excited about what’s to come in student ministries. We look forward to participating this summer in Kingdom Come, an all-day event of service, worship, and games, the UNITE conference in San Diego, a denomination-wide conference for high school students, and a fun year of programming for the 2024-25 year!



CHILDREN'S PASTOR

KAYLEIGH LEONARD

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This year has been a whirlwind in Children's Ministry! We've made our way through the final year of the Gospel Project, we've played and learned, but most importantly, we've learned about Jesus' love for each and every one of us! We've gone through three years of the Gospel Project, where we spent a year in the first half of the Old Testament, the second year in the other half of the Old Testament, and this final year in the Gospels and Paul's letters. Learning about the Gospel has come quite naturally to our kids. We have been practicing our Bible skills by finding verses and stories in our Bibles each week, reading stories out loud, and having live storytellers in our Sunday School lessons. All of ACC tried out Learning Hour for the Spring of 2024 and our kids got to learn about creation care, how God made the world around us, and why it matters that we care about our planet.

We hired two new nursery staff members after saying goodbye to Maria Vadeen: Maureen and Megan McKay! They jumped in quickly and so well. They

rotate each week and are absolute pros when it comes to our youngest ACCers. They care deeply for our kids and their parents, they teach weekly, and make sure our kids get the age-appropriate care they need. Say thank you to Megan or Maureen when you see them!

We also hit our one-year mark of our kids, preschool through 5th grade, participating in worship on Sunday mornings. Our kids are always learning new things and learning about how to participate in a service while still being kids. We've introduced children's moments during Advent and Lent and are going to slowly incorporate those more often through the year to better include our kids in service.

We got to celebrate a lot of fun holidays and themed Sundays in children's ministry this year! We celebrated Easter twice, Christmas twice (both with our curriculum and the church calendar), Pentecost, Royal Sunday, Fan the Flame, and Move Up Sunday! We got to dress



up, do an escape room, wear our favorite jerseys, and participate in the Easter services with leading some hand motions. Finally, we got to dedicate one of our little ones, Andi Finizio, in April.

Thank you for all of your support of ACC Kids! It has been a fantastic year of learning new things, adjusting to new schedules, and preparing our kids for their

“It has been a fantastic year of learning new things, adjusting to new schedules, and preparing our kids for their futures”

futures. Personally, I am so grateful for all of your support of me this past year. It has been such a joy and honor to serve at ACC! Thank you for all of your time, prayers, and resources to best care for our kids and their families. As the next year begins, please be praying for these two things:

1. We need a camp for our kids that is not eight hours away! We are looking for something that is theologically sound, closer to Arvada, and has options for all elementary-aged kids, whether that is an overnight or a day camp.
2. We need more Pen Pals! If you are interested in becoming a Pen Pal with one of our kids (or if you kid would like to have a pen pal), let me know! I'd love to connect you all.





WORSHIP ARTS PASTOR

MATT ANDERSON

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Worship at ACC

Over the last year we have gathered to worship at 60 different gatherings. We regularly worship together to remember who God is, and who he has created us to be. The story of God was front and center this past year as we continued to celebrate the seasons and significant days of the church year. ACC seeks to make the old stories new and retell them every year to remind us of who we are in light of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. With the addition of a seasonal choir we had over 100 people help to lead us in worship this year! We have taken significant strides in updating the technology used during worship. Our drummers are now “cage free” thanks to a few upgrades :) Kids have worshipped with us for the last year and this has helped to shape us into an intergenerational church that values all ages and stages as we plan worship.

Matt’s Musings

I am struck with a few images as I look out at the people of ACC worshipping God with their heart, soul, mind and strength. I love that we are surrounded by windows looking out onto open space and neighbors. People outside are walking their dogs, chatting with friends and enjoying the view while we worship inside our glass box. I wonder if the holy moments we have within the church ever seep through the joints and small spaces to find their way into our life outside the church. We may hope and pray that the neighborhood around us will stumble into our midst, but the people of Arvada are not really the type to just show up to random church buildings on a Sunday morning. I see the city in which we live as a group of people, willing to be our friends and take part in spiritual conversations, but reluctant to enter the doors of a church building. We live amongst people that value community, mercy, justice, peace, and joy, but have

little interest in the established church. The culture in which we find ourselves in actually values things of God, but has dismissed the local church because it seems that the things that go on inside the church have little effect on the community outside its walls.

When I see the worshipping people of ACC, and look through the windows out onto the surrounding neighborhood, I am reminded that the only thing that physically separate us from Arvada are thin pieces of glass. ACC participates in many outreach ministries that serve our community. But what does it mean to worship inside the church and have those experiences intermingle with our day-to-day lives.

My hope is that the music, words, and actions of worship would play as a soundtrack to the lives we live outside of the church walls. All of our gifts and preparation week in and week out would fall short if it didn't leave the confines of our building and take root on the other side of the glass. I hope that the worship experience is not an isolated occurrence from the rest of your week. I pray that our worship gatherings this coming year will give us food for the journey and sustain us as we interact with our neighbors and build a stronger relationship with our community





CONNECTIONS DIRECTOR

SHERI PRICE

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The Connections Director position continues to expand as our staff, opportunities, and congregation have grown and changed over this past year. I love helping folks connect to each other, our God and our community. It continues to be a joy to serve our Lord and ACC in this role. Here is a summary from this past year.

Summer 2023

At the Table Meals: Once-a-month gatherings for a shared meal in host homes provided a sense of renewal for fellowship, new friendships and strengthened camaraderie. Friendships were made that continue to exist bringing unity and familiarity on Sundays.

- 41 different hosts and 20 host homes
- 163 different people attended the meals altogether.
- 291 mouths were fed over the three meals and gathered At the Tables.

Sunday of Service: 139 registered and 158 participated. Working heavily with our volunteer Local Outreach Coordinator, Karen Baer, we provided opportunities for congregants to serve in our community on a Sunday in July. The service opportunities included yard work for a community member, trash removal from Arvada West High School and Drake Middle School, painting and cleaning services to BeyondHome, cleanout and organization of a trailer for Royal Family Kids, fleece blankets made and donated to RFK, generosity and homeless kits made to be given out by congregants as they come across appropriate recipients, praying and emailing our foreign missionaries, and a guided prayer walk in downtown Arvada.

Fall 2023

Small Group Leader training and development continue to be high on my list. We provided training for our 23 groups specifically on the new database

system, Church Center, as we kicked off the fall semester. Keeping the groups updated in the system, getting an accurate attendance snapshot and ongoing meetings in person, by phone, texts and emails has helped almost everyone implement the new system.

ACC Gives: This year for Thanksgiving and Christmas I worked with Linda Camblin and Karen Baer to coordinate and give away Thanksgiving meal bags and a Giving Tree where we provided tags for congregants to pick and bring back to bless our Local Outreach Ministries. Specific details are provided under each ministry later in this report. What a generous body of Christ we have here at ACC!

Winter and Spring 2024

Ongoing group leader training, planning appreciation events, launching new groups, providing support to new Local Outreach ministries (Love, INC, BeyondHome), helping work through new workflow of newcomers' pathway with staff, engaging with unsheltered walk-ins requesting food/gas cards round out my 1/4-time position.

We are grateful that over 65% of ACCers are involved in a group. Thank you to all the study and support group leaders.



MISSIONS FAIR

On Sunday, February 4, ACC hosted the first Global and Local Mission Fair. Grace Shim, the executive minister of Serve Globally for the Evangelical Covenant Church, was our special guest speaker. Grace challenged and inspired us to live into our fifth practice, “Restore the World around us.”

After the service, we gathered in the gym for a passport-guided journey to engage with ACC mission partners who serve throughout the world (globally) and in the greater Arvada area (locally). Attendees learned about these ministries and discovered how they could get involved.

Highlights:

- 13 booths highlighting local and global ministries
- Approximately 150 attendees of all ages
- 10 individual ministry presentations
- 40 adult & 15 kid “passports” returned for prizes



SERVE LOCALLY



Arvada West Partnership | Supporting our local high school

- 25 Sunday of Service volunteers (July 2023)
- ACC Gives donated 6 student snacks, 10 spiral notebooks, 4 packs of writing pens, \$170 in Walmart gift cards, \$125 in King Sooper gift cards, \$50 in Costco gift cards
- 160 staff were provided with 3 meal/snack events
- 4 student families were provided with gift cards/donations
- Provided volunteers for 3 classroom or After Prom student events
- 6 sports team banquets were hosted at ACC
- More than 10 volunteers and 14 food or money donors



Benevolence Fund | Supporting individuals struggling financially

- \$13,204.16 given to help with everything from utilities to car repairs to food.
- Approximately 350 people assisted.



BeyondHome | Supporting families transitioning to self-sufficiency

- 35 Sunday of Service volunteers (July 2023)
- Officially launched this new partnership in May 2024
- 150 Mother's Day congregational gifts
- \$2750 ACC grant to inaugurate partnership
- 3 ACC volunteers



July 4th Hosting | Providing a warm welcome for Arvada neighbors

- Volunteers provided snacks and water for guests who came to enjoy the fireworks show from our parking lot



Love INC (In the Name of Christ) | Supporting Arvada's needy through multi-church ministry

- \$750 for support with startup costs
- 1 ACC board member



Royal Family Kids | Supporting foster children in need

- 22 Sunday of Service volunteers (July 2023)
- ACC Gives cash donations equaling \$240
- Club (2023/2024):
 - 20 kids total meeting monthly at ACC
 - 8 ACC volunteers (1/3 of all volunteers)
 - Average of 87 hours donated/volunteer
 - 20 kids' fleece blankets made and donated
- Camp (June 2024):
 - 49 campers for Mon-Fri mountain camp
 - 16 ACC full-week volunteers (1/4 of all volunteers)
 - 10 ACC day volunteers (1/2 of all volunteers)
 - 1,920 kid contact hours from ACC volunteers
 - 15 ACC donors (1/10 of all donors)
 - 60 thank you/prayer cards written for camp volunteers



Safe Parking Program | Supporting local car-dwelling unhoused people

- ACC Gives donated 7 electric blankets, \$210 in King Soopers gift cards, \$210 in Walmart gift cards, 7 devotional books, and individually-wrapped snacks
- 20 parkers in the program for 1607 total nights
- 105 nights with meals/showers available
- Roughly 525 meals served by 41 volunteers
- 6 of 13 parkers moved on from Lot to housing



Vanderhoof Elementary

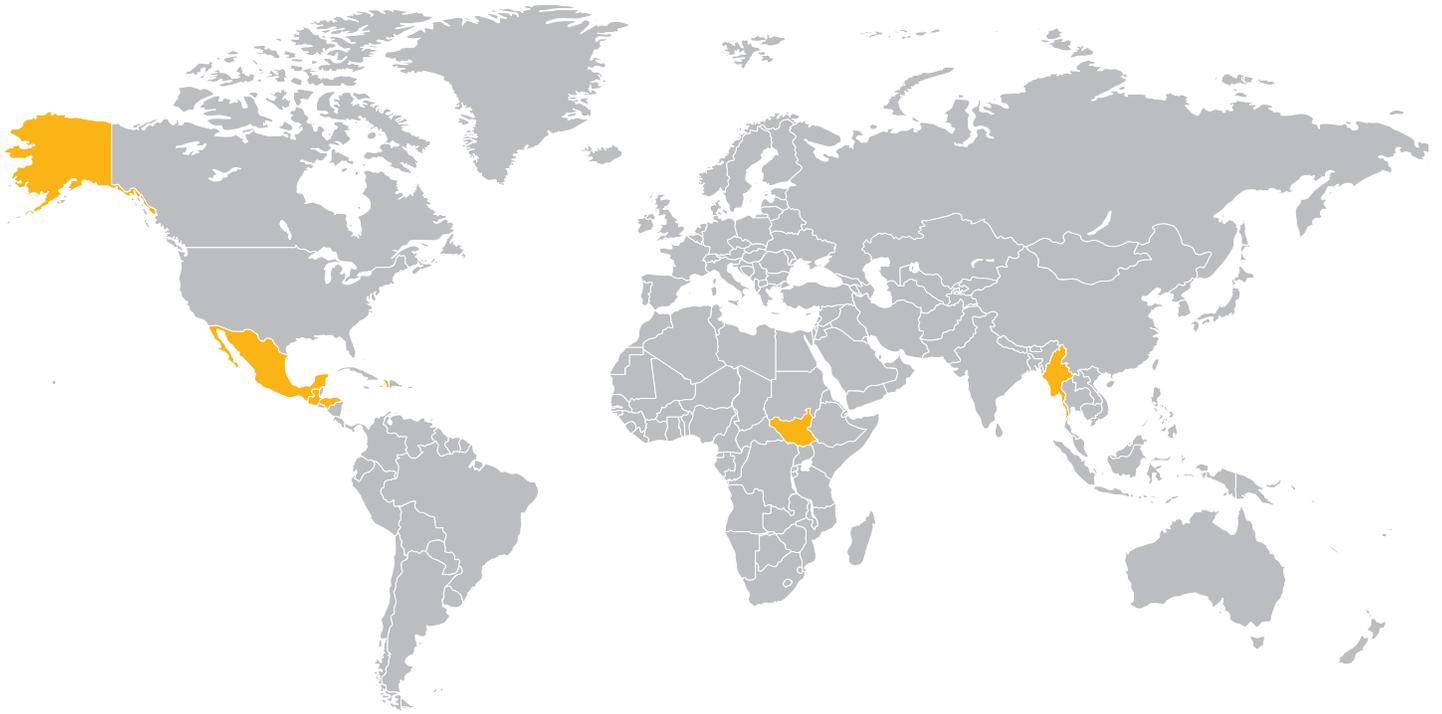
- Provided emergency snacks for influx of children at their school in February.



Whiz Kids | Supporting kids with educational needs

- 30 ACC Gives kids' Bibles donated
- 25 tutors trained at ACC
- 8 ACC volunteers mentored 8 students
- 288 ACC-student contact hours over 24 sessions
- 13 Thanksgiving meals donated

SERVE GLOBALLY



GuateStar

GuateStar was founded in 2015 by Ken & Lori Anderson to work with the indigenous Mayan population in Guatemala and is devoted to educational activities for impoverished and underserved children.

Quick Stats for 2024:

- 5 Club Extra locations
- 275 children attend Club Extra weekly
- 80 children receive scholarships that allow them to attend two partner Christian schools
- 4 students receive scholarships to University del Valle.
- 4 student receive scholarships for vo-tech training and pre-professional development
- 187 families with multiple students per household receive loaned computers
- 4 MayaLink servers reaching many students.



Ignite Myanmar

Ignite Myanmar's goal is to support evangelistic missionaries in Myanmar, while rescuing those in need, including orphans.

Highlights

- 132 baptisms of new believers, the most they have ever seen in one year.
- Distributing \$20,000 worth of rice and cooking oil to the destitute neighborhoods they serve
- Supporting the 36 orphans under their care; giving them access to education, healthcare, and a nurturing environment
- Conducting outreach to thousands of Burmese refugees in India, Thailand, and Malaysia

Casa Hogar

The Casa Hogar ministry entails support and relationship building with three connected organizations in the city of Chihuahua, Mexico. Casa Hogar Palabra de Vida is a orphanage to abandoned and abused children, El Porvenir del Estudiante is an opportunity for the older children to earn a scholarship and continue with an education at one of the trade schools, university, or bible school in Chihuahua, and Cuidar Corazon is a new ministry to provide care for the disabled children of Chihuahua.

Highlights

- 25 years serving under-resourced children in Chihuahua, Mexico
- 106 children currently being cared for in 4 separate facilities
- In addition to a physical home and meals, children are given access to education, mental and physical health support, and a church community

Alaska Christian College

The mission of Alaska Christian College is to empower Alaska Natives through biblically-based higher education and Christian formation to pursue excellence in character, learning, and service as followers of Christ.

Highlights

- 61 Fall students
- 43 Spring students
- 85% students are Alaska Native
- 100% of students receive financial aid
- 13 graduates 2023-2024 class

Seeds of South Sudan

Seeds of South Sudan educates South Sudanese refugee orphans to be seeds of change for South Sudan, by providing education for them from elementary through high school, and continuing through college when possible.

Highlights

- 42 Roots Academy Students
- 54 High School Students
- 25 Students in college
- 8 College graduates
- Since 2008, SOSS has brought 176 orphans out of Kakuma Refugee Camp with the help of ACC

International Hope Builders

International Hope Builders partners with local government, churches, orphanages and agencies to identify children and families in desperate need of shelter to restore dignity, hope, and most basic human needs.

Highlights

- 300 Homes, 19 Schools, 4 Clinics, 16 Senior Housing Units
- 1 Civic Center, 1 Community Feeding Center

Non-Focus Ministries

Highlights

- 7 mission activities supported: Bill Merritt (local & Denver Rescue Mission), Terry Thomson (international students at Mines), Allison Davies Moody (Cru), Glennis Henry (East Africa), Adam London (in transition to Africa), Todd Boyle (foster children - Honduras), and the Ilkeiyio Friends School (Kenya - Maasai).
- Latest addition is the Ilkeiyio Friends School in Kenya. This is a young, vibrant, but struggling, ministry to the marginalized Maasai people.
- Adam and Shirleen London and family are transitioning from remote Alaska, where Adam has pastored a church, to Africa. Adam was in our high school youth group in 2000.

LOVE MERCY DO JUSTICE

LAURA RODRIGUEZ AND VICKY REIER

While Love Mercy Do Justice (LMDJ) is still in its early stages at ACC, we are encouraged by the many people who thoughtfully journey with us along the way. Anyone who would like to join us for an LMDJ event or study is always welcome to come! In 2023, we had a total of ninety-two participants across twelve different LMDJ activities. And thus far in 2024, fifty-eight individuals have joined us for events and studies!

The mission of LMDJ at ACC is to join God in making things right in our broken world by helping hurting people (love mercy) and addressing the causes of that hurt (do justice). Our goal is to resource and equip Arvada Covenant in its call to love, serve, and work together with people at the margins toward holistic individual, family and community transformation. (Modeled after the mission/goal of the ECC's LMDJ.)

In anticipation of the upcoming constitutional change, we have transitioned to the Ministry Team

structure (currently with two co-leaders and four team members). This LMDJ Ministry Team will prayerfully plan and facilitate LMDJ studies and events.

Since last year's annual report, we've had the opportunity to:

- Learn about and celebrate Juneteenth together (25 people)
- Reprise a study of "The Color of Compromise" (32 people)
- Host four movie nights - "The Best of Enemies" (15 people), "Stand & Deliver" (19 people), "Black Nativity" (20 people), and "I Am Not Your Negro" (13 people)
- Facilitate two Local Learning Experiences - Native American Heritage (9 people) and Black History in Colorado (15 people)
- Delve into the Covenant's "Responding Faithfully to God's Call" study guide of the 2011 Covenant Resource Paper on the Ministry of Compassion, Mercy and Justice (47 people).





Many of the authors we study emphasize the importance of truth telling, especially in relation to learning history - our own particular history and our national history. As author Latasha Morrison observes, “When we lack historical understanding, we lose part of our identity. We don’t know where we came from and don’t know what there is to celebrate and lament. Likewise, without knowing our history, it can be difficult to know what needs repairing, what needs reconciling.” (“Be the Bridge” p. 2-3)

With this in mind, Laura Rodriguez spent the past two years researching and compiling ACC’s history, with a special focus on people and race. This spring, the LMDJ Ministry Team along with members of the ACC Staff and Council came together to study this history, with the twofold goal of learning our history and discerning the best way to make it available to the congregation.

This is an ongoing process, however, we would like to share in this Annual Report the executive summary of “A Racial History of Colorado, the Evangelical Covenant Church in Colorado, and Arvada Covenant Church.”

An Executive Summary of “A Racial History of Colorado, the Evangelical Covenant Church in Denver, and Arvada Covenant Church,” compiled by Laura Rodriguez

The Ute people were the original inhabitants of Colorado. They spoke one common language, possessed a set of central values, inhabited and held a set territory, and had a highly developed society that observed the same social and political practices. The Ute people traveled throughout Ute territory on familiar trails that crisscrossed the mountain ranges of Colorado. When Christopher Columbus landed in the Bahamas in 1492, it marked the beginning of the end to the way of life as the Ute people knew it.



Ute Camp, Denver Public Library

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI issued the “Doctrine of Discovery,” establishing a religious, political, and legal justification for colonization and seizure of land not inhabited by Christians. As the Spanish made their way north into the area of Colorado, the Arapaho and Cheyenne people also made their way westward when European colonists from the east forced them off their homelands. Large parts of Colorado were claimed by France and Spain. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 and the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) eventually resulted in the newly formed United States taking over all future lands of Colorado as unknown territory.

As Americans began to see value in the plains and mountains, Native Americans were forced into increasingly restricted areas through treaties that were repeatedly made and broken. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, about one-third of American men in the newly established Colorado Territory were sympathetic to the cause of the South. The bloodiest day in Colorado history occurred during the Civil War, when around 230 Cheyenne and Arapaho people composed mostly of women, children, and the elderly were killed by U.S. volunteer soldiers in the Sand Creek Massacre in 1864.

Colorado became the thirty-eighth state in 1876, near the same time the Evangelical Mission Covenant was organized in Sweden. Denver was made the permanent capital of Colorado just a few years before the Evangelical Covenant Church of America (ECC) was formed in 1885. In 1898, a group of twenty Swedish people decided to establish the First Covenant Church of Denver (First Covenant). First Covenant grew over the next 50 years. In time, they switched from services entirely in Swedish to services entirely in English. This change came at the same time that the Ku Klux Klan had a strong hold in Denver, with about 30% of white men registered as KKK members in 1920, including Colorado’s governor,

Denver’s mayor and police chief, judges, state senators and representatives.

In 1953, Leyden Covenant Church (Leyden Covenant) was planted by First Covenant in the neighborhood of Park Hill, an area restricted to only white residents. Leyden Covenant experienced amazing growth for a few years, but soon the neighborhood underwent a drastic racial change, as Colorado’s Fair Housing laws of 1959 (the first in the nation to pass statewide fair housing laws) made previous barriers illegal and black families started moving into Park Hill. Blockbusting accelerated the white flight that was occurring in the neighborhood, and when Leyden Covenant celebrated their 10th Anniversary, many members had already moved away and were starting to look elsewhere to attend church.

The town of Arvada, established in 1901, had grown 715.7% between the years 1950 to 1960, and three young couples who had previously helped establish Leyden Covenant decided to establish a Covenant church in Arvada. The pastors of First Covenant and Leyden Covenant were very supportive of their dreams, as was the ECC - providing unprecedented financial support as Arvada Covenant Church (ACC) became a reality. On October 6, 1963, ACC enjoyed their first morning and evening worship services in the home of Elom and Vera Nelson. On ACC’s Organization Sunday, December 1, 1963, fifty-four individuals signed the membership charter.

The year 1963 was also weighted with significance for the Civil Rights movement. Nonviolent protesters—including Martin Luther King Jr.—were arrested en masse while marching to Birmingham City Hall. In the following days, high-school students continuing the protest were met with police dogs and fire hoses. The demonstrations of 1963 culminated with the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where Martin Luther King, Jr. notably delivered his “I Have a Dream”



speech.

ACC experienced steady and significant growth, becoming well known and respected in the community. They were able to assist other church plants and launch a new church in Broomfield. Leyden Covenant continued to diminish in membership and, burdened with debt and insufficient members for continued ministry, they discontinued meeting together in 1969. The building was leased and then sold to Shiloh Baptist Church, a black congregation established thirteen years prior. There were occasional shared services between Shiloh and ACC, but that practice did not continue for long.

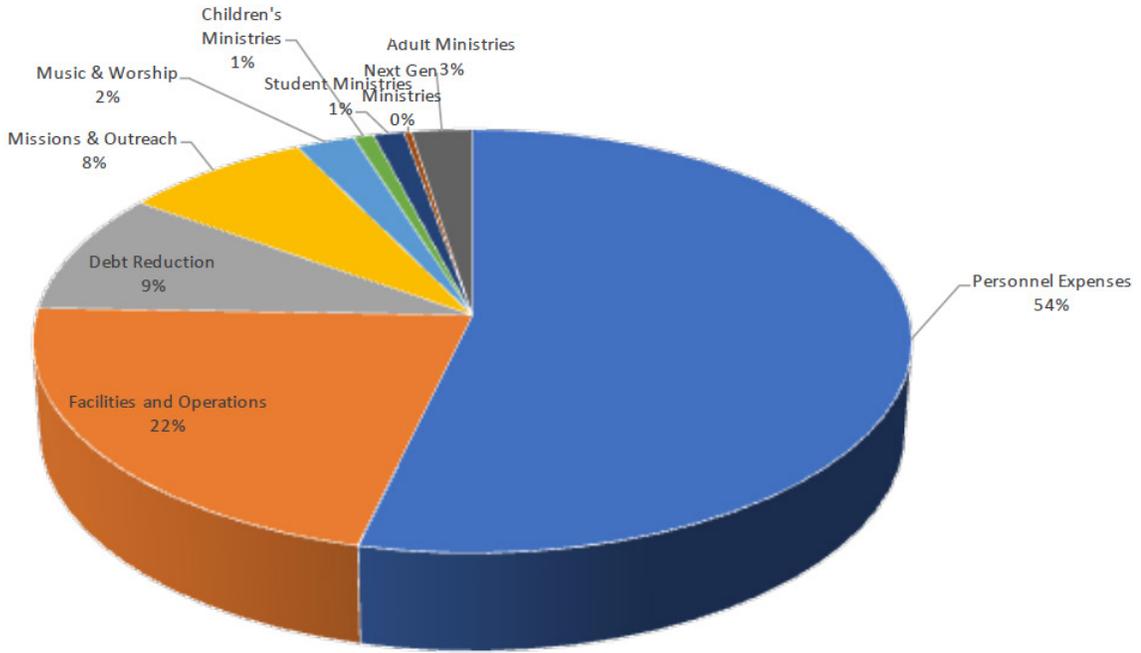
In 1988, ACC was nearing its 25th Anniversary. However, the church was struggling with a change in leadership, going from a pastor with a shepherd-type ministry style to a future-oriented pastor with strong administrative skills. The church began to split over a recommendation by ACC's Long Range Planning Committee to sell its building and move into a larger space. Supportive guidance was sent from the ECC, and the decision was made to shift from a split of the church into a church plant, which became Christ Community Covenant Church (4Cs).

ACC continued to grow rapidly in the 1990's. They started a daughter church in Applewood and eventually moved into a new building. ACC became known throughout the ECC for its commitment to missions, to ministry, and to excellence. The church grew to become one of the ten largest ECC congregations and one of the ECC's churches most committed to World Missions.

Church membership began to decline during the Great Recession in the late 2000's. After another significant decrease in staff and membership in the years surrounding the COVID pandemic and the racial reckoning of 2020, an intentional focus was made on the culture of the church, seeking a sense of togetherness and community. By 2022, an extensive search process for a lead pastor resulted in calling two pastors to start a new season at ACC.

EXPENSES BY ACTIVITY

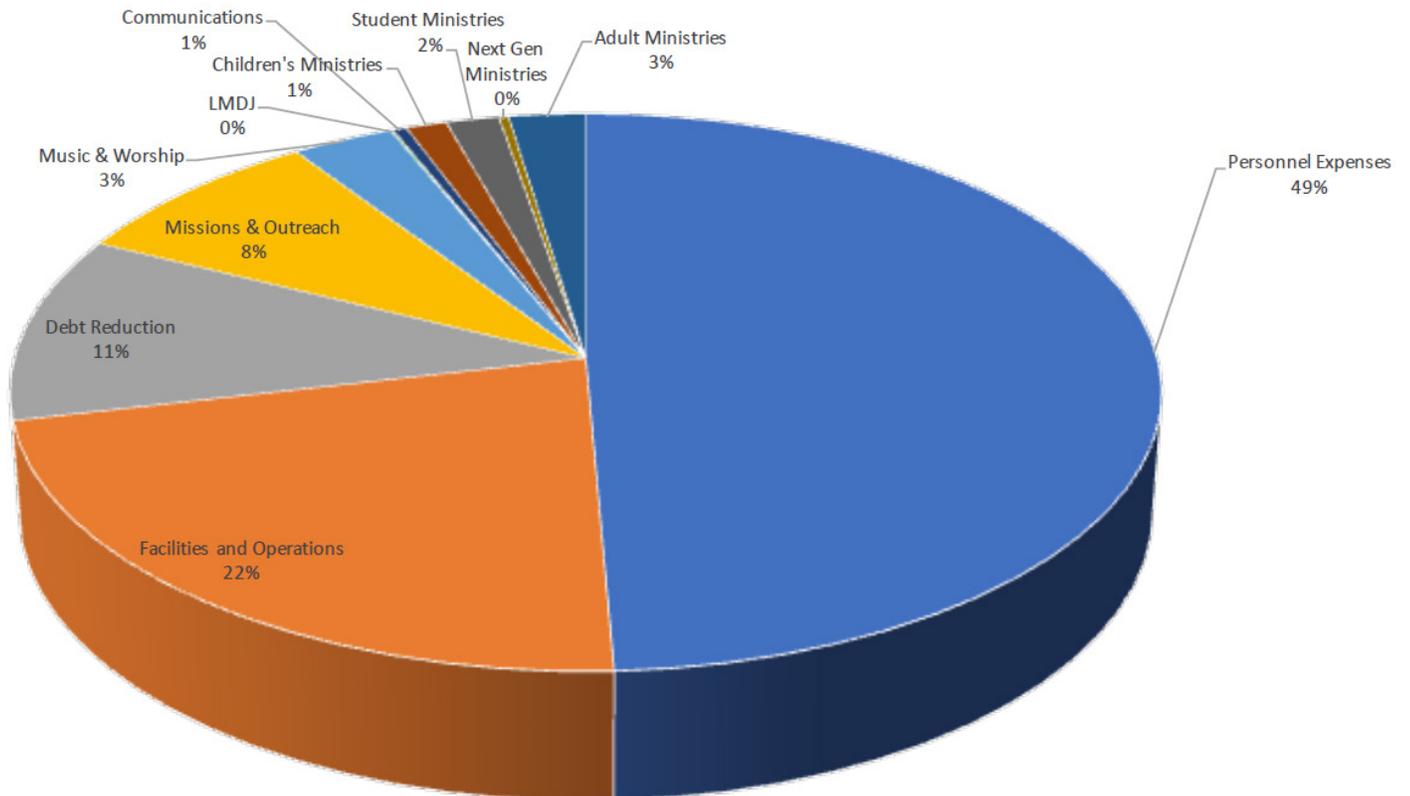
FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET VS. ACTUAL



	Budget	Actual	Variance
Undesignated Revenues	\$1,318,392	\$1,329,246	\$10,854
Designated Revenues	\$80,025	\$78,044	\$(1,981)
Total Revenues	\$1,398,417	\$1,407,290	\$8,874
Personnel Expenses	\$709,733	\$695,667	\$(14,067)
Facilities and Operations	\$308,331	\$282,714	\$(25,617)
Debt Reduction	\$141,167	\$120,102	\$(21,065)
Total Administrative Costs	\$1,159,230	\$1,098,482	\$(60,748)
Missions & Outreach	\$118,425	\$101,754	\$(16,671)
Music & Worship	\$27,775	\$31,329	\$3,554
Children's Ministries	\$17,554	\$10,756	\$(6,798)
Student Ministries	\$26,858	\$16,582	\$(10,277)
Next Gen Ministries	\$4,583	\$3,906	\$(677)
Adult Ministries	\$44,229	\$32,557	\$(11,672)
Total Expenses	\$1,398,655	\$1,295,366	\$(103,289)
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(239)	\$111,924	\$112,163

EXPENSES BY ACTIVITY

FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET



ACC'S PURPOSE

Why We Exist

**Practicing the way of Jesus together
for the renewal of the world.**

ACC PRACTICES

How We Do It

**Be with Jesus
Journey together
Follow the Holy Spirit
Bless others
Restore the world around us**



**ARVADA
COVENANT
CHURCH**

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