

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

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# FROM THE LEAD PASTOR

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I really enjoy co-leading our membership classes. At the beginning of each class, we ask attendees to tell us why they are interested in becoming members. I am constantly moved and encouraged as people respond with stories that reflect our identified priorities: Jesus centred. People focused.

For example, one membership class attendee shared that after their kids' first experience in our youth ministry, they came home and reported excitedly, "They really love Jesus there." We are Jesus centred. We want everyone who encounters our church to have the same report.

This past year, our Youth and Young Adult Ministries reflected this priority by having students read through Luke together and share their insights in their small groups. Our Kids Ministry and the rest of the church joined them after Easter to read and study through Acts. People were impacted by the insights and applications the Spirit gave them and the conversations that resulted. We are Jesus centred.

We are also people focused. I see evidence for this growing priority in the way our church responds to needs in our church family and our community. I also see this in our Seniors Coffee Times which started up this past year. This was a grassroots initiative to provide community and relationship on Wednesday mornings. It's so fun to stop in for a visit! We are people focused.

Our Gatherings are another example of this priority. At the beginning of the ministry year, we asked people to commit to gather around the table for one year. Many of you took us up on the challenge. Some of you attended our Open Gatherings. These were times of rich conversation and community. We are people focused.

There are tons of other stories and programs that celebrate these priorities. You can read some of them in this report. You'll hear more as you gather around coffee, in services, and in Gatherings this year. I look forward to more stories that celebrate our priorities: Jesus centred. People focused.

Grace and peace,  
Jeremy



# FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

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The Board's past year has been full of a sense of renewed purpose, and thoughts of the future of our church. I believe that we are at our best when we can spend our time being proactive instead of reactive, and by God's grace, He has brought us here to this point in time. Working with Jeremy in his new role as Lead Pastor has been exciting, and we are walking along with him as he has settled in. We've seen a number of staff members move into new roles in the church, and we are so grateful for their commitment and the gifts they've been given. Our monthly meetings are filled with encouraging stories from the different ministry areas, and we are overjoyed to see the baptisms and new member applications that have been flooding in throughout the year. As we look forward to the year ahead, we plan on keeping momentum on a few areas that we are focused on:

- Mission & Vision: We are starting the work of reviewing and renewing our guiding principles, with the intention of bringing them to the membership in 2024. These are key statements for our staff and volunteers, and we want this process to start with involvement from them, and finish with commitment from the membership.

- Membership: This is another vital part of our church life. Membership is an important commitment, and we want to make sure that it means something. We are developing a plan for membership renewal that will help us maintain our membership list, as well as engage our church body in our Mission and Vision.

- Policy Renewal: This is a much less exciting task, but incredibly important. Our staff deserves a set of guidelines that removes any doubt regarding their guidelines, and empowers them to engage in the ministry areas they work in. This will take some time, but we are committed to the process.

Thank you all for your support, engagement, and prayer as we continue our work as a Board. We pray that God will continue to move in this church to engage in our world.

Tyler Lammertsen,  
Board Chair





# FRIENDSHIPS IN THE KIDSZONE

The Kids Zone is one of my favorite places to be on a Sunday morning. Community coming together in one place to play, learn, laugh, cry, grieve, discuss, plan, connect, and visit. All this “noise” forms what feels to me like joyful worship to the Lord! As check-ins finish and a quiet murmur begins to settle, one of my favorite aspects of community starts to form. Men and women in their 70s, 60s, 50s, 40s, 30s, 20s, as well as teens and children begin to fellowship and learn alongside each other. Teens and adults teach children together, older children help younger children find scripture in their Bible or team up to play fun activities and help each other to be successful. In the nursery, older adults teach teens how to care for babies and toddlers and those same babies and toddlers bless those that are older with their joyful play and sweet hugs. In the midst of all this activity, quiet conversation takes place. “How has your week been?” “That must be hard.” “I will be praying about that.” “How did your trip go?” “How did you do on that big test you had last week?” The sound of intergenerational friendships growing and building! What a blessing it is to be able to hear stories from someone who has journeyed life before you. What a blessing it is to hear what our youth are struggling with today and to be able to pray with and for them. A perfect example of this is Terry, who is in her 70s and Ashley, who is 16. Several months ago, they began to be scheduled together in nursery and today, they call each other friend. As you pass by the nursery you will hear them talking about anything from Terry sharing a life experience she learned from to the details of a dress that Ashley bought for a special event. What a blessing it is for Terry and Ashley and what a blessing it is for Ashley’s parents to know that another adult cares so much for their daughter and is speaking wisdom and truth into her life. We are blessed in this church community with so many people at different ages and stages of life.



There is so much to be critical about when it comes to our generational differences, but...there are also so many ways that we can learn from each other and grow from what each other knows and experiences in life. “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” (Proverbs 27:17) We need each other as we travel through the ups and downs of life in community. I pray that we will continue to look for ways to sharpen and encourage those older and those younger than ourselves. What a blessing it is to be a part of this wonderfully diverse and intergenerational community! - Kylie Dubber



# SENIORS, TEENAGERS, AND DESSERTS

Can you imagine a church family without any youth? Can you imagine a church family without any senior adults? There are churches that face such a dilemma and it means that church is not what God intended. God's church is intergenerational by His design and praise God EFCL has a healthy mix of seniors with their life legacy of walking with God through all of life's experiences and youth who are just beginning to experience God beyond their safe family confines.

How many of you know Jean Gray or Mable Sturm or Merle Stone? You don't know them because they were seniors in the little church I (Tim Seim) attended after becoming a Christian at 16 years of age. Yes, I was a youth once long ago. Each of these ladies impacted my life as a youth. They believed in me, they encouraged me, they taught me God's Word, they provided me transportation, they prayed for me. Thank God for those senior influencers.

Earlier this year the Prime Time seniors here at E-Free invited our Youth Pastor Chelsea van Schothorst and her ministry crowd of youth to join us for a dessert and light games night. We had fun together. The seniors have often spoken of that event since it took place as being so valuable to them. We sat around tables in small groups and heard stories from as many as we could share and learned about life from people not in our stage of life. We ended the evening by exchanging names from the youth to pray for them one-on-one over the summer. I don't know about others but I still pray for the young girl who entrusted me with her name and some specific requests for her life. Every once in a while a senior will say "when are we meeting again with Chelsea and our E-Free youth?" My reply is "soon and very soon!"

Here at E-Free, we have been blessed with a range of generations that call this church home. As a youth community, we have been dreaming of what it looks like to grow our intergenerational connections within the church. We were grateful to have been invited to join this Prime Timers gathering and look forward to more to come. There's something significant about sharing our stories with those older and younger than us. These moments shape us, grow us, and connect us. These moments also help disciple our students in their own faith as they hear from those who have journeyed a life of faith and share incredible witness of the goodness of God in their own lives.

-Tim Seim and Chelsea van Schothorst



## THE NUMBERS

- 13 kids dedicated
- Sung King of Kings 21 times 🎵
- 22 people baptized 💧
- 37 new members
- Handed out 400 copies of Our Daily Bread 📖
- Served 1100 snacks during the week of Summer Day Camps
- 2,600 Timbits were consumed by the tech crew
- Received 3,760 electronic tithes 💳
- Used 9,508 communion cups
- Printed 55,757 items in the church office 🖨️