

2023 Annual Report



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West Hills didn't bite off more than we could chew in 2023. But we did take quite a mouthful, as the rest of this Annual Report clearly demonstrates. I feel a bit silly reporting this to y'all because, well, you were there! What I mean is that 2023 was a year of engagement for our congregation. You were there — whether you helped strengthen our mission partnerships, engaged in group discipleship, joined in new caring initiatives led by the Deacons, or teamed up with so many others to carry out our Capital Campaign.

So in this year's Mission Management report, I'll try to note a few dynamics that you may not have noticed, even if you were in the thick of things.

Opportunities for Vibrant Discipleship

Every year, one of our critical tasks is to manage our commitment to ongoing discipleship. Being on a Journey with Jesus involves worship, mission, community, and growth in knowledge and action. The following reports provide just a glimpse of the attention we focused on in this area. I'll just point out here that although our leadership team was short staffed, and we had other big initiatives on the table — our opportunities for discipleship continued to flourish.

Capital Campaign

For over ten years WHC has been anticipating a Capital Campaign, and from day one of 2023, we had teams working to finally make this a reality. Please read the Support Ministries report for more about the story of generosity told by the Capital Campaign numbers.

Other gains from Capital Campaign efforts:

- The Capital Campaign challenged us to receive the gift of a legacy of stewardship at WHC - part of which is our incredible facility and its potential for ministry.
- We were challenged to own our role as stewards of the facility and our own personal resources.
- Facility and financial discussions tend to lead churches toward an inward focus. I am ecstatic that our efforts to refit our facility have instead resulted in greater focus on how we can join God in ministry and outreach.
- The congregation's overwhelming involvement and ownership of this project was a great

reminder of the talents, passion, and spiritual depth of WHC. We can accomplish great things together!

Managing Fluctuation

Over the last decade WHC has experienced periods of significant flux in budget, staffing, and congregational engagement caused by everything from leadership transitions, to cultural and economic shifts, and even a global pandemic. Finally, over the last 2 years we've begun to identify some steadiness in our shared life. Two simple examples of this can be found in our worship attendance and our giving. Over the last 24 months both have been trending stable to slightly higher as we end 2023.

Looking back, we also see how much effort has gone into adjusting, right-sizing, and reworking plans and goals.

Here's what we need to celebrate about all this:

- This work has happened over a period of years, and yet we have not sacrificed vibrant discipleship or mission
- Our Elders, Ministry Teams, and Staff are on it!
 - WHC is not a church to stick its head in the sand or to get stuck in the status quo. Read, for example, the enclosed Support Ministry Report; it's a testimony of congregational generosity, and also a testimony about faithful management. Consider the successful long-term plan to gradually rebalance the budget (accomplished one year early), or the all-out effort to make sure we're using our facility for kingdom work — see more below.

Expanding Building Partnerships for Mission

In 2022 we laid the groundwork to develop building partnerships to aid us in mission, caring for the facility, and creating opportunities for relational outreach. In 2023 we tasted the fruit of these partnerships and added new ones.

Here's what this meant financially:

- Annual building use proceeds rose from less than \$3,000 in 2021 to over \$40,000 in 2023
- In 2024 we've budgeted to receive \$55,000 from building use

What greater facility use looks like:

Mission Management, continued

- There are babies in the building! Everyday!
- Many Monday evenings every single spot in the parking lot is full.
- When the Tuesday music classes switch, the East stairwell feels like the passing period of major high school.
- If you spent 12 hours here on a particular weekday you could run into a group of ladies on their way to Bible study, people grabbing coffee before heading to one of two different addiction ministries, families with special needs playing in the gym, and a troupe of toddlers testing the echoes in Geneva Lounge on their way from snack time to nap time.

How building partners expand our mission:

- Bible Study Fellowship - weekly, rigorous Bible education for hundreds of women, men, and children.
- Atonement Child Care - daily care for children of working families and employment for childcare workers.
- OBHO - Weekly music education for hundreds of homeschooled children and teens (also providing a gathering space for their families).
- Addiction ministries several days per week

Relational opportunities

Here's a glimpse of how relationships have developed with – one of our partners, Atonement Childcare:

- Of course, our two staff have extensive contact – initially just to coordinate shared building use, but recently to collaborate to accomplish goals for both ministries, and now genuine friendship.
- WHC members and staff lead weekly chapel for the kids.
- WHC members and staff participated in Atonement's annual Thanksgiving feast for parents, and their Christmas program.
- One WHC family has already enrolled a child at Atonement, a member volunteers with the preschoolers weekly, and another member of congregation has become a part of the Atonement Staff.
- We've even had families from Atonement reach out for more information about our congregation.

Our building remains one of our greatest resources to expand mission and outreach, and we have only just begun to scratch the surface. The management and development of these relationships has involved serious effort across several ministry areas and staff departments. Yet consider this, the total number of WHC people involved in these partnerships remains small. The successes mentioned above were accomplished by a small (but growing) group of people who sense a new vision for our relational ministry. Imagine what God could do through WHC if this vision catches on.

What's Next

The past two years of ministry have taught us a lot about our congregation. We've learned more about our strengths and our limits. We've learned to be adaptive and to embrace questions about what it means to be the church in our changing world. God has given us so much and invited us into His redeeming and restoring work. What we need now are some points of focus as we follow God into the future.

In the coming weeks, our Elders and Staff will gather up what we've learned and what you've shared in recent months. We'll lean into the Spirit for direction – asking for landmarks in the distance which we can aim for in the coming years. This is a season to be grateful for what God has done, and to firm up our faith that God will also guide our next steps. I've never been more excited for the next phase of the Journey with West Hills!

Caregiving Ministry

By Karen Lofgren-Anderson, Elder

In everything we do our focus is to be present, listen, and be unconditionally Christ-centered. Caregiving Ministries is one of presence, a ministry of listening, a ministry that is unashamedly Christ-centered.

1. Stephen Ministry — Led by Judy Nelson, Dan O'Reilly, and Linda Gadwood. This quiet confidential ministry touches lives behind the scenes. Stephen Ministers are trained lay people who listen and walk beside others providing one-on-one Christian care during difficult life circumstances.

Dan O'Reilly and Linda Gadwood successfully completed the Bridge Leader's Training Course to equip them to begin and lead Stephen Ministry. This year we had five active linkings. Two people received cancer ministry care. 27 Sundays Stephen Ministers provided confidential care after Church services rotating weekly. Stephen Ministers served during five healing prayer services rotating on the 5th Sunday of the month.

They provided grief books to those at WHC who have lost a loved one. This is a series of four Stephen Ministry books which are sent during the first year after the loss. Six families received grief ministry care. During the Christmas season when losses are especially difficult a grief gift was distributed to each person who had lost an immediate family member.

Some folks have expressed interest in becoming Stephen Ministers. As more express interest, training will be held in 2024.

Prayer boxes and blank prayer cards have been added at each of the entrances of West Hills Church. Anyone utilizing our facility in need of prayer can drop a prayer card in the box. Stephen Ministers are praying specifically for the prayer needs identified. One person expressed interest in being linked with a Stephen Minister.

2. Caregiving Outreach — Led by Sheryl Overby, Ginny Jansen, and Marilyn Moore.

a. Hospital/Rehab Outreach — Church volunteer makes contact with person who is hospitalized or in rehab facility through phone calls, sending cards, and when able in-person. 10 prayer shawls/blankets were delivered through this ministry to those who were grieving. Multiple hospital/rehab visits were made.

b. Newborn Outreach — Church volunteer makes contact with family who had a new baby and delivers a gift from the Church. 1 family received a baby blanket.

c. Meal Ministry — Ministry provides a few meals to someone recovering from an illness/surgery or upon request. Four meal trains were set up and meals delivered.

d. Note to Prayer Requesters — Personal notecards are mailed weekly to those who have requested prayers letting them know that someone has prayed for them. 8-10 notes are mailed each week.

3. Homebound Ministry — Led by Deb Johnson, Angie Arner, and Barb Wooley.

a. Homebound Partners — Linking with our homebound members/friends of the family to provide regular contact through phone calls, sending of cards, and when able in-person. 30 homebound were served through homebound partner linkings.

b. Homebound Communion — Delivery of homebound communion in-person when able to those who have responded 'yes' to the monthly call asking if they would like to receive communion. Homebound communion was served to an average of one to five homebound per month.

c. Homebound Rides — Provide homebound rides to West Hills Church for Sunday services. Over 100 rides were provided.

d. Birthday Cards — Birthday cards for our homebound were available for the congregation to sign and give well wishes. The cards were then mailed to the homebound birthday person.

e. Chili and Caroling; Christmas Stockings — Over 100 people enjoyed chili, then divided into five teams to carol to our homebound members and deliver Christmas stockings stuffed with goodies. Many thanks were received from our homebound.

Caregiving Ministries has many hands and hearts that make all of the various ministries happen. We can always use more volunteers in our ministry.

Family Ministries

By Jessica Scheopner, Director of Spiritual Formation and Family Ministries

For Family Ministries, 2023 was a year of responsive listening, innovation, and growing relationships. In a post-pandemic world, the Family Ministries team listened to young people and their families, and carefully tuned into the leading of the Holy Spirit. As messages became clear, the team responded with a wonderful combination of flexibility and steadfastness, offering innovative ways for young people and their families to explore their faith in community. There are three passages of scripture that guide Family Ministries, and they were each radiantly visible this year:

“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.” Mark 9:37

We saw this in worship. Together with Worship and Music Ministries, we explored ways to welcome people of all ages and abilities more fully into Sunday worship:

- By welcoming children to help lead the closing song
- By continuing to enhance and educate about the Nooks and Tables and worship resources
- By offering a weekly Family Ministry Moment for the whole family of God
- By displaying the art and sermon responses people create in Geneva Lounge alongside the worship resources



We saw this in discipleship. What is more welcoming than learning of a need and responding to it? The structure of Crosswalk Kids and Youth changed this year in response

to the changing needs of our families and ministry leaders. We began to reimagine these vibrant, age-appropriate, relationship-centered environments:

- Crosswalk Kids saw 4-year-olds — 4th graders focused on the stories of God shared through large group lessons and age-specific small group activities.
- Crosswalk 56 allowed 5th and 6th graders to build a foundation for their own maturing faith by taking a closer look at God’s Big Story and how they fit into this beautiful story.
- Exploring Faith Together is the Crosswalk Youth curriculum, designed to invite middle and high school students to examine their beliefs in community. Upon completion, they may consider joining the church through Confirmation when they are ready.
- During the 5th Sundays, children were invited for sermon pull-out lessons, giving them a chance to discuss and explore hands-on faith practices through prayer stations, exploring spiritual gifts, and Examen.

We saw this in collaboration. Family Ministries partnered with others to imagine ways young people could share their gifts and opportunities for all-ages offerings to help the whole church grow.

- **Chili and Caroling:** Caregiving enthusiastically welcomed families buying stocking stuffers, making cards, and bringing the gift of Christmas joy in song.
- **Journey to the Cross:** This annual collaboration between Worship and Family Ministries helped people from West Hills, our friends, neighbors, and building partners to consider Jesus’s last days through scripture, art, and the senses. Visitors reflected or explored a hands-on activity at the twelve stations representing an aspect of Holy Week.

We saw this in mission. West Hills has embraced the opportunity to welcome the littlest children by inviting Atonement Childcare Center into

Family Ministries, continued

shared spaces and growing relationships in Jesus's name - in the nursery, children's library, gym, fellowship hall, and on the newly refurbished, accessible playground area. West Hills volunteers and staff have enjoyed getting to know Atonement children and their families during a daily summer story time for school-aged children, a weekly year-round Chapel time for the preschoolers.

“‘Come,’ [Jesus] replied, ‘and you will see.’ So they went and saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him...” John 1:39

Today, Jesus continues to transform people in the context of ongoing relationship with Him and in the community of the Church.

We saw this in relational ministry. This year we responded to the need to be a place of genuine warmth, affection, and empathy where young people see Jesus in the body of Christ represented by their faith family.

- During Community Nights, all generations came together for a meal, lesson, and activities. Children, teens, and adults built friendships established on love, safety, and acceptance – the kind of place where faith can take root and grow. We've seen these relationships continuing to flourish in the sanctuary and Geneva Lounge on Sundays, and in the cheering section of activities.



- Young people began to use the “Come Cheer Us On!” bulletin board to invite their faith family to come and see what they are doing beyond West Hills, deepening those relationships.

- Children and teens have been invited onto teams where they are recognized as valuable contributors – greeting, ushering, leading music, performing support ministry tasks, and mission work.
- At Youth Group, leaders created safe, fun gatherings where students would see Jesus as they connected with each other and trusted adults, and shared life, stories, questions, and experiences with one another in an unconditionally loving space. They also helped young people explore ways to connect with God through faith practices and to continue taking the next step in their faith journey.

“So let’s do it — full of belief, confident that we’re presentable inside and out. Let’s keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps His word. Let’s see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshipping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:22-25 The Message)

We saw this in fellowship during all sorts of gatherings.

- Food Truck Party was an all-church summer celebration and VBS weekend, bringing children and adults together to celebrate God's perfect provision through Bible stories, crafts, games, and music.
- Sensing Nature was an end-of-summer day camp for the children of West Hills, Atonement Childcare Center, and the neighborhood. It was filled with hands-on projects integrating art and nature to help children and leaders recognize and celebrate God's creation and our place in it. Many thanks for the vision and execution of this meaningful camp goes to two West Hills college students – Rylee Zimmerman and Juliana Scheopner – who capably led other adults and teens in sensing nature activities with kids!
- Monthly Parenting Community gatherings encouraged parents on the journey with kids and teens.

Family Ministries, continued

- Gatherings for kids (and all of God's children):
 - Community Nights in the spring
 - Fun Day at Calvin Crest in August
 - Playground Party in October
 - Cookies and Cocoa in December
- Youth gatherings:
 - Lunch. Play. Learn. Pray. Youth Group on the first Sunday of each month, built community and equipped and encouraged students to walk faithfully in daily life.
 - Sunday Funday on the third Sunday of the month. Youth in 5th-12th grades and their friends got together to play, laugh, eat, and sometimes did a service project as they grew in friendship.
 - LIFT (Living In Faith Together): West Hills Youth helped plan and lead quarterly events for all PMRV youth, including a spring retreat, an end-of-summer retreat, a fall outing to Skinny Bones, and an upcoming winter mission project and glow party.

The work God has done in and through Family Ministries has been carried out by the hearts and hands of nearly 100 volunteers. It has been a privilege to serve with these (YOU!) gifted, creative, caring, and passionate leaders in children and youth ministry. This work has been supported by the cheerful, energetic, and resourceful labor of Spiritual Formation Assistant Han McClelland Wagoner, and the insightful vision and prayerful guidance of Marti Bloes, Elder for Intergenerational Impact, and Chris Hanna, Elder for Children and Youth.

As we thank God for all that He has done in 2023, we also have our eyes on what lies ahead. I suspect that the work we did with God in 2023 was something like setting the footings for bridges. I hope in this coming year we will see these bridges being built as we continue to grow in faith and friendships in 2024 while welcoming others into a new or deeper journey with the Living Christ.



Building on the things that were implemented during 2022, we were able to improve in some areas and develop others where generations could build relationships. Working closely with many of the Elders and staff members, this has been an exciting year of growth in bringing a more clear understanding of the necessity for intergenerational activities and relationships.

The **Nooks & Tables** in the sanctuary have become an important way for all of us to disciple the children of West Hills. As our younger sisters and brothers in Christ interact with the materials in each of those spaces, they can observe and participate in worship and understand the parts of that service. We were able to continue growing together in a deeper relationship with each other and with the Lord.

Family Ministry Moments continued to be a wonderful way to help the children understand the message presented by the pastor. Using the children to present part of the message is unifying for old and young. Our young members love to show off their Jesus knowledge. Their responses are sometimes very enlightening. We added the opportunity for the younger members to participate in worship by offering instruments to play for the last song during the service. This is another way to give the children and youth ownership during the service.

As **Atonement Child Care** moved into our facility, it became apparent there should be a liaison between the church and the child care. I stepped into that role and have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the directors, teachers and children. Relationships have been growing between Atonement, their staff and the staff of West Hills. Jessica Scheopner and I have been presenting songs and a Bible story once a week, they call it "Chapel". During the summer, Atonement had school-aged kids as well. Jessica presented a Bible study for them that was very well received. We were fortunate to have families from Atonement join us for Cookies and Cocoa and trick or treating, too!.

Community Nights continued on Wednesdays in the Spring. Starting with a family-style meal around the table with some new friends and some old ones there were activities for the group to enjoy together. After dinner topics of interest were offered, including Bible study groups, worship

team practice, open gym, ukulele players, and many more. There were also mission projects included.

A new bulletin board was added where young and old could post activities they were involved in. This offered the opportunity for all WHC members to support each other in those activities. What a great experience to see the surprised smiles on faces when an unexpected spectator showed up.

Growing Old in the Grace of God was an offering for our older members. Starting with brunch, we then had a Bible lesson and lively discussion. This was a great opportunity to discuss topics pertinent to each of the participants. We will continue this group this Spring.

As co-leader for the Mending the Nets campaign youth team, I was able to get acquainted with some of our youth members. We talked about items that would make the facility more attractive to people their age. During some of our discussions, they said it would be good for them to mentor the younger children in Crosswalk. Working together with the younger children, our youth group helped to decorate the JAM room. They also suggested that they would like to teach the Large Group message for the younger kids so that will happen in the Spring.

I continued to work with Christina Embree, CEO of Refocus Ministry, as we met in Zoom meeting consultations. Refocus Ministry offered several roundtable sessions on topics pertinent to the intergenerational work we have been doing here at West Hills. Sharing during these opportunities pointed out what great work we are doing here to build those relationships across generations.

Part of the fun at the end of the year is reading all the Christmas Cards we receive from our Mission Partners. It is such a joy to receive Christmas greetings and best wishes from them. And, of course, how thankful they are for our support for their ministries. Truly we are blessed to be a blessing.

What an honor and privilege it is to be able to help others who are engaged in serving in the name of God. In addition to their thanks and blessings, we get to hear about their work in furthering God's kingdom. West Hills provides support for 15 ministries with many right here in Omaha as well as many around the world. Here is a brief summary of their work in service to God and to others.

Partners in Omaha

Abide: Serving North Omaha, we helped with several of their ministries. By filling Love Your Neighbor Boxes we helped provide food to families. We even helped to distribute the boxes with volunteers from West Hills going to Abide's "Better Together" Campus on several Saturdays and loading the boxes into cars. We also welcomed a new family into the Skinner East Lighthouse. After a period of vacancy, the Idowu family moved into the house to serve the Skinner East neighborhood. In October, our congregation got to meet Ade and Hannah Idowu and their son Jyra in person when they came and worshipped at West Hills.

North Omaha Good News Bears (NOGNB): Early in 2023, the Good News Bears shifted executive leadership; the long-time director, Rev. James Patterson, stepped down and Jeremiah Saffold became the new director. We regularly connect with Jeremiah to seek ways to assist as they seek to provide a positive Christian environment to build life characteristics of self-esteem and confidence through coaching and academic tutoring. Many from West Hills took the time to help wrap Christmas gifts at their annual gift-wrapping party in December.

Heartland Hope (HH): Dedicated to helping others who are trying to improve their circumstances, Heartland Hope offers programs for hiring, provide food and clothing, and offer children's mentoring and training. West Hills has many volunteers who serve once a month at HH in the clothes closet. We also ran three different food and hygiene item

drives. West Hills was awarded the Heartland Hope Church Volunteer of the Year Award.

InterVarsity: This has been a difficult year for Intersity due to the loss of several staff members. But thanks to the dedication of many volunteers, they are still active and vital. Despite the lack of staff, Intersity was able to form 14 new small groups, and West Hills hosted their annual progressive dinner.

Young Life: Young Life has also faced staffing challenges. But Northwest High School has two new leaders and the Capernaum Ministry is running strong. Summer Camp is also going strong with many kids attending and coming back changed by the experience.

Youth For Christ (YFC): YFC meets monthly at West Hills, and we sponsored a "Walking Taco" event in November.

International Friendship Center (IFC): Founded by Pastor Emad, a friend of West Hills, the IFC's mission is to witness and share the love of Christ through service and interfaith dialogue. West Hills helps support the IFC financially and by participating in some of their local hospitality events.

Westgate Elementary School: West Hills has been a faithful and longtime supporter of Westgate. Every year we collect school supplies for the students. We also provide lunches and gifts for the staff several times a year. In December, we adopted the children of families who needed help in providing gifts for their children for Christmas. West Hills provided gifts for 24 children and welcomed the parents with coffee, hot chocolate, and donuts when they came to pick up the gifts. We also have several volunteers throughout the year working in the library and mentoring children by having lunch with them and developing relationships in a one-on-one environment.

Crossroads Connections: Crossroads Connections is a Christian community of faith in support of prisoners, those released, and their families. West Hills also sponsored dinner twice in the past year for New Community, a women's prison ministry.

Mission Ministry, continued

International Partners

Aid International Christian Women of Vision (AIChrisWOV): ChrisWOV is a non-profit, faith-based organization. In Cameroon the organization works with groups of distressed women, subjected to gender based violence, vulnerable widows, children and persons living with or affected by HIV. This year we had the great honor of having Dorothy Tanwani (leader in Cameroon) speak at West Hills and then meeting with a smaller group for a luncheon and further discussion of her work.

41O Bridge: Our decade-plus partnership with The 41O Bridge continued throughout 2023. The 41O Bridge is a Christ-centered, non-profit organization helping to redefine the war on poverty through community development in poverty-stricken nations such as Kenya and Guatemala. West Hills celebrated 41O Day in April again this year with news of change. After partnering with numerous communities in Haiti over the years, 41O Bridge decided to transition to Guatemala. Even though we were sad to move on from Haiti where West Hills sent teams four times since 2012, unsafe conditions forced 41O Bridge to wind down their presence in the country. The 41O Bridge started partnering with communities in Guatemala in 2016 so they have a presence there and are working with community leaders already. We are looking forward to watching how God connects West Hills with the people in the country of Guatemala in the coming years!

For His Children: West Hills had the absolute pleasure of having folks from For His Children in Ecuador come visit and speak in April. This was an amazing opportunity for the congregation to hear about what God is doing through them in Ecuador in caring for orphans and children suffering from disabilities.

Pastor Raphael: Pastor Raphael is a local pastor in Ecuador who helps disciple and equip the indigenous Queshua people of Ecuador through pastoral care and training workshops.

Evangelical Theological Seminary in Cairo (ETSC): ETSC is one of the longest serving protestant Seminaries in the Middle East. Through The Outreach Foundation, West Hills has been a long

time supporter of their mission to provide pastors and educators. During a year of economic hardship, our support has been more important than ever.

PCUSA/Middle East Liaison: The Presbyterian Church has a long history of ministry in the Middle East. It has been a great honor to help Elmarie and Scott Parker (formerly of West Hills) serve the people and Churches in the Middle East. Many new avenues have opened up for this ministry in the last year including new ministries in Iraq, and forging relationships with the Bible Society of the Gulf (Kuwait and Bahrain). They also continue to be involved with the Compassion Protestant Society, Home for Hope, the Near East School of Theology, and many others.

As you can see, God is at work in many, many places where West Hills has been able to join with Him in furthering His kingdom. This is work that we take on with gratitude and even greater blessing. As 2024 unfolds, we look forward to even deeper involvement as the joy of service in His name knows no bounds.

Spiritual Formation & Discipleship

By Jessica Scheopner, Director

2023 was a year in which the Spiritual Formation and Discipleship (SF&D) Ministry began to imagine integrated faith formation opportunities while continuing to lean into the core discipleship strategies which have been important to spiritual growth of the adults at West Hills. These ministry teams have worked hard to consider the needs of the groups they serve and to offer a variety of opportunities for adults to grow individually and as a faith community on the journey with the Living Christ.

The Spiritual Formation and Discipleship Committee facilitates opportunities for increased biblical literacy and life application through weekly Bible studies, classes, and book discussion groups as well as multiple libraries and resource rooms. This year's Sunday morning studies created opportunities for listening and adult intergenerational engagement around several current topics including Rick Warren's "God's Answers to Life's Difficult Questions," Presbyterian Disaster Assistance's "Trouble the Water: Conversations to Disrupt Racism & Dominance," and Adam Hamilton's "When Christians Get It Wrong." Some studies challenged participants to consider how to more fully integrate faith and life, as in Tim Keller's "Generosity: How God's Radical Grace Makes Us Givers," John Ortberg's "The Me I Want to Be," and Andy Stanley's "Go Fish." Two studies dove into the cultural, historical, and geographical context of scripture with Ray Vander Laan's "Fire on the Mountain" and David Jeremiah's "Why the Nativity."

The Men's Ministry Committee continued to offer multiple opportunities for the men of West Hills to form deeper connections, study scripture, serve together, and simply enjoy fellowship. The men's Tuesday morning and Wednesday evening Bible studies had a combined weekly average attendance of about 20 participants. These faithful groups provided a community that challenged and encouraged the participants as they met God in scripture, discussion and prayer. The men also served the church with energy as they washed Community Night dishes and helped with church clean-up days. Weather challenges featured in

several of the Men's Ministry offerings in 2023. The Ash Wednesday Fish Fry coincided with a winter storm, resulting in this fan favorite moving to March. The Great Brisket Show-Down in July – one of the quarterly Men's Night Out events – ushered in temperatures hot enough to rival the sun's surface, but the men adapted, and enjoyed some amazing food and fellowship. And the Fall-back Pancake Breakfast brought with it the expected darker afternoons along with a fellowship hall filled with the warm sounds of a church family connecting while the men offered a hot meal. Through all of this, the men of West Hills continued to work to build faith in community, which has positively impacted the entire community.

The Women's Ministry Committee completed an extraordinarily successful first year of Table Talk, an informal time for women to gather around the table to draw closer to God and one another. This much-anticipated, once-a-month gathering brought women together for dessert, a brief talk on an everyday topic rooted in Scripture led by one of the women of West Hills, followed by a small group discussion around the tables. The stories and Spirit-given thoughts, and the friendships forged and deepened around the tables continued to resonate with participants long after the close of the evening. West Hills women also experimented with a casual summer offering called "Walk and Talk," which brought women of all ages together at the Walnut Creek Park pavilion for a brief devotional followed by a chance to walk and talk on the shady, paved trails. Women's Ministry hosted three weekly Bible studies led by Gloria Zinn, Tracy Enholm and Jane Loeck, and LeAnn Schaffer, with a combined average weekly attendance of around 30 women participating in these three studies.

West Hills also offered several **Retreat and Conference** opportunities for men and women in 2023. Linda Springsted and Kelley Deases co-led three silent retreat opportunities to the Saint Benedict Center, with 46 silent

Spiritual Formation & Discipleship, continued

retreat participants in 2023, including 12 first time attendees from West Hills and beyond! Jason Scheopner headed a men's retreat opportunity with Eric Rafferty teaching about building and experiencing a strong relationship with God and the people around them. A group of about 30 men gathered for this March retreat at beautiful Camp Carol Joy Holling.

An opportunity for **Senior adults** began in September. 30 retirees warmly welcomed the chance to gather for a discussion group around the idea of Aging in the Grace of God. This group, facilitated by Marti Bloes, met two Fridays a month for lunch, laughter, and learning about God's plan for the retirement years to be fruitful in fulfilling His purposes.

Small Group Ministry, long a bedrock of the discipleship journey at West Hills, is now part of the Spiritual Formation and Discipleship Ministry umbrella. While this doesn't change the nature of Small Group Ministry, it does change the point of contact for those wishing to join a small group, or for small groups seeking support or resources. SF&D was grateful to work with Caregiving to facilitate this transition and looks forward to stewarding this special means of faith growth. It is encouraging to celebrate two Small Group milestones:

- Each adult who expressed an interest in joining a small group has now been welcomed into a thriving, existing small group.
- The pilot of an evening Emerging Adult small group in 2023 proved to be a success that will continue in 2024, meeting a need in the youngest adult population. This open small group, ranging from recent high school graduates through 30-year-olds, from West Hills and beyond, met weekly for Bible study and discussion, interspersed with a monthly game night.

Collaboration was important to SF&D. In 2023, SF&D partnered with other ministry areas to bring about innovative discipleship opportunities:

- **Spring Community Nights** were a successful foray into creating a time for our faith family

to lean into the values of being rooted in God's Word, pursuing authentic relationships, and building Christ-centered community. These evenings were a time where relationships among all generations were built over delicious dinners, scripture, themed activities, and shared stories. As we emerged from the shadow of the pandemic, Community Nights fulfilled a felt need to come together to build friendships and extend community around a meal and God's Word.

- In September, West Hills hosted its first **Story Table: Traveling Together**. This evening set in the intimate setting of the dinner table shared stories about impactful relationships, building on the previous sermon series, and celebrating the strategic priority of building relationships. During the meal, the audience had the opportunity to hear, interpret the stories, and just like the disciples, share them with others. Many thanks to Steve Dostal, Candy Glasgow, John Good, Heather Hipp, Peggy Kelley, and William Scheopner for helping to make this pilot possible; to moderator and storytellers Andy Hamer, Tom Backer, Julie Burgess, Mike Kelley, Kathy Padilla, Josh Sauer, and Barb Wooley for sharing their stories; and to the inaugural audience that listened with openness to the stories and this new way of growing together.



Spiritual Formation & Discipleship, continued

Also noteworthy in SF&D in 2023 were opportunities for keychain leadership and tiered discipleship to open doors for **Emerging Adults** to have meaningful opportunities to lead and teach.

- The **Emerging Adults small group** came about because of an expressed need of young people in our congregation and beyond. It is led by the adults in the group, with ready access to resources and support.
- **Sensing Nature Day Camp** came about through the vision and work of two upper-class college students who grew up at West Hills. Rylee Zimmerman's dream and her ensuing partnership with Juliana Scheopner led them to plan, write content, prepare materials and space, and lead a team of volunteers in offering a day camp for twenty-five children. The process for this learning was tiered discipleship, where they requested and were given coaching that enabled them to plan, execute, reflect, adjust, and repeat the process with guidance from a veteran teacher. The opportunity for this kind of tiered discipleship process is a unique, defining example of what it means to be a church committed to helping young people find, refine, and use their gifts generously to the glory of God.

2023 was a banner year for adults of all ages to explore new ways to grow in faith in the West Hills community! This is due to the leadership and hard work of many selfless leaders, including outgoing elder, Rick Mason, whose commitment, passion, sharp-thinking and drive have led us all, including our dedicated Committee leaders, Patti Brownlee, Les Peterson, and Linda Springsted; Exceptional and dedicated teachers for each class and Bible study; our Librarian, Leaders for each small group; Community Nights volunteers; and ALL who are an encouragement to others on this journey. As we each grow more Christlike, we *all* become more like Him. When we commit to being formed, re-formed, and transformed, we encourage others to also lean into their growth. Thank you for spurring this faith family on by your own commitment to growing. God is glorified when we are each and

all shaped and formed into the beauty of greater Christlikeness. I believe 2024 will be an opportunity to see and celebrate this!



Support Ministries

By Mike Alfieri, Director of Church Administration and Mike Overby, Elder

After just finishing completion of my 9th budget at West Hills Church, I was brought to the realization that 2023 was a year unlike any other in the past decade for the church. It was no longer a year of anticipation, expectation, "...wait and see...", "...once we get past this...", or foundation for some future happening; it was a year of action and a story unfolding before us. A year of God's blessings and a journey of discernment and progress. Of the many monikers used to describe me at West Hills, that of the "numbers guy" has always been the most misunderstood about me. Not that I cannot seem to be a fount of trivial data; but what matters is not the figures, it's the story they tell! Some may know I was a music major for several years in my youth. When I ended up with finance degrees, friends were shocked. How could I go from music to accounting?! But I find great similarity in the sense of communication they both hold. The stories they tell. Music through the language of notes and dynamics. Finance through the language of numbers and context.

This idea of seeing the "story" is true of all folks who see numbers as not just data points, but a language and context for communication whether in finance, scientific study, or even the Bible. This all came together perfectly in the way Mike O. told me "I personally believe that behind every number is a person and their story of a pursuit of meaning, purpose, and significance in this world. The primary theme and significance of the Book of Numbers are to highlight the significance of faith and obedience to God. With that I thought we could incorporate some of those faith steps (how we have engaged) taken over the course of the year. Numbers ends with "preparation", the lesson is clear—God's people must trust in him, moving ahead by faith if they are to claim his promised land. I think there is some correlation between this and the WHC community as we now see it."

So, by the numbers, a **recap of "moving ahead by faith" in 2023:**

\$140,582 – Pledge gifts received in December. A communication was made to the congregation the numbers were telling us that 2023 might end with a large shortfall given the level of gifts in November and early December. Once again our congregation

showed its overwhelming generosity, and we received \$119,517 in gifts during the final 2 weeks of the year.

\$40,718 – Building Use revenue in 2023. After months of prayer, review, discernment, and plain elbow grease, the Building Use Team brought on 2 excellent partners to share the gift of our wonderful facilities; Atonement Child Care Center which started in mid-March, and Omaha Homeschool Band and Orchestra which started regularly in September. Marti Bloes, Heather Hipp, and John Good have done an amazing job of working with both groups to create true partnerships. This revenue is a \$29,291 increase from 2022, and a great example of how the Finance Committee is working to diversify our resources to support God's work through West Hills with a changing congregation.

\$0 – West Hills Church overall 2023 financial breakeven. Another significant story related to the generous December outpouring by the congregation...We did NOT have to use any cash reserves to cover 2023 expenditures! We had budgeted for the use of \$35,000.

\$940,874 – Total financial support (operating, capital, memorial, and emergency funds) given in 2023 for God's work through West Hills. That is an average of \$3,095 for EVERY active congregation member/friend! **THANK YOU!!**

\$27,575 – Grant funds received by West Hills in 2023. With successful grant applications we received

\$2,575 from the Komarek Trust to help fund the cost of fire sprinkler work early in 2023; and \$25,000 from Nebraska Presbytery Foundation to help fund the "Outdoor Outreach" project work which allowed the wonderful new playground installation and ADA accessibility to it for all.

Support Ministries, continued

\$612,084 - Completely new roof funded by insurance due to hail damage. Sometimes numbers tell a story that doesn't seem so positive on the surface but are much different if you did a bit deeper. Hail damage requiring a new roof certainly is one of them. This project was ongoing for nearly 2 years from the time the damage was identified to the point when we received the final insurance check in January 2024. It was a great partnership with our vendor White Castle Roofing, our insurance company The Insurance Board, John Good, and the Building & Grounds ministry table lead by Dick Frandeen. As you can imagine over nearly 2 years there were plenty of ups and downs with John squarely in the middle of almost all of them. He and the B&G team did a great job of managing the many delays, identifying necessary corrective work required, and ensuring the job was done completely and properly. **Kudos to you all!**

\$882,700 - Pledges made so far to our Capital Campaign. Since the first day I came to West Hills the need for a Capital Campaign has been expressed. Awareness of needs escalated, but each year there was something to prevent it happening. For me there is no greater symbol of the changes within the church in 2023 than this number, and the years of discussion and effort to overcome obstacles to make it happen. If you have not yet done so, PLEASE become a part of this important ministry undertaking.

\$825,430 - Total financial resources needed for ministry work budgeted in 2024. Hundreds of hours each year are put in by Elders and staff as we plan our ministry, and identify the resources needed to complete the work. It is an amazing, and at times challenging, effort by everyone involved as we look for creative solutions to optimize our ministry offerings within our resource constraints, and in keeping with how we discern God's calling for the future of West Hills.

\$0 - **Balanced 2024 budget!** Our congregation has had changes over the past years. This has led to incredible work during the budget process, and by church leaders outside the budget process, to seek ways to diversify our financial resources, find more efficient ways of doing ministry, and to discern core ministry priorities on which all

ministries can focus and collaborate. It is a multi-faceted process that has been ongoing for several years with many difficult decisions. In 2021 we anticipated a \$100,000 deficit that was offset by the forgiveness of our \$100,000 PPP loan. In 2022 we anticipated a \$50,000 deficit and realized an \$86,019 deficit due unexpected building costs. In 2023 we again anticipated a \$50,000 deficit, but thanks to the yearend generosity of the congregation we ended at breakeven! Now with the diversity of our resources, and the reduction of our ministry costs we anticipate for 2024 that these important numbers of resources and costs will match.

Many, many, many! - Not all numbers in the story of 2023 are financial. There are others, that are much harder to calculate that involve the dozens of volunteers: Dick Frandeen, Don Glasgow, and Les Peterson who vacuum the entire facility each week; Pam & Jack Culek, Kelly & Tim Briggs, Dan & Deb O'Reilly, and Sheryl Overby who care for the gardens. Peggy Kelley and her decorating talents always present with the Holy Week/Easter displays, and all the many, many Christmas decorations.

Finally, I want to thank Mike Overby for his leadership, partnership, and friendship over the past 3 years. All the 1 to 3-hour "brief" conversations we would have on all things financial, all things facing the church, all things we were working to improve, and all things in life generally. **THANK YOU!!!**



2023 was a busy year of ministry for West Hills Church, and that remained true for the Worship & Music Ministry teams. This was a year of healing, trying new things, and reinvesting in our volunteers. 2023 was a year that was heavily volunteer-driven, with West Hills staff working alongside volunteers to continue ministry as we searched for a full-time Director of Worship & Music.

This past year, the Worship & Music ministry had Hebrews 12:1-2 as the guiding scripture for our ministry area. In this passage, the author of Hebrews writes,

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

This passage held great meaning for me and others in ministry for a variety of reasons. First, I really love the communal aspect of this encouragement. The author says, *"Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses..."* It is through the grace of God, and the strength of Godly community that we can find encouragement in the ministry set before us.

I also take great hope in the idea of running a race *set before us*. God is not surprised by the circumstances we've experienced over the years at West Hills. Even in times of great loss and grief, we can cling to the idea that these situations have been *"set before us"* by a God so great, powerful, and in control. I'm reminded of the words of the timeless children's song, "He has the whole world in his hands."

Finally, I've been encouraged by the idea of running that race *with endurance*. None of us anticipated the sudden loss of Kevin, and no one could have predicted that the search for the next Director of Worship & Music would stretch on for as long as it has. In spite of this, I'm reminded that since God is unsurprised and unflustered, our response must be one of pressing in and working for His glory with endurance.

Journey to the Cross

Several years ago, Kevin brought a new worship experience to West Hills with the interactive, multi-media Journey to the Cross experience. This was a tremendous gift to our congregation, and his vision included the personal sharing of several pieces from his own personal art collection. Jessica Scheopner, Peggy Kelley, and I worked with Christy Gibson to purchase or borrow some of those pieces from his collection, giving them a place in the West Hills Journey to the Cross for the future. Peggy and Jessica also found and purchased a new centerpiece art piece for Journey to the Cross.

Kathy Leach's Retirement

After 24 years of faithful and Godly service as the accompanist at West Hills, Kathy Leach retired. She stepped up in big ways to bridge the gap following Kevin's death and helped to set us on the path of volunteer-led ministry we're following now. Kathy is in a period of redirection as she seeks God's direction for His next call on her life. She's been able to go on travel adventures with Ed, spend time with family and friends, and explore new passions and interests in this season. We are so incredibly grateful for Kathy's leadership, friendship, service, and example to our community of faith. She is missed!

Worship Team

The team of vocalists, instrumentalists, ushers, media and technology crew, and many others continue to be the beating heart of the Worship & Music ministry area. We've welcomed a number of new folks onto these teams, created space for experienced folks to be creative, and invested in the relationships that are created by serving together. As we move into 2024 and anticipate the arrival of a new Director of Worship & Music, I want to continue to make the Worship & Music group an easy place for people to explore and share their gifts.

I'm thankful to be on this journey together, and excited to see the ways that God uses West Hills in the coming year. Thank you for the ways you have served in worship, strengthened our community of faith, and been open to the working of the Holy Spirit in your life and worship.

WEST HILLS CHURCH
Operating Fund
Statement of Financial Activities
Years 2024-2022 Actual to Budget

	Budget 2024	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
REVENUES				
Contributions Revenue				
Pledge	720,000	730,495	740,000	719,214
Plate	-	-	-	1,055
Total Contributions Revenue	720,000	730,495	740,000	720,269
Total Other Revenue	55,000	40,718	50,000	11,427
Ministry Specific Revenue*	50,430	39,946	20,117	30,416
TOTAL REVENUE	825,430	811,159	810,117	762,112
OPERATING EXPENSES				
Personnel				
Pastoral	129,902	121,512	125,060	119,420
Staff	384,098	379,107	412,940	385,473
Total Personnel	514,000	500,619	538,000	504,893
Program Ministries				
Church Leadership	3,900	6,222	2,000	2,428
Spiritual Formation	11,250	11,272	9,990	4,113
Caregiving	3,540	3,813	4,027	1,919
Youth	34,875	3,344	13,240	5,918
Children	10,750	10,788	14,560	10,933
Outreach	1,500			
Worship	9,350	9,353	12,250	11,471
Property	117,750	135,055	127,750	106,959
Mission Ministries	47,515	58,198	52,300	59,080
Administration	71,000	72,495	71,000	78,310
Total Program	311,430	310,540	307,117	281,131
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	825,430	811,159	845,117	786,024
Budgeted Operating Surplus/(Deficit)	-	-	(35,000)	(23,912)
EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS				
Unbudgeted/approved Property expenses				62,107
Total Operating Suplus/(Deficit)	-	-	(35,000)	(86,019)
Use of Cash Reserves to offset deficit	-	-	35,000	86,019
OVERALL NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	-	-	-	-
Property Expense with Budgeted Capital Fund component **				
Property	40,000	30,000	30,000	
Total 2023 Property Budget	157,750	165,055	157,750	

* Activity fees and designated gifts specific to ministry areas; for example: Youth Commitment Offering,
Silent Retreat registration fee, or mission trip participation fees.

** Capital maintenance projects at discretion of Building & Grounds Ministry funded from first proceeds of Capital Campaign.

Pastoral Staff

	Budget 2024	Actual 2023	Budget 2023
Salary	52,000	50,733	50,000
Housing	31,200	29,267	30,000
403B	2,080	2,000	2,000
Effective Salary	85,280	82,000	82,000
Cont Ed	4,000	452	4,000
Cell Phone	998	960	960
Board of Pensions*	33,259	31,980	31,980
SECA Allowance	6,365	6,120	6,120
Total Pastoral Salary	129,902	121,512	125,060

* The Board of Pensions rate for 2023 is 39.0% of pastor's effective salary.

Paid annual leave:

4 weeks vacation

2 weeks study leave

1 week "service to the larger church"

Fund Asset Balances at December 31, 2023

(American National Bank)

Operating Fund:

Cash Balance	\$ 183,309	
Spirit Fund		(14,748)
Miscellaneous Payables Due		(50,655)
Funds due to Programs		(19,175)
Deferred revenue/2024 gift rec'd in 2023		(8,190)
Net Cash Available at 12/31/23		\$ 90,541

Capital Fund:

Cash Balance	\$ 30,992	
Insurance proceeds for roof replacement		(519)
Capital Campaign gifts		(25,748)
Net Cash Available at 12/31/23		\$ 4,725

Memorial Fund:

Balance at 12/31/23	\$ 28,246
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Congregational Emergency Fund:

Balance at 12/31/23	\$ 4,603
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Total All Funds:	\$ 128,115
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WEST HILLS CHURCH
Capital Fund
Statement of Financial Acitivities

Balance 12/31/22 **\$ 517,472**

REVENUES

Capital Campaign gifts	\$	91,048
NPF Grant for "Outdoor Outreach" project	\$	25,000
General capital fund gifts	\$	36,780
Interest	\$	25

TOTAL REVENUE **\$ 152,853**

EXPENSES

White Castle Roofing - new roof progress pmts	\$	513,046
Anderson Comfort - Chapel wing HVAC system	\$	32,372
Crouch Rec. - "Outdoor Outreach" playground install	\$	13,820
RC Handyman - "Outdoor Outreach" fencing install	\$	4,715
Scotland Ent. - "Outdoor Outreach" ADA sidewalk	\$	10,080
Church Development - Feasiblity Study/Capital		
Campaign management fee progress pmt	\$	35,300
multiple vendors - 2023 capital maintenance		
projects approved with 2023 budget	\$	30,000

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$ 639,333**

FUND BALANCE - Surplus(Deficit) - 12/31/23 **\$ 30,992**

Appendix A

2023 ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

OVERALL SUNDAY WORSHIP ENGAGEMENT

	2023 Annual Total	2022 Annual Total	2023 Weekly Avg	2022 Weekly Avg
In-person	6,942	6,587	131	127
Live-stream/online*	2,660	3,276	50	63
	9,602	9,863	181	190

SPECIAL SERVICES

	2023	2022
Ash Wednesday	n/a	66
Maundy Thursday	75	113
Thanksgiving Eve	76	n/a
Christmas Eve	163	132

TOTAL WORSHIP ATTENDANCE (including Special Services)

2023	2022
9,916	10,174

* Online/Live-stream viewership based upon number of "unique" devices logged-in to watch via live-streaming, vimeo, or WHC website during initial week of worship service. (Sun-Sat)
Estimated viewers per household at 1.5 - 2.0. Online figures shown based on 1.75 viewers.

Clerk Of The Session Report

2023 Elders:	Lisa Backer	Candy Glasgow	Chris Neil
	Marti Bloes	Chris Hanna	Mike Overby
	Steve Burgess	Karen Lofgren-Anderson	Rene Padilla
	Dick Frandeen	Rick Mason	William Scheopner

Greg Schuchmann was the Clerk of the Session. Mike Alfieri was Director of Administration.
Mike Overby was Treasurer. Lisa Backer chaired the Nominating Committee.

Membership

Active members January 1, 2023

316

Gains:	Transferred from other churches	0	Losses:	Transferred to other churches	7
	Received by Profession of Faith	0		Deaths	0
	Reaffirmation, or Confirmation	0			
	Received by Baptism	0	Other:	Removed from rolls	27
	<u>Total Gains</u>	<u>0</u>		<u>Total Losses</u>	<u>34</u>

Adjustment to actual member headcount -25

Active members January 1, 2024

257

Baptisms:	Infant Baptisms	0
	Youth Baptisms	0

Active Friends of the Family

47

Weddings: 1

Baptisms

none

Weddings

November 4, 2023

Connor Mann & Jamie Carlson

Pastor Andy Hamer

Deaths

Note: Deaths reported are of active members for reporting to presbytery, and correlate to the number in the report above. Deaths of former members and friends of the family are acknowledged in the weekly bulletin.

none

Annual Congregational Meeting, January 29, 2023

Meeting time: 6:45 p.m.

The meeting began with a welcome extended by Pastor and Moderator Andy Hamer to those attending in-person in the sanctuary and to those attending online. Andy opened the meeting with prayer at 7:03 pm. Andy then provided instructions regarding common consent, asked everyone to have a copy of the Annual Report in hand, and reminded those online of the time delay between the live action and viewing the streaming of the meeting.

For worship, the songs 'Your Grace is Enough' and 'Be Thou My Vision' were sung.

The staff presented the first scene of their version of the Top Gun movie called 'Top Fun'.

Church Business

- Greg Schuchmann, Clerk of Session announced a quorum was present.

A motion was made to bundle the minutes from the Annual Congregation Meeting held January 30, 2022, the Congregation Meeting held August 21, 2022, and the Congregation Meeting held November 13, 2022, to be approved by one vote. The motion to bundle the minutes carried by common consent.

A motion was made to approve the minutes as written. The motion carried by common consent.

A motion was made to accept the nomination of Dick Frandeen to the position of Elder for Building and Grounds. Nominations from the floor were requested, none were received. The motion carried by common consent.

- The Committee Reports were introduced by Andy and questions were asked for. None were received.

The second scene from 'Top Fun' was presented.

Church Business

- Mike Overby, elder for Finance presented the Year end Financials and Funds Report. Questions followed including the idea for an endowment fund and clarification of the \$50,000 of other revenue to come from the use of the facilities, and if the salary for a Director of Worship and Music is accounted for.
- Pastor Andy Hamer turned the meeting over to Gary Anders, Elder of Personnel, while Andy and his wife Theresa stepped out of the sanctuary during the discussion of the Terms of Call for Pastor Andy Hamer.

A motion was made to approve the Terms of Call for Andy Hamer as Pastor for West Hills Church in the amount of \$125,060. The Terms of Call are found in the Budget 2023 column and the Paid Annual Leave outlined on Page 19 of the Annual Report.

Discussion: The Effective Salary disbursement is decided by the Pastor. Gary Anders noted that a cost-of-living increase was proposed to Session by the Personnel Committee. There has not been a change to Pastor Hamer's compensation since called to West Hills in September of 2019. ***An amendment to the motion to increase the proposed Effective Salary by 7% was made. The motion was seconded.***

This would raise the effective salary by \$5,740 to \$87,740 and the Total Pastoral Salary by \$7,988.60 to \$133,048.60. We need to remain fiscally responsible and we are already in a deficit. Open to a cost of living at 3%. The building remains in need. COLA from 2019 is up 16%.

Annual Congregational Meeting, January 29, 2023, continued

There is a concern for the Cash Surplus.

The amendment failed with a vote of 17 for the amendment and 25 against the amendment.

The motion to approve the proposed Terms of Call of \$125,060 carried by common consent.

The third scene of 'Top Fun' was presented.

State of the Church (Andy)

2022 a real fun year with challenges. Also, a year to see new leaders rise, things that were on the back burners brought back. Session dealt with spur of the moment changes. Fun and excitement in ministry. Extra mojo to dive into things that needed to be done. Many delved into praying for the church, the congregation, and members of the congregation. Strategic Priority – Go Build Relationships. New Director of Worship and Music. Developing Policies and Procedures. In preparation for a capital campaign a communication campaign will be initiated. Funding for Capital Campaign will be to address existing issues as well and looking forward to necessary expenses. Stewardship is taking care of things but also of how to use what we have for outreach and ministry. Two mission partners considering getting into the game with us. When ACC opens in the next few weeks West Hills will be joining them in their mission. A fair amount of the budget goes to keeping the facility going so we are challenged to make use of the facility.

A motion to adjourn with prayer and worship was made, seconded, and carried by common consent.

The meeting closed with the worship song 'Build Your Kingdom Here'.

Respectfully Submitted,

Greg Schuchmann
Clerk of Session

Congregational Meeting July 30, 2023

Pastor and Moderator Andy Hamer called the meeting to order and stated the meeting is called for the purpose of electing a Deacon for Stephen Ministry, and to fill an open position on the Nominating Committee, and to make an announcement regarding the Capital Campaign.

Andy opened the meeting with a prayer at 11:11 am.

A quorum was present.

Pastor Hamer reviewed the process for participants attending this hybrid meeting explaining those in person should raise their hand or speak up while those attending remotely should type in a comment or question using the Streaming Chat Function.

- ***The nominating committee nominated Johnny Dunn to fill the open position on the nominating committee. There were no nominations from the floor and no objections to the nomination. The nomination carried by common consent.***
- ***The nominating committee nominated Linda Gadwood for the position of Deacon for Stephen Ministries. There were no nominations from the floor and no objections to the nomination. The nomination carried by common consent.***

Capital Campaign

The Feasibility Report from Church Development is available in Geneva Lounge and online.

- Constructive feedback in the report was appreciated and helpful.
- The input from the Feasibility Study was overwhelmingly positive to move forward with a Capital Campaign.
- The congregation would like to hear more about vision and strategic planning.
- The Session has voted to move forward with the campaign and to include strategic discernment alongside the campaign.
- A Volunteer Organization Meeting is scheduled for after the service on August 13, 2023, with more details on the campaign and how pieces will work.
- Requesting prayers for the process.
- See Andy Hamer, Dick Frandeen, or Chris Neil with questions.

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The motion carried.

Andy closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Schuchmann
Clerk of Session

Andy Hamer
Pastor and Moderator

Congregational Meeting December 10, 2023

Announcements of a meeting of the congregation were made in Thursday Thoughts, on media screens and verbally during the services. The meeting was held on December 10, 2023, in the church sanctuary following the 10:00 am service.

Pastor and Moderator Andy Hamer called the meeting to order at 11:16 am.

Pastor Hamer opened the meeting with a prayer.

A quorum was present.

Pastor Hamer stated the meeting is called for the purpose of electing the new leadership classes of Deacon and Elders and to provide an update on the Stewardship and Capital Campaigns.

Pastor Hamer explained that those in attendance in-person should raise their hand if they would like to speak. Those watching the livestream should use the chat function. Due to the 30 to 45 second delay, pauses in the meeting would be made to allow for those streaming to comment or ask questions. He also explained that the vote would be by common consent if there were no nominations from the floor and if there were no objections to the slate as nominated.

Election of New Leadership Class of Deacons and Elders

- The nominating committee nominated the following to 3-year terms: Cathy Voshell, Elder of Caregiving; Paul Springsted, Elder of Finance; Joanne Topolski, Elder of Outreach; Julie Zimmerman, Elder of Spiritual Formation and Discipleship; Pam Culek, Caregiving Outreach Deacon; and Kathy Kerkhove and Janet Laughlin as Homebound Deacon co-leaders.
 - There were no nominations from the floor and no objections to the nominations.
 - The election carried by common consent.
 - Congratulations was extended to the incoming class.

Ordination and Installation is expected to be during worship on the last Sunday in January 2024.

Stewardship and Capital Campaign Update

As of Sunday, December 3, 2023 the Stewardship Campaign had received 81 responses for \$484,000 compared to last year's 86 responses for \$513,000. The Capital Campaign had received 76 responses for \$816,000 which is 75% of the foundation goal and 54% of the Faith Goal of \$1.5 million dollars.

A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded. The motion carried.

The meeting ended at 11:36 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Schuchmann
Clerk of Session

Andy Hamer
Pastor and Moderator

Staff List

Assistant to Pastor/Communications	Heather Hipp
Custodian	Ricardo Lopez
Director of Church Administration	Mike Alfieri
Director of Spiritual Formation and Family Ministries	Jessica Scheopner
Facility Coordinator	John Good
Maintenance	Don Good
Pastor	Andy Hamer

Elders Holding a Position in 2023

Building & Grounds	Dick Frandeen
Caregiving	Karen Lofgren-Anderson
Finance	Mike Overby
Intergenerational Impact	Marti Bloes
Membership	Candy Glasgow
Mission	Steve Burgess
Music & Worship	William Scheopner
Children & Youth	Chris Hanna
Nominating	Lisa Backer
Personnel	Rene Padilla
Spiritual Formation	Rick Mason
Stewardship	Chris Neil

