

The background of the cover is a grayscale photograph of the Riverwood Church building. The church has a gabled roof and a central arched entrance. Above the entrance, the words "RIVERWOOD CHURCH" are visible in a stylized font, accompanied by a circular logo. A large, bold, orange "2022" is superimposed over the center of the image, partially obscuring the church's facade. The word "ANNUAL" is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the top of the "2022". Below "ANNUAL", the words "RIVERWOOD CHURCH" are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, also in all caps. The entire title is centered horizontally. There are four solid-colored rectangular blocks: a light blue one on the left, a yellow one in the top right, and two yellow ones in the bottom right corner.

ANNUAL REPORT

RIVERWOOD CHURCH

DISTRIBUTED JAN 22, 2023



DEEPANDWIDE

Erin Bird, Pastor

Since Riverwood's inception, I have prayed regularly for God to grow

our church family spiritually and numerically. During 2022, we saw Him do just that, growing us **deeper** and **wider**.

DEEPER

After using numerous rental and leased locations, Riverwood dug its roots deeper into Northeast Iowa by purchasing the building located at 2704 5th Ave NW in Waverly in September. To make this major faith-step, we held our *Building Lives* Capital Campaign, raising over \$20,000 above the needed \$50,000 to meet a matching grant for the down payment. (If you gave toward the purchase of the building - thank you for your generosity!)

But as I said during the *Building Lives* series in Nehemiah, I did not become a pastor to get into real estate. My longing is for people to find and follow Jesus. That's why my greatest joy in 2022 was seeing a 7-12 grade Youth Group start in September, a new 5th/6th grade class start in November, and seeing roughly a dozen Wartburg wrestlers come to my home every Thursday to study Scripture and talk about the Gospel.

WIDER

As you can see on the next page, after observing a dip in 2021, Riverwood once again experienced a year of numerical growth. However, what excites me most is the large uptick in the number of people in a Growth Group. And that figure (40) doesn't include the teens gathering each Wednesday to study Scripture. One of my hopes for 2023 is that we will see at least one more Growth Group start. (Want to help start that? 😊)

We also grew wider as a church when we put two overseas missionaries in our FY22 budget. It's been a blessing to prayerfully and financially support Azlyn McCarthy, as she

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THE NUMBERS

GATHER

55

PEOPLE IN GATHERINGS
UP FROM 42

7

PEOPLE ONLINE (EST)
DOWN FROM 13

27

KIDS CREEK
UP FROM 24

89

TOTAL SUNDAY AVERAGE
UP FROM 79

GROW

3

ADULT GROWTH GROUPS
DOWN FROM 4

40

AVG # PEOPLE IN A GROUP
UP FROM 26

12

AVG # AT YOUTH GROUP
STARTED SEPT 2022

3

PEOPLE BAPTIZED
DOWN FROM 6



KIDSCREEK

*Bridget Pavelec,
Kids Creek Director*

We had a wonderful
2022 in Kids Creek. We
finished the *What's in*

the Bible? curriculum early in the year. It was
a great way to teach the kids about God's
great rescue plan.

During the summer, we walked through the
Fruits of the Spirit. We took our time to
understand that we receive these gifts when
we accept Jesus as our Savior. Each week we
discussed a different gift and how we can
show it to the people we encounter. Also in
the summer, we invited our elementary-aged
kids to join their dads and moms for songs at
the start of the **Worship Gatherings**. Both
parents and kids seem to have enjoyed this!

After lots of research and
prayer, we decided to use *The
Gospel Project* curriculum for
the next several years. We are
using this Christ-centered,
chronological study of
Scripture in Preschool,
Elementary, and the new 5th/
6th Grade class to teach the
story of the Gospel, invite the
kids to love God, and learn
how to live out the mission of
the Gospel. They are learning
to answer "Big-Picture"
questions such as "Why did
God create everything? What
does it mean to sin? Does God
keep His promises?" I'm
excited to watch the kids learn
Scripture through the lens of

the Gospel over the next
several years.

Thank you so much for
entrusting your kids to our
care at Riverwood. Also, thank
you to the volunteers who
willingly jump in where
needed to help develop
disciples of Jesus. Please
continue to pray that each
child's heart would be soft to
God's truth and they would
come to know Him as their
personal Savior!

Bridget





WORSHIP

*Jake Epley,
Worship Gathering Director*

What a blast we had in 2022! 😊

It's been fascinating to see the various ways in which God worked through our Worship Team this past year.

During 2022, we welcomed several new members (on both our Music & Tech teams): Valerie Feyen, Anthony Leerhoff, Cooper & Emily Scholten, and Seann Wheeler. Our overall worship team is now comprised of 19 members, allowing us to have full teams on a regular basis, giving our volunteers as much time as they need to rest in between Sundays, so they might also be ministered to.

Just in time for Easter, we purchased an electronic

drum set. This allowed Jon Post to further develop his skills, as well as allow Cooper & Emily Scholten to serve, as both are percussionists as well. We also upgraded our presentation software to ProPresenter 7, allowing us to streamline our online offering. While we have encountered a few technical difficulties here and there, I'm grateful for the hard work of our troubleshooting pros (Randy Albright, Nate Laun, and Seann Wheeler).

Last but not least, we released our first Christmas single in time for Advent: Riverwood Worship's rendition of *Joy To The World*. And if you joined us on Christmas Eve, Anna Post led us in her original song called *Emmanuel* based on the introduction of John 1.

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RIVERWOOD
WORSHIP

FINANCIAL REPORT

HIGHLIGHTS AND QUICK NOTES OF FY22:

- **Building Lives Capital Campaign:** Through your immense generosity, \$69,359.06 (+ \$50,000 matching) was given for the down payment on our building! \$21,446.31 remains for improvements in and around the Riverwood building.
- **Christmas Impact Gift:** Our largest Impact Gift ever! The final total sent to this year's recipient (Alternatives Pregnancy Center) was \$6,829.76!
- **General Operating:** With this amazing giving noted, we saw a hit in our general fund. General giving was \$160,827.43, but even after cinching up the budget, our yearly expenses were \$23,423.49 above income. Thankfully, we were able to pull from Savings to cover this deficit. For 2023, we have drafted a policy to prevent such a drastic deficit should giving again fall short of budgeted expenses.

GIVE "TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH..."

\$145
TO COMPASSION INT'L
FOR 29 FIRST-TIME GUEST UNITS
UP FROM 14

\$9,500
TO U.S. CHURCH PLANTING

\$3,600
TO OVERSEAS MISSIONS

\$2,313⁸³
TO LOCAL BENEVOLENCE



ELDERREPORT

Matt Townsley

Because we aspire to live out 1 Peter 5:1-3, every Wednesday morning, the Riverwood elder team willingly and joyfully

prays over every request noted on the *Connections Cards* or emailed to us each week. Prayer is not only a way of connecting with God in a personal way, it is also part of how we can "shepherd" the Riverwood family. So please continue sharing your praises and requests with us!

Many of you know that in 2022, we voted to secure a mortgage and now own the property at 2704 5th Ave NW! While our church is much more than a 'building,' we now have a more permanent and welcoming place to invite the spiritually disconnected to find and

follow Jesus on Sunday mornings. Please invite your friends, coworkers, classmates and neighbors to "that church by the recycling center and the future elementary school."

Finally, we would like to thank you for your generosity in 2022. Many of you continued to give of your time and talents to Riverwood, while others have stepped up in new capacities. Because of your generosity, we are able to show others in our community what it means to live like Jesus lived and love like Jesus loved through expanded Kids Creek classes, a warm coffee or apple cider on Sunday morning, and inviting music on the stage. (Please let Jake or Bridget know if you would like to serve in a new way in 2023.)

As we enter a new year, our pathway will continue to be to Gather (online or in-person), Grow (Bible reading and Growth Groups), Give (our FIST – finances, influences, skills, and time) and Go (share the Gospel and be a blessing to the world). We look forward to a 2023 and seeing many people trust in Jesus and be baptized!

Matt

PASTOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

starts a deaf ministry in Togo (located in western Africa), and Josh & Hillary Smith as they do evangelism, discipleship, and church planting among the poor in Cambodia (located in SE Asia).

While I am not a prophet, I suspect God will continue to grow Riverwood deeper and wider in 2023. To accommodate this growth, we will need to multiply several areas of ministry (volunteers, space usage, Growth Groups, etc.). This makes for exciting times that require prayer!

Respectfully submitted,

Erin

WORSHIP (CONTINUED)

For 2023, my hopes & plans include:

- more volunteers joining our teams,
- providing training resources for our musicians, so they can continue to grow musically,
- continuing to foster a songwriting culture, sharing our own original songs and reworked hymns,
- and recording a Christmas EP — featuring more reworked carols and Riverwood originals! — for this upcoming Christmas season.

Glory to God in all things, and I can't wait to see what the Lord has in store for us in 2023!

Jake



RIVERWOOD
CHURCH

