



BIBLE CENTER
CHURCH

#HereLikeThere

Bible Center

2022 Annual Report

Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on
earth [here] like it is in heaven [there].
- Matthew 6:10



www.biblecenterpgh.org

Bible Center's vision is, "to make earth more like heaven." In 2022, we tried to bring that vision a little bit closer to reality.

Our goals for 2022 were to grow in our relationship with Christ through discipleship, to strengthen our relationships with each other through fellowship, to make new disciples through evangelism, to celebrate God through worship, to serve each other and the community through ministry, and to maximize God's blessings through stewardship.

Through your generous giving, and hard work, and God's grace and abundant blessings, we made significant progress towards these goals and many more!

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on our progress and highlight some key accomplishments.

We greatly appreciate your continued involvement and investment in the work of Bible Center and look forward to working with you in 2023 to continue to love, serve and make our piece of earth more like heaven!


For the Kingdom!

John M. Wallace, Jr., PhD
Senior Pastor

Cynthia M. Wallace, EdD
Executive Pastor



Greetings From Our Pastors

A wooden bowl containing a card with the text 'BIBLE CENTER CHURCH' and 'A COMMITMENT TO STEWARDSHIP'. The bowl is set against a blue background.

STEWARDSHIP

“The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.” Psalm 24:1

Stewardship is the faithful management of the resources that God entrusts to our care. God has blessed Bible Center abundantly through the tithes, offerings and generous giving of our members, friends, and donors. As stewards of God's resources, we are a debt-free ministry.

The Bible Center Church's reliance on God's provision is evident in this report, as is our endeavor to steward and maximize His blessings.

Through the financial support of our members, and the hard work of our dedicated staff, the mission and ministry of Bible Center continues to grow as we aspire to make our piece of earth, more like heaven.

***"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the Lord."
Psalm 122:1***

***"Lift up your hands in the sanctuary
and praise the LORD." Psalm 134:2***

We praise God that we were able to gather again to worship and exalt Him together in 2022!

In addition to weekly worship for Bible Center's Sunday morning services, the Worship and Arts ministry provided music, dance, and various other artistic expressions for us to corporately celebrate God's love, to be spiritually uplifted and to acknowledge His abundant blessings.

The Worship & Arts Department also sponsored four virtual events this year, including, a virtual prayer summit, a virtual benefit concert to help victims of a Penn Hills apartment fire, and two online worship events called "When Men Worship" and "When Women Worship."



**WORSHIP
& ARTS**



"Two are better than one because they have a more satisfying return for their labor, for if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion."
Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

"Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn."
Romans 12:15

Fellowship is simply building relationships and caring for one another. Relationships are a core focus of the church and are critically important to our mental and spiritual health and well-being, in times of celebration and in times of distress.

These events included a Valentine's Fellowship, African Cultural Heritage Sunday, a Family Game Night in memory of beloved Bible Center Church member, Carol Cox, an egg hunt for the children on Easter Sunday in April, Mother's Day and Father's Day, a virtual revival, the annual church picnic, a baby shower for members Eric & Tereasa Cargo, Grandparent's Sunday, Christmas breakfast on Christmas Day, New Year's Eve dinner, and Bible Center's 66th anniversary celebration.

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

Discipleship is the process of learning to live life more like Jesus.

Our mission—

We Love God

We Love People

We Live Like Jesus

Small group Bible studies are a key vehicle for discipleship at Bible Center Church and a great way for our members to form lasting relationships and grow in their faith. Our Bible studies in 2022 explored:

- **The book of Genesis**
- **The book of Psalms**
- **The book of Proverbs**



DISCIPLESHIP

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Matthew 18:20

In 2022, we expanded our small group discipleship strategy called Discipleship Groups, (“D-Groups”). A “D-Group” is a group of 4–6 individuals of the same gender who meet weekly for one hour, with a goal to grow closer to God and closer to each other through Bible study and discussion. During that hour group members:

- **Spend time catching up and sharing their “highs” and “lows”**
- **Recite the weekly memory verse**
- **Discuss what the Lord is showing them from the scripture readings that week**
- **Identify a person for whom to pray the entire year that God will draw closer to Himself**
- **Request support for any area in which they want to be held accountable**
- **Pray for each other’s needs**

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

Evangelism is sharing the good news (witnessing) about the Kingdom of God and giving people the opportunity to come to know Christ, their Savior and King.

Our most powerful witness is one-on-one conversations with our friends, families, co-workers, classmates, and other people in our immediate sphere of influence.

Other ways for us to witness include inviting people to connect with us in person at our Sunday worship services, and on demand, from anywhere on the globe, through our “digital campus,”—bcpgh.online.church, and our various social media platforms.



EVANGELISM



“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

Ministry is serving others, using the gifts and talents that God has given to us, in response to His love for us.

Bible Center engages ministry as a lifestyle and is therefore a church filled with ministers who use their God-given abilities to serve inside and outside the building, in-person and online.

Many of Bible Center’s ministries combine aspects of worship, fellowship, discipleship, and evangelism.

Some of the more formal ministry areas in which our members served this year included: prayer and care, guest and member follow-up, marriage and family, women, children and youth, and discipleship.

We also participated in two collaborative community focused ministries this year. We sponsored a senior resource breakfast with a variety of community partners that served 60 seniors from the Homewood Community and surrounding areas. We also partnered with Amen-to-Action, and churches from around the Pittsburgh region, at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, to pack over 100,000 meals for needy families.

PRAYER & CARE MINISTRY

In 2022, Bible Center's Prayer and Care ministry team met 156 times (every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday), via conference call, to pray for our members, our ministries, our community, and our world. They also made hospital visits, weekly care calls, and arranged for meals for those who were sick and shut-in.

MARRIAGE & FAMILY

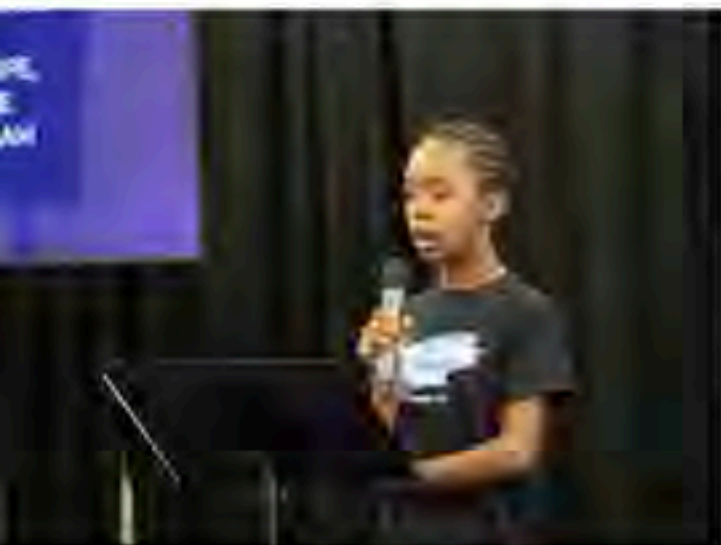
The Bible Center Marriage and Family ministry hosted a fun winter picnic for married couples that included good food, good conversation, and good fellowship.



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

The Bible Center Women's Ministry had a full slate of activities in 2022. The women met monthly for Bible study, hosted a well-attended prayer breakfast in the spring (served by Bible Center's men's ministry!), enjoyed a fun tropical luau in the summer, had a picture painting party in the fall, and held a holiday wreath making event to close out the year.





CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRY

Weekly Children & Youth Services

Bible Center's Children and Youth Ministry provided Children's Church to our pre-K, elementary, and middle school-aged children every Sunday in 2022. Their weekly gatherings included scripture readings and discussions, prayer, videos, games/prizes, and a snack. Every other Sunday, the ministry hosted a teen service, and every 5th Sunday was youth Sunday.

OTHER 2022 ACTIVITIES:

In addition to the weekly children's church, some of the other activities in which our children and youth participated included the following:

The Solomon Award—an academic awards program that recognizes students who achieve Honor Roll at their schools, Vacation Bible School (including a field trip to Skyzone!), Education Sunday, with the awarding of the Priscilla Igwe College Scholarship to our high school seniors, and end of school, back to school, and winter celebration events.

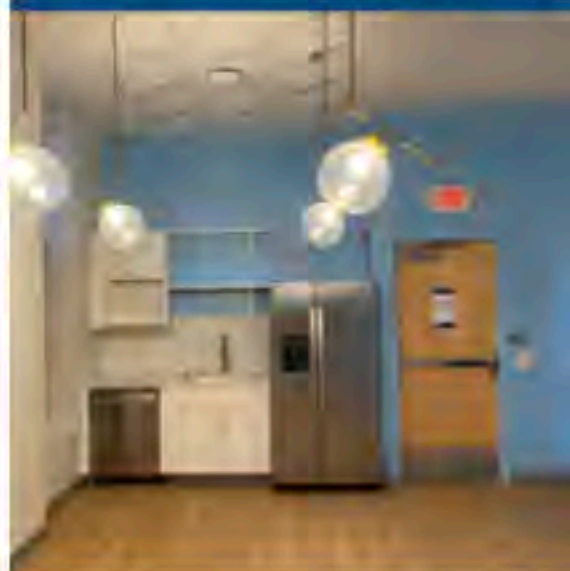
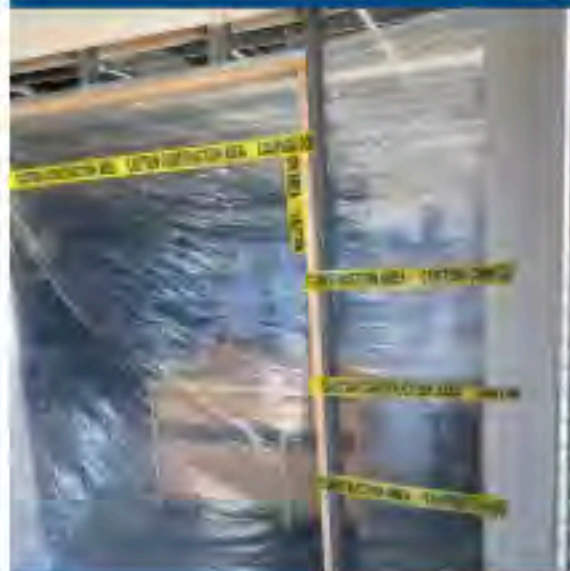
MINISTRY FACILITIES EXPANSION

In addition to providing ministry, in 2022, we also launched several ministry facility improvement projects to expand our campus and extend the reach of our ministries. The members of Bible Center gave over \$166,000 to support this work through our 2021-22 Building Campaign.

Our first project, still in progress, involves major renovations in the Worship, Arts, Recreation and Ministry (WARM) Center at 717 N. Homewood Avenue. Phase 1 of the renovations include a significant remodel of the foyer, new restrooms, and the addition of a small warming kitchen, an office, and a staircase to connect the upper and lower levels.

Phase 2 of the renovation, also still in progress, in the lower level of the WARM Center, is the construction of classrooms and additional restrooms for children's ministry and The Maker's Clubhouse Early Learning Center.

In addition to the renovations of the WARM Center, we recently completed the build-out of the Own Our Own Business Development Center at 626 North Homewood Avenue. The Business Development Center will support small business owners through a variety of resources and programs including classes, mailboxes, spaces to meet and work, and networking events. We are currently working to furnish the building and prepare for a grand opening.



THE OASIS PROJECT

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”
Matthew 6:10

Making earth more like heaven is the call to action that drives the outreach ministries of The Oasis Project, the community and economic development arm of Bible Center Church.

The mission of The Oasis Project is to create oases—places of peace, safety, and happiness in the midst of difficulty. Our four areas of focus to promote social and economic opportunity are **education, employment, entrepreneurship, and improvements in the physical environment** in which people live, learn, work, and worship.



The Maker's Clubhouse (TMC) is The Oasis Project's after-school STEAM (science, technology, engineering, agricultural, and math) program for children in elementary school. With daily homework assistance and academic enrichment programs, TMC focuses on kids. The availability of free childcare and the assurance that their child is nourished and safe while they work, or study benefits the families of the students as well.

Children who attend Faison and Lincoln elementary schools are served by The Maker's Clubhouse after-school program. Every day, five days a week, we educate 150 kids between the two schools. Project-based learning, science experiments, coding, art projects, robotics, a nutrition program we call Better Food Better Me, social-emotional learning, and environmental studies were among the subjects covered in the sessions. Students also get daily homework assistance, an evening meal, and a snack in addition to these lessons.



THE MAKER'S CLUBHOUSE

EDUCATION & EMPLOYMENT

GREEN STEAM & PLAY



Green STEAM & Play is a seven-week, five day per week, summer day camp that engages children in STEAM learning, reading and math enrichment, healthy cooking, urban gardening, and field activities.

In 2022, we enrolled 69 students for the summer. In addition to STEAM programming activities, the students went on several educational field trips to nearby attractions, including:

- **the Pittsburgh Zoo**
- **the Carnegie Science Center**
- **Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History**
- **the Frick Art Museum**



Oasis Farm & Fishery (OFF) is an educational urban farm. In addition to being an integral part of The Oasis Project's out-of-school-time programming, the farm grows fresh produce, which is sold through a Veggie Subscriptions CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), to local shoppers at the Homewood Food Access Working Group's seasonal Farm Stand and used in Everyday Café's sandwiches and salads.

Oasis Farm and Fishery intends to grow food, grow people, and grow community. Programming demonstrate how to grow produce in reinvigorated soil, how to incorporate that produce into healthy recipes, and how to deepen our connections to the organic world, food systems, and one another.

OFF is a member of the Homewood Food Access Working Group and participates in their efforts to provide access to fresh local produce within the community. This year, HFAWG's farm stand with the Oasis Farm and Fishery brought to the community:

- **1630 lbs of farm-grown produce**
- **540 lbs of supplemental produce**
- **575 estimated visitors**
- **21 total markets**
- **63 fresh food deliveries**



OASIS FARM & FISHERY

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, & ENVIRONMENT

BETTER FOOD, BETTER ME



Coordinated and taught by the Oasis Farm & Fishery team, Better Food, Better Me (BFBM) is an out-of-school-time program of The Oasis Project. Cooking with children is a large part of BFBM's focus, using healthier foods in healthier recipes to build healthier bodies.

In 2022, the elementary school students in Green STEAM & Play and the Maker's Clubhouse after-school program had the opportunity to learn about healthier living through food literacy, nutrition education, cooking skills, and urban gardening basics. The team also began teaching BFBM at Catalyst Academy Charter School weekly.





Field 2 Fork is a culturally responsive work readiness initiative of Oasis Farm and Fishery which uses urban farming as a medium to help teens and young adults, ages 14-24 years, to develop skills that aid in a successful transition to adulthood. Seven high school students were farm apprentices in the 2022 Field 2 Fork program as a part of the Partner4 Work Learn and Earn summer youth employment initiative. In 2022, Field 2 Fork included professional development activities, career exploration, farm maintenance and production, a trip to Chatham University, and a day spent on the adventure fitness leadership reaction course at Slippery Rock University.

Apprentices learned skills like transplanting seedlings, general farm maintenance, and harvesting. Cooking and nutrition workshops also provided opportunities for the teens to sharpen problem-solving, communication, and collaborative work skills while the group crafted recipes that highlighted the produce from the farm.



FOOD 2 FORK



FOOD FOR THE CULTURE

Food for the Culture is a community impact and educational initiative developed by Oasis Farm & Fishery.

Youth and elders share their knowledge, experience, and food practices while re-examining ancestral connections and elevating cultural foodways that we can incorporate into our daily lives. Participants leave with a better understanding of how to prepare a diverse plate of meals using a variety of fruits, vegetables, and spices.

In 2022, Oasis Farm & Fishery hosted 32 adults, in 4 cohorts, of our Food for the Culture program. Through a series of interactive and educational workshops, utilizing the American Heart Association's Healthy for Life curriculum, participants learned about cooking, nutrition, and wellness. Participants were exposed to a variety of cultural foodways and health practices, improving their ability to make informed health decisions.





In 2022, we continued with Part 2 of the Urban Farming Academy (UFA), focusing on several topics related to running an agribusiness: bookkeeping, site planning, marketing, farm management, property acquisition, and fundraising. In the spring, in-person apprenticeships began, and participants from Part 1 of the UFA were offered the opportunity to join Own Our Own. With two new Urban Farming Academy participants enrolled this year, we look forward to growing in the future!



URBAN FARM ACADEMY

NOOK PROJECT



The Nook Project is a collaborative project to further develop the property adjacent to the KABOOM! playground on Fleury Way into a parklet. Working to center the voices of current Homewood South residents, 5 pop-up design charrettes were facilitated in late 2021 by students of Chatham University's Falk School of Sustainability and Environment. 2022 saw further developments, including the construction of a large geometric raised garden bed with the help of volunteers. With plans for completion by the end of April 2023, as the Nook project continues to take form, we look forward to opening it to the community.



Oasis Transportation Services (OTS) is a social enterprise of Bible Center and is designed to meet the transportation needs of out-of-school time and non-profit youth-serving organizations. Its mission is simply to “transport our community to opportunity.”

In 2022, OTS provided transportation for an average of 960 children each month (duplicated count). In addition to transportation to and from school, and related activities, children ages 5-18 were transported to regional opportunities including visits to universities, the Carnegie Museums, the Pittsburgh Zoo, PNC Park, and other museums and parks. In addition to partnering with Bible Center programs (i.e., The Maker’s Clubhouse, Oasis Farm and Fishery, VBS, etc.), OTS works with several other agencies in the Greater Homewood community, including the Homewood Children’s Village, YMCA Lighthouse, and the University of Pittsburgh to transport children and youth to opportunities.



OASIS TRANSPORTATION

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, & ENVIRONMENT

OASIS PROPERTY MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT EMPLOYMENT & ENVIRONMENT



Oasis Property Maintenance & Management (OPMM) is a social enterprise of The Oasis Project, providing services for general grounds upkeep, facilities cleaning, setup, and maintenance. OPMM is a valuable asset behind the scenes, ensuring that each of the programs hosted by The Oasis Project and Bible Center Church has a fully equipped and well-maintained space for activities and events. With the Early Learning Center and Business Development Center coming online this year, and the increased frequency of events at the Oasis Community Kitchen Event Center, OPMM will be busier than ever.

The entire OPMM crew are Homewood residents, including Bible Center Church's elder at 86 (soon to be 87) years young!





Informed by data that Pittsburgh has one of the lowest rates of African American entrepreneurship in the country, Own Our Own (OOO) was launched in January 2019 to help African American and other underestimated entrepreneurs launch successful businesses. The program targets start-up and early-stage businesses owners who desire to move their ideas to action. To date, OOO has sponsored 10 cohorts, and graduated 80 entrepreneurs, through the program.

“This experience was amazing and I will always credit Own Our Own for putting me on the path to success. I’m glad this program exists!” – Cohort 9 entrepreneur

Each participant received at least 36 hours of training on the building blocks of business finances, customer relations, marketing, and strategy, and up to six hours of one-on-one technical assistance. Their tangible takeaways include:

- **A complete business summary**
- **A pitch presentation**
- **Business banking accounts**
- **State business registration**
- **A network of peers, mentors, and business advisors**

Own Our Own is poised to open its Business Development Center on Homewood Avenue in 2023 to respond to the needs of our growing entrepreneur community.



OWN OUR OWN
ENTREPRENEURSHIP & ENVIRONMENT

EVERYDAY CAFE

EMPLOYMENT & ENVIRONMENT



Everyday Café is a quadruple (social, economic, environmental, and cultural) bottom-line social enterprise of The Oasis Project. Entering its seventh year of operation, Everyday Café received the 2022 Black Kitchen Initiative Award from Heinz!

Everyday Café continued to craft high-quality food and beverages and serve as a vital “third space” for Homewood and an educational and workforce development space for young people.

Everyday Café also supports local entrepreneurs by providing space for small business “pop-ups” on Thursdays and Fridays, to spotlight local vendors. Our guest entrepreneurs included recent Own Our Own graduates, Oasis Community Kitchen clients, and other early-stage business owners.

Everyday Café also works with Oasis Community Kitchen, and Oasis Farm and Fishery to supply fresh, high-quality produce to our customers' tables.





Oasis Community Kitchen is another social enterprise of The Oasis Project. It is a certified, professionally-equipped, shared-use commercial kitchen and small event venue. The on-site Chef is a business planning resource to beginner, intermediate, and seasoned independent entrepreneurs, and provides oversight and catering for the venue and Everyday Café.

Located on the lower level of the Bible Center WARM Center. The 685-square-foot kitchen operates six days a week as a rentable licensed commercial kitchen for entrepreneurs to safely prepare their products to sell to their customers, while the 1,675-square-foot multi-use space is also available to rent for meetings, small parties/receptions, lectures, etc.

An integral program of The Oasis Project, Oasis Community Kitchen supports the Everyday Café with food prep and catering, the Oasis Farm & Fishery with fresh produce prep for redistribution and a culinary classroom, and Own Our Own as a commercial kitchen option for program graduates.

Oasis Community Kitchen also supports Bible Center Church ministries by providing space for church and neighborhood events such as food distribution, community meals, special events, and children's activities.

In 2022, its second full year, Oasis Community Kitchen continued its successful entrepreneurial renter program. Clients include caterers, food truck purveyors, all-natural skincare product creators, and baked goods artisans.



OASIS COMMUNITY KITCHEN

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, & ENVIRONMENT

PARTNERSHIP

We do not do our work alone. Our partnerships are critical to our ability to serve. Some of our key partners in 2022 included:

- **STEM Coding Lab**
- **Reading is Fundamental (RIF)**
- **Women for a Healthy Environment**
- **The Frick Pittsburgh**
- **The Boys & Girls Club**
- **BUGs (Black Urban Gardeners and Farmers)**
- **Chatham University's Center for Regional Agriculture Food and Transformation (CRAFT)**
- **Grow Pittsburgh**
- **Homewood Children's Village**
- **Operation Better Block (and the Junior Green Corps)**
- **Sankofa Village Community Garden**
- **Trying Together**
- **University of Pittsburgh including the Community Engagement Center (CEC) in Homewood**
- **Zone 5 Citizens Public Safety Council**





2022 was an exciting and productive year!
Although we have significantly more work to do,
with your help, and the help of our funders,
partners, and other supporters, we succeeded in
making our piece of earth, a little more like heaven.

THANK YOU!