

Minutes for the Annual General Meeting

26 January 2025

Shelbourne Street Church of Christ
3460 Shelbourne Street, Victoria, BC, V8P 4G5

1. *Welcome, establish a quorum, approval of the previous meeting's minutes*
 - Mark Langley establishes a quorum and calls the meeting to order at 11:34 am.
 - Monique Cummings motions to approve the minutes from 2024, seconded, carries.
2. *Prayer for wisdom and guidance*
 - Vivian Roberts opens with prayer.
3. *Elders' report*
 - Mark Langley shares this report (attached – ADDENDUM 1).
 - Scott Jacobson and Vivian Roberts are called up to share:
 - Scott shares that his eldership term is coming to an end and he is not standing for reconfirmation.
 - It is a difficult decision because of his love for the Church, his fellow elders, and the greater Church community.
 - Thanks to his wife.
 - He needs to take a time of rest.
 - Despite many challenging issues, it has been a privilege to serve alongside his fellow elders. He is at peace because the Church is healthy and in a good place in part because of the elders, Kelly, and their spouses.
 - It has been a privilege to serve.
 - Thanks to everyone.
 - Asks that those listening consider serving, even though it is not easy.
 - Vivian shares that she is stepping down before the end of her current term.
 - She has felt Spirit-led in her prayers and responses to the call to serve as an elder, both in saying yes and saying no (including the first time she was asked when she felt God leading her to say no at that time).
 - She is busy with personal commitments that take up a lot of time.
 - It is important to be honest and share that the elders have served together through a difficult time (and that she's glad that's over), but she feels sad because she's been blessed to serve as an elder and be part of that group.
 - The Spirit is guiding every one of us here and will speak to our hearts as well. She especially encourages others to follow the Spirit's guidance if you're being called to this role.

- Acknowledges that some struggled with having a women as an elder. She thanks them and shares that she never felt any animosity from those who were not on board with that.
 - Will continue to pray for everyone.
- Mark shares that the elders will miss them both so much and thanks them for their amazing contributions.

4. *Elder nominating committee report*

- Kelly Carter shares that our bylaws require an Elder Nominating Committee to meet annually.
- This committee was called together near the start of 2024.
- The group asked for nominations from the congregation. Fourteen individuals were nominated and the committee approached each of them, but each decided to decline at this time. There are therefore no new elders nominated for 2025.
- Two elders have now stepped down, leaving us with three. While this might appear negative, Kelly does not perceive it that way. He shares that we are in a healthy place because the current elders, as well as those who are stepping down, are all good elders. We can lose two elders and we'll be fine because God has put us in a good place. The Lord is in control and is quite able to take care of us with three instead of five.
- Kelly shares about his experience serving at other congregations both with elders, and as an elder himself, and how this has prepared him for his current role in working with the elders. He has nothing but good things to say about everyone and they are all able communicate with each other and interact in a mutually respectful and collaborative way.
- He points out that we don't have to wait until 2026 to appoint more elders, we can call a special meeting at any time to appoint new elders. We'll let the Lord guide that since the Holy Spirit is the one who appoints elders and He can do that at any time.
- Shares that it was a privilege to serve with Scott and Vivian.

5. *Deacons' and Ministry Leaders' reports*

- Art Goodwin shares reports from various people (attached – ADDENDUM 2), adding that he has always admired and looked up to Vivian (since he was 12) and commended her desire and ability to serve.

6. *Budget for 2025 & vote*

- Donna Wilkerson shares the Church's financial details and budget plans for 2025 (attached – ADDENDUM 3).
- The budget for 2025 is set for \$369,956.17 (summary attached – ADDENDUM 4)
- Show of hands vote: Art Goodwin motions to adopt the budget, a second is not necessary because the budget comes from a committee, carries.

7. *Minister's report*

- Kelly Carter shares his report (attached – ADDENDUM 5).

8. *Dismissal prayer*

- Mark Langley adjourns the meeting at 12:33 pm.
- Steve Mann closes the meeting in prayer.

ADDENDUM 1

ELDER REPORT - SHELBOURNE STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

JANUARY 26, 2025

Good afternoon. It is my privilege on behalf of the Elders to offer you a report for this AGM. I would like to cover three areas.

These would be:

1. What elders do and how we spend our time together in our meetings and as members of this fellowship.
2. Some of the priorities that we have tackled over the last year.
3. Comments from two of our elders.

All of our comments this afternoon will be kept very short for the sake of time so please feel free to approach any of us and ask questions or to clarify anything we have shared.

So, what do elders do and how do we spend our time? The Scriptures call elders to be spiritual leaders in the church and to provide governance, direction and to care for folks. Another good descriptor would be that we are called to be Shepherds under the great Shepherd. Within the constraints of our busy lives we are called to serve. This could mean praying for you, hospital and home visits, attending as many church functions as we can, listening to how and what the Holy Spirit is guiding so God's word and His presence is flourishing among us all. We meet with our Lead Minister, Kelly, twice a month to pray for the congregation, to grow together and to discuss and pray for the many issues that need to be decided upon. One of us will always attend the monthly Deacons meeting, as well, so we can encourage them and communicate and work together well. The Deacons are doing essential and wonderful things among us, which Art will share more about, which allows the Elders to focus more on what God has called us to do.

- This year we have spent quite a bit of time discussing what should be our stand and response to the Truth and Reconciliation work that some of our brothers and sisters have expressed concerns for. We did produce a document that is on our website that I think is a good beginning to supporting our fellowship to being part of the solution moving forward.
- Another issue we have prayed into and done some research towards along with examining the Scriptures is where our culture is with the LGBTQ+ issues and concerns. What should our response be to supporting and loving folks? Although we are not "affirming" of many of the current views we do desire to be a church where

anyone can come and seek God. What does that look like? We continue to inquire of the Lord for His best for us as Christ followers.

- Kelly's Evaluation: Each year we have gone through a process where the Lead Minister can receive feedback from Elders and other leaders. This year was an important year as it would be the first evaluation that Kelly would have. The feedback to Kelly is somewhat personal and private, of course, but I don't think Kelly would mind if I read just a part of what we summarized:

Summary Conclusion for the period Oct 2023 – January 2025 - Level 1

In an overall sense, the Elders are completely unified in our appreciation for what you, Kelly, have accomplished since you have taken on the responsibilities of Senior Pastor. We are very grateful to the Lord for sending you to us in a challenging time for our fellowship.

Kelly, we are very appreciative of:

- *Your consistent honesty, humility and transparency in communication that has fostered a "trustful" atmosphere. Your engagement with many individuals, Planning groups, Life Groups and the Deacons and Elders has been so positive and encouraging. This leadership from yourself has greatly contributed to SSCOC in the process of healing and moving forward in a positive manner.*
- *Your excellent listening skills and the ability to maintain open lines of communication is creating an increasingly positive environment and one of mutual respect. Former folks are returning and new folks are beginning to attend.*
- *Your consistent and strong work ethic at the office, in attendance at functions, and in personal relationships have certainly contributed to others being willing to become more involved. You are a leader to our church family by example and through clear communication. Life Groups, women's Bible studies and prayer teams and times of "prayer and fasting" are growing.*
- *Your use of the "preaching/teaching" time each Sunday morning and at our Elders' meetings has challenged is all to be more Spirit-led and prayerful. All of the personal contacts that we have appreciate your teaching and your teaching style. We are hungering for more.*

Kelly, we are looking forward to the new teaching series through Ephesians and our shared and collaborative responsibility with you to give spiritual leadership and direction to the precious brothers and sisters at Shelbourne St Church of Christ and to influence our community for Christ. It is our prayer that you and Robin would thrive here in Victoria with us, and we would all be

blessed to see our gracious God continue to heal and grow us all and to see God's work flourish among us.

God is at work in our midst and He is bringing a foundation of Unity, Joy, Peace and Hope.

Well done, Kelly and Thank You!!

The Elders

And, finally, may I ask two of our elders to share very briefly with you: Scott & Vivian.

In the same sense and heart that the Apostle Paul requested prayers from the church all through the Epistles, including the book of Ephesians that we are now studying on Sunday morning, please pray for us in our Eldership responsibilities that we would be faithful and walk in wisdom, discernment and unity as we seek for and walk in God's will for our fellowship. Thank you!

ADDENDUM 2

DEACONS' REPORTS 2025

The deacons meet on the first Tuesday of every month, and we actively communicate as a group pretty much daily via email to deal with items as they arise. The leadership of the church, which is the eldership and our senior minister Kelly, is concerned with the spiritual guidance and oversight of our congregation. The deacons, as a group, are entrusted to take care of the more nuts-and-bolts workings of the church. We aren't fully trusted to do this independently, so to keep us doctrinally sound our meetings are attended by one of the elders on a rotation. Kelly also attends our meetings to keep another eye on us. Joking aside, I can assure you that the deacons take our mandate very seriously and humbly seek God's will and ask for his wisdom in all we do for the church.

Your deacons are (in alphabetical order): Rob Davies, myself, Garnet Goud, Carol Kitson, Diane Mann, Joan Mann, Brian Morton, and Kirk Roberts. This year Dave Anderson and Fay Hickman stepped down, and in the fall we were joined by Carolyn Langley. If we had team jerseys, Donna Wilkerson would wear one as well. As the Treasurer (among many jobs she does around here) we consider her a de facto deacon. She attends all our meetings and produces detailed and accurate minutes.

I would like to say that I'm humbled and honoured to serve alongside these doers in our church. They are true servants. As someone way, way younger than the median age of the group, I look up to them and have for years.

If you're wondering what kinds of things we deal with, here's a partial list:

- Budget
- Benevolence and support
- Liaising with the Elders
- A spring Work Bee
- Special sent/ices — Good Friday, Easter, Polo Field, Celebrating our Grads, Christmas Eve
- Staff Job Descriptions
- Church Retreat —venue, budget, etc.
- Coins for Christ — where the donations go
- Adjustments to our worship service format
- Management and care of the physical property of 3460 Shelbourne (this one encompasses a lot of our scope of work as deacons)

- Requests from outside organizations for support or partnership (such as Haven Pregnancy Center); requests to rent the parking lot and/or the building, etc. This led to reviewing and adjusting our building use policy.
- Discussed and prayed over additional ministry positions (children/teens, worship, etc.)
- Worked through arrangements with Conor Wilkerson, Kirk Ruch, and Daniel Patstone
- Engaged a fencing contractor to replace the failing fence. Part of this process was a very successful volunteer demolition of the old one.
- Researched options for a replacement sign, with the idea that it will be digital
- Reviewed our Safety Policy

Diane Mann oversees our Sunday School Program, and she's given me a report to share with you. I'm admittedly biased because Diane is my mother in law, but I can objectively say that we as a congregation are richly blessed through her dedication to our kids. Diane has a huge heart for children and an obvious gift for teaching. She retired a few years ago from a full and wonderful career as an elementary teacher.

My daughter Ava was among the first of the current crop of young people in this church. She was Diane's first grandchild, and when she was still a baby Diane and her daughter Rachel (my wife, also an elementary teacher) began updating and reworking the cradle roll curriculum. As more and more kids came along and grew, Diane eventually took on the entire Sunday School program. Anyone can tell from a mile away that Diane is 100% invested in the kids of this church. One of the reasons must be because the grandkids kept coming. Ava was the first and is now 18 and in her first year of university - she's on her way to being an elementary teacher like her Grammy and her mom. Grandkid #9, Sophia, just turned 5, so I would bet that this blessing of Diane's Sunday School oversight has a few years left.

Here's Diane's report.

If you are a parent here today at the AGM, I want to thank you for allowing us to partner with you in teaching your children in our Sunday morning Bible classes. It is a privilege to spend time with them, to open God's word, pray, eat a snack, play a game, watch a video or do a craft. We enjoy them for 35 minutes, but you have them all week. You are their first responders and biggest influencers. If we want our children to have a faith that influences the way they live their lives, and the critical life decisions they make, we need to nurture, love and model that faith in our homes through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

I think there is always room for improvement in the way we teach, what we teach and the curriculum we use. The most important teaching tool we have is our Bibles. In our classes we are making an effort to find our way around the books of the Bible, look up text, read out loud, stop and ask questions. How do we impress this upon the hearts of our children? It takes intention,

time, repetition, acceptance, forgiveness, prayer, a sense of humour and never ending dialogue. Parents you do this daily.

Our Sunday school enrollment isn't big. We have combined multi-age groups of children and this model seems to be working.

Recently, there was a need to have a Toddler Class. When we have family's come to church with little ones, it is important to have an available class. We want them to come back! Joan Mann saw the need and has volunteered to be the teacher. We are looking for extra volunteers for this age group when Steve and Joan head to Zambia on Feb. 18th until the end of March.

Pre-School to Grade 2 - This year Yvonne Mann and Kathi Mann have taken turns teaching. Renee Jordan happily is the TOC. They use the Bible's we give to the children from the Sunday school. Each week the children use their Bibles to hear the story, look at the pictures, talk about it and share what they see. They started in Genesis and are working their way through the Old Testament. They are not using a specific curriculum and create a weekly take home craft.

Grade 4-6 - This is the biggest class. We have had as many as 16 crowded into the class. We average around 10 to 12 each week. We are using a curriculum called, DIG IN. This quarter has 13 lessons and we worked our way through the Beatitudes, which took a number of weeks. Our lessons have been on Salt and Light, Anger, Vows, Revenge, Giving, Worry, Judging, Prayer, The Golden Rule, The Narrow Gate, True Disciples and Firm Foundation. There is a lot of material to cover and it often takes a couple of Sundays to finish a lesson. This group is enthusiastic, eager, noisy and a lot of fun! They are eager and competitive to look up Scripture. It's wonderful the way they help each other find scripture. They have mastered memorizing the books of the New Testament and are almost there with the Old Testament. Diane Mann, Rachel Goodwin and Robin Carter have helped teach this class.

This age group of children is also responsible for gathering the cups after communion and taking the baskets downstairs. They are eager to participate, act responsibly and are serving. I'm very proud of them. This gives them ownership, accountability and a sense of belonging. We appreciate their participation.

Teen Class - With good counsel, a decision was made to add the younger teens to the older teen class last September. This was due to very small numbers of junior teens. I believe this has worked well. What is more difficult is getting teachers. Thank you to Kelly Sim, Scott and Stacey Jacobson and JR and Tami Ruch. I am looking for volunteers for one or two Sundays over the next few weeks. Feb. 9, 16, 23 and March 23. See Diane if you are willing to take a turn.

Thank you, Carolyn Langley, for putting the Christmas program together for the Sunday school children. They enjoyed dressing up and participating. It was especially nice that the program was part of our Sunday morning service. Thank you to the behind the scenes people who helped

make it run smoothly. Of course we couldn't forget our three Wise Men, Art, Graeme and Wes for their willing participation.

During the month of December, Jocelyn and Jeremy, and Janiece organized three amazing drop in times, here at the church for children, ages 4 to 11. The children made wonderful crafts, watched movies, came dressed in their PJ's, baked cookies, played games, ate together and invited their friends. This was a really great community building time for the kids who came. The children who participated absolutely loved it. Jocelyn is organizing a Valentine's event in a few weeks. I know the children are looking forward to more of these events. Stay tuned about this ministry!

Please, we really need more Bible teachers. If you want to grow in your faith, be stretched, spend time in God's word and learn a lot from kids, then volunteer to teach. Our church has a safety policy for working with children and youth. To volunteer teach you need a Criminal Record Check. It is easy process to go through and Monique can answer your questions and point you in the right direction.

If you are feeling your heartstrings being tugged to participate in this partnership SS ministry with our families, please talk to Diane Mann

ADDENDUM 3

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR AGM JANUARY 26, 2025 FOR THE YEAR 2024

Whether your giving is Intentional, Glad-hearted, Regular or Sacrificial, God bless each of you as your gifts combined to provide the monetary resources for our church to serve God's Kingdom work here on earth.

It has been a privilege to work with the Deacons, Elders and staff this past year as the Bookkeeper for the church. They all have a deep love for the church and its members and take their positions very seriously. Also, a big thank you to Monique for all the help and support she gives me.

Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2024:

- Balances in the bank accounts are:
 - a. GIC: \$151,510.27 which matures on July 7, 2025
 - b. Chequing: \$17,463.79
 - c. Savings: \$119,610.65

Our donations and other income for 2024 were up from 2023. Also, it is beneficial to the church to have some surplus in savings to be used for items that come up that we are unprepared for so we don't have to dip into our operating budget, especially in regard to our building and property. This past year we had to replace the fence and the payment for that will come out of the savings when the work is completed, and we receive the invoice.

- Under the Current Liabilities, we owed \$4,477.85 in various accounts payables & \$3,297.98 for Payroll source deductions and WBC premium for the year.

Income Statement from January 1, to December 31, 2024:

- Our total Income for 2024 was \$340,166.24.

- Spiritual Formation Ministry total was \$2,122.08
 - a. Education for children, teens, adults and staff comes under this ministry.
- Property Management total was \$112,414.37:
 - a. Building & Liability Insurance
 - b. Building repairs and maintenance
 - c. Regular servicing & compliance upgrade of the elevator
 - d. Grounds maintenance
 - e. Telephone & Internet
 - f. Kitchen Supplies
 - g. Janitorial service & cleaning supplies
 - h. Hydro, water & sewer charges
 - i. Alarm security, regular fire safety inspections & maintenance
- Fellowship Ministry total was \$814.35:
 - a. Supplies for after-service coffee time
 - b. Lunch after the Day of Prayer & Fasting
 - c. Flowers for Mothers' Day
- Acts of Mercy Ministry total was \$2,296.48:
 - a. Financial assistance and benevolence help & encouragement – this emergency help includes food, clothing, rent but also includes pastoral counseling and evangelistic bible studies.
- Finance Ministry total was \$222,954.72:
 - a. Staff salaries & employment benefits
 - b. GST paid on purchases
 - c. Bank charges & interest
 - d. Advertising
 - e. Bulletin
 - f. Office Supplies
 - g. Photocopying

- h. The annual Society report fee
 - i. Criminal record checks for staff
 - j. Canadian Centre of Christian Charities membership
 - k. Sage accounting software
- Worship Ministry total was \$7,911.78:
 - a. Maintenance & replacement of audio & visual equipment
 - b. Video & Copyright licensing for Staff & Volunteers
 - c. Provide supplies and communication support for Worship Teams
 - d. Communion supplies
 - e. Honorariums for guest speakers
- Youth Ministry total was \$72.59:
 - a. Unfortunately, without someone leading this ministry the budget isn't utilized fully. Hopefully this year we will find someone for this important ministry.
- Outreach & Discipleship total was \$23,783.00:
 - a. Local Bridge Events were Leading Influence MLA Breakfast, Good Friday service through City Reach, Polo Field Sunday, 2 barbeques held in the parking lot for the workers on Shelbourne Street and neighbours and the Fall Harvest Party.
 - b. Our missions include funds given to support Youth Sanctuary, Haven Pregnancy Support Clinic, Youth for Christ, Christa Smith-Kingston through Christian Direction and our child sponsorship to attend school in Zambia.
 - c. Special Events include the All-Church Retreat and gifts to our grads.
 - d. The Coins for Christ collection helped support The Mustard Seed Church, Shelbourne Community Kitchen, Spruston Road Bible Camp, Haven Pregnancy Support Clinic, Samaritan's Purse Canada and Youth for Christ.
- Our total expenses were \$372,369.37 with a net loss of \$32,203.13 but that does include the accounting entry for depreciation of \$65,340.68. Depreciation is an accounting method of allocating the cost of a tangible asset over its useful life or expensing of a portion of Asset Costs over several years.

- Asset purchases this year were a new photocopier for the church office and a podium microphone. These purchases were paid for from funds in the savings account.

2025 Budget:

- Our budget for 2025 has been set for \$369,956.17 or \$7,114.54 per week to continue the work in these areas of ministry. This Budget has been carefully & prayerfully prepared considering this past year & hopes for the new year.
- Again for 2025, the Budget includes a salary and payroll expenses for a full-time Associate Minister if one is found.
- If anyone would like a copy of the detailed 2025 Budget or the financial statements, please let me know and I can make you a copy. Also, if you have any questions, just send them to me by email.
- **Could we have a motion to Adopt the Proposed 2025 Budget?** (*2nd not necessary because the budget comes from a Committee*)

Motion: That the 2025 Budget be adopted as read & approved by the Deacons & Elders.

Could I have a show of hands to Adopt? Carried

ADDENDUM 4



PROPOSED BUDGET

2025

Reasons for giving

There are several reasons for giving. Many give out of gratitude or thanksgiving for what God has given, thus giving comes as a celebration. Others give out of a sense of responsibility, understanding that God's work in the Church costs money. Some give based on integrity, fulfilling their promises to support the Church with their time, giftedness and resources. Still others give because they believe in what the Church is doing. They want the Church to continue to minister to adults, children and youth. Your gift, combined with the gifts of all, will provide the monetary resources for Shelbourne St to remain faithful to God's calling.

What does the Bible say about giving?

Intentional

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind...." - 2 Cor. 9:7a

Glad-hearted

*"...not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."
- 2 Cor. 9:7b*

Regular

*"Every Sunday each of you make an offering and put it in safekeeping.
Be as generous as you can." - 1 Cor. 16:2*

Sacrificial

"For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will." - 2 Cor. 8:3-5

THIS YEAR'S BUDGET

The proposed Church budget for 2025 is
\$369,956.17 (\$7,114.54 per week)

Outreach Cluster \$16,880.00 (4.56%)

These funds help spread the Good News around the corner as well as around the world. We also provide monetary, food and housing assistance for local families. This figure does not tell the whole story; in addition to these items we partner with *Zambia Mission Fund Canada* in their tireless efforts to bring hope to the children of Zambia. Because it is self-funding, this mission is not included in the figures shown above.

Worship Cluster \$64,541.98 (17.45%)

This part of our budget is dedicated to creating a climate of worship that enables people to say yes to the love of God.

Spiritual Formation Cluster \$80,721.08 (21.82%)

These funds make it possible for us to teach the faith to our children and to teach the Bible to our adults. The funds will be used to purchase materials, outfit classes, train teachers and mentors, as well as for retreats and special events.

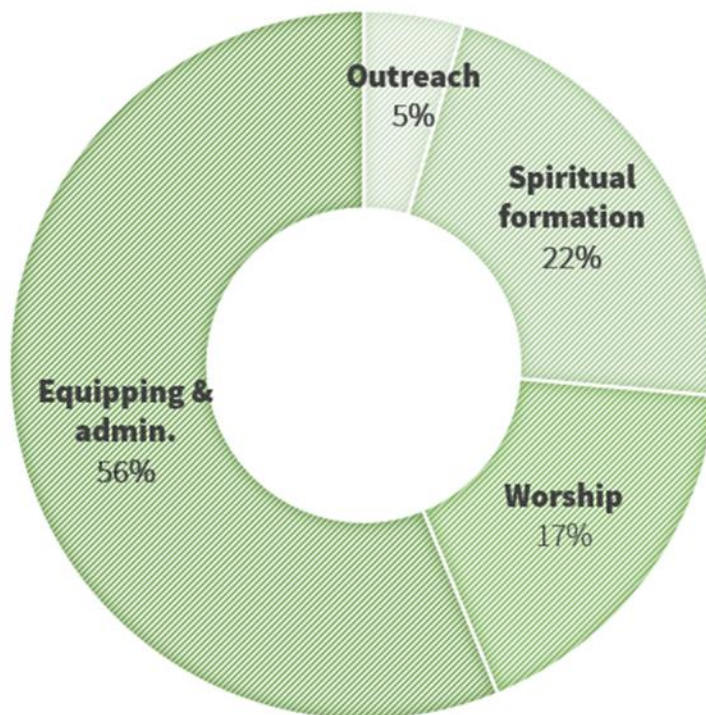
Equipping & Administration Cluster \$207,813.11 (56.17%)

These funds help provide training and equipping for ministry leaders, office operating expenses, support staff salaries, building upkeep, utilities, insurance, as well as custodial and maintenance services.

Shelbourne Street Church of Christ

We experience the joy of giving throughout the year when our ordinary dollars, through regular giving to the Church, transform into eternal expressions of God's love.

As you prayerfully consider the proposed Church budget, consider the vital role you play in support of these ministries. Consider also the blessings we extend and receive as we allow God to give our dollars eternal value.



ADDENDUM 5

MINISTER'S REPORT FOR THE 2025 AGM JANUARY 26, 2025

For my part in the meeting today I want, first, just to thank the leadership and the church for allowing me the privilege of serving with you. Last Sunday we talked about God granting us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, and I consider serving with you one of those wonderful spiritual blessings God has granted me. I never take it for granted and am always appreciative. We have a group of Elders that are to be commended for their service, both those stepping down and those continuing to serve, and the same goes for the team of Deacons, for Monique and for those who volunteer in so many ways or who are otherwise just part of this church family. And I enjoy serving alongside all of you!!

So, I am mainly going to give a summary report of the year and its activities, and then I will just mention a couple of things that are forward-looking with reference to our ministry.

When I first arrived, my first few sermons were focussed more or less on God-dependency, largely because that's the only way a church can make legitimate progress. Unless the Lord builds a house, the builders build in vain. I am still there in what I think should center our thinking about our life together, and you will hear more of that from Ephesians, for sure. God-dependency needs to be a dominant element among us.

We began 2024 with our Day of Prayer and Fasting, and I would say that not only was it one of the highlights of our year, but one of the most fruitful. One of the things we prayed about on that day was Our unity and cohesiveness, that God would bless us with a spirit of loving unity and peace so that we could move forward together. I would say that that is the most significant thing God has done in response to that day—he answered that prayer. There were other ways in which he answered our prayers, and He will do the same in response to our prayer of two Sundays ago. In fact, the other things I am going to list are all in some sense answers to the prayers we offered at our Day of Prayer and Fasting last year.

Along the lines of our unity and cohesiveness, the Relationships that were formed between myself and the leadership team and myself and the congregation in general have continually grown throughout the last year, being strengthened and maturing. And, I say that, knowing that there is always someone who feels like they have not really connected with the Preacher. I know I don't always get around to everyone every Sunday morning and there may be times when I rushed past you and you thought, "he ignored me." But please don't feel that way. I do try to talk to everyone, but it isn't easy, and especially in the middle of a busy Sunday. I encourage you not to wait for me to seek you out—please come seek me out. Often those I end up talking to are those who came to speak to me on a Sunday, so if you can do that, please do! I know some Preachers who are introverts and don't really like that much

relational interaction. I am not one of them!! If I don't get to you, please feel free to stop me or find me.

As far as our ministry and activities, several of us participated in the city-wide Good Friday Service on March 29 at North Douglas Pentecostal Church, and then we were blessed by our Easter Sunday on March 31. I was blessed by our All-Church Retreat in April. The theme had to do with personal connection to God as a core element in our discipleship. We were blessed to have Conor lead worship for us, which he will do again on March 7-9 this year, there were activities for the kids (for which we are seeking a volunteer or volunteers for this year's Retreat), there was some free time, and I really enjoyed sharing with you the things I did. One of the great things that came directly from the Retreat was our Growing Together Through the Spiritual Disciplines. We currently have 42 people participating in reading the same Bible verses daily and praying for ten minutes a day, and that has been a rich, rich blessing! You cannot have 40 or 50% of the adults in your church involved in the Spiritual Disciplines and have it not impact the life of your church! God-dependency is developed in just this way, as we discussed at last year's retreat, and I am excited to see how that effort will continue to be a blessing for us! And, of course, it was at the Retreat that solidified in our minds the idea of having Conor lead our worship for us once a month, to relieve some of our wonderful volunteers from some of the responsibilities that they have shouldered and continue to shoulder, so well.

In the spring we initiated a new design for our ministries by forming Ministry Planning Groups. More important than lofty sounding Mission and Vision statements, which have their place, it is vital that we have structures that actually work and that do work. We formed four Ministry Planning Groups for Missionality; Spiritual Formation/Discipleship; Fellowship/Relationships; and Worship. Then sub-groups for Life Groups and Children's Education came out of these. There was immediate impact from the forming of these planning groups and today we have several more Life Groups, an expanded Fellowship team, changes to our worship, and a couple of outreach efforts that otherwise would not have gotten off the ground. We have seen the beginning of a new Women's Ministry that will begin its second round of group learning on Tuesday night of this week—please see Carolyn Langley and sign up, Ladies.

We also met in the spring concerning future possibilities for the Use of the building and property with which the Lord has blessed us. The Shelbourne Street corridor is changing, and, while it is likely years or even a decade or more away before something might actually happen, it makes sense that at least in some preliminary way we might consider what the long-term possibilities for our property might be—where might the Lord take us with this? What are the questions we need to be asking? What resources are there on which we could depend in order to alter the use of our physical property? Who might help us or partner with us? Or is this at all the direction God may want us to go? It doesn't hurt to ask questions way ahead of the game and to seek the Lord's will in such matters. Of course, along these lines we could mention the finishing of the Shelbourne Street modifications that Don Mann Excavating

carried out and the updates to our parking lot and grounds that occurred in the process. The most recent thing was our new fence on the west side of our property.

We, of course, enjoyed our annual trip out to the Polo Field for Worship, and Daniel and Luke both joined us on that day. In July kids enjoyed Junior Camp and I directed Teen Camp at Spruston Road Bible Camp, and Senior's Camp happened over August 16-18. In September we entered into what essentially functions as a new church year with a new focus in the sermons (I will do some more with that in just a moment), and on September 29 we celebrated Truth and Reconciliation Sunday, where we heard from our own people concerning the impact on their lives of early colonization and its subsequent outcomes, and we adopted a statement acknowledging the mistreatment of Canada's First Nations by those who immigrated here from Europe. Then, at the end of October, we enjoyed the renewal of our Fall Harvest Party, with over 100 in attendance. Thank you to all of you, who made all these events happen!

One of the recurring blessings that we again enjoyed was the chance to Serve others at Christmas time, with special efforts made to bless The Haven and Sanctuary Youth Centre, and then we shared together in our Christmas Eve Service—which was quite well attended--and our Youth Christmas Presentation on the Sunday before Christmas.

And finally, I will just mention that since I came last fall I have had the joy of teaching from the Bible each Sunday. We started, as I said, with discussions about God-dependency. But then we looked at the Ministry Priorities of Jesus, The Sermon on the Mount—which was the teachings of Jesus, The Blessings of Being in Christ, and in the fall we looked at length at The Spirit in the Church—a journey into the book of Acts. And, of course, we are now entering into a time of reflection on the book of Ephesians, and I am excited about that.

I don't know exactly where the Lord may lead us in the coming year and years ahead. But now that we have established an environment of peace, unity, and joy in Christ, what shall we do specifically in Discipling our children and others new to faith (Outreach and Nurturing), in Serving our community and blessing those who hurt and struggle, in Helping each other to grow in serving the Lord and each other, and in Helping each other relate to and understand better the God we serve?

Let me close by reiterating that I have been greatly blessed to do ministry among you for the last year and four months, that you have ministered and served well, and I look forward to the years ahead!