

# FOCUS

📍 2024

EFCCCL ANNUAL REPORT



**FOLLOW**  
CHRIST PASSIONATELY

**CONNECT**  
IN MUTUAL COMMUNITY

**MAKE**  
DISCIPLES WHO MAKE DISCIPLES





# IT ALL STARTS HERE

**LETTER FROM PASTOR JAY AND BECKY**

**CONNECTIONS MINISTRY**

**MINISTRY TO WOMEN**

**ADULT & CARE MINISTRY**

**WORSHIP MINISTRY**

**CHILDREN'S DISCIPLE-MAKING**

**NEXUS STUDENT MINISTRIES**

**OUTREACH**

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

# EFCCCL AT A GLANCE



“Who is like the Lord our God, the One Who sits enthroned on high, who stoops down to look on the Heavens and the Earth?” (Psalm 113:5-6).

This passage from the psalms gives us confidence that our God knows what He’s doing, even when His ways are mysterious and confuse us. He is a God of providence. He is a God of grace and mercy. He is a God who is on the move, advancing His fame among the nations.

This past fall, Becky and I celebrated our 10th anniversary on staff! We continue to be thankful for such a vibrant church family. We praise God for a healthy staff and elder board. As the leaders go, so goes the church. We are also very grateful for such a large pool of faithful volunteers.

Our Business Director, Mark Kolbe, and our Bookkeeper, Emily Peterson, continue to serve us with expertise and precision. Kelly Demakis does a great job as our Communications Director and our website is second-to-none when it comes to church sites! I’m also thankful for Eileen Palsgrove, who leads our missions outreach program with energy and vision. Nina Lowe is now filling the role of Short-term Mission Trip Coordinator in addition to her job as Director of Connections. She will work alongside Eileen to help facilitate logistics of adult mission trips to Budapest and Honduras.

Mike Niemi continues to serve with excellence as our Tech Director. Heather Soukup faithfully leads Children’s Disciple-making Ministry with skill and God’s blessing; the 100+ children we average on a Sunday are being impacted with great gospel-centered material. Both Gabe Moore (Director of Ministry to Men) and Peggy Strasser (Director of Ministry to Women) continue to lead well and impact many lives.

Our finances also remain healthy and we want to thank you, our church family, for your faithful tithing and sacrificial giving this past year. Beyond this, many have stepped up to serve others this past year in a wide variety of ways. It has been very rewarding to see the church function like the church!

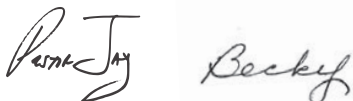
This summer we will be giving our Worship Center a face-lift including replacing carpets, chairs, video screens and reworking the stage—it will be quite the update! To accommodate this, we will be worshipping outside under the tent for a number of weeks. We are also moving towards a redoing our children's area to better accommodate this growing ministry. We are thankful for the many faithful volunteers who are investing time into both of these renovation projects.

It continues to be a delight to work beside Pastor Doug and his teams as they focus on helping our people worship corporately on Sunday mornings. Pastor Tim does a skillful job leading in all sorts of areas: adult education, benevolence, our library resource center, discipleship and Community Groups. I'm also thankful for our Buildings & Grounds Crew led by Dave Palsgrove; they do an incredible job maintaining and improving our campus on a regular basis—it takes a lot of hard work to keep our campus in top-notch shape!

My Executive Ministry Assistant, Bethany Keyes, is helpful beyond measure! She keeps everything in our office well organized and running in tip-top shape. Nexus, our Student Ministry, continues to surge on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings! Pastor Ron leads a small army of faithful volunteers who are committed to impacting young people for Christ. We've also seen many new faces show up on campus this past year, with many of them taking the step of membership. Life on our campus is more energetic than ever...God is clearly at work in our midst!

Becky and I are very thankful for what God is doing in our midst. He is glorified on our campus throughout the week as believers gather—and disperse—to worship, pray and do ministry together in Christ's name. We use three words to capture our vision here at EFCCL: Follow, Connect, Make. Becky and I praise God for the vitality, health, and vision of our church family!

Soli Deo Gloria,  
Pastor Jay and Becky

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Pastor Jay' and the second is 'Becky'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.







# CONNECTIONS MINISTRY

NINA LOWE

88

WELCOME  
BAGS

We gave 88 welcome  
bags to our visitors.



Last fall 700 people  
attended our 3rd annual  
Fall Fest and enjoyed a fun  
night of food, fellowship,  
games, and more!

700

ATTENDED  
FALL FEST





Our pastors and staff ate pizza with 49 people who were looking to get connected in our church.



49  
PIZZA  
EATERS



This past year 27  
people attended  
Bridge to Connect.

27  
ATTENDEES

84  
TEAMMATES



Our team serves as greeters, ushers, valet, and work in the Café and at the Welcome Desk.

## CONNECTIONS MINISTRY





# MINISTRY TO WOMEN

PEGGY STRASSER



19

ATTENDED  
EMBRACE

### EMBRACE

19 women participated in our ministry to moms with young children.



98

ATTENDED  
7 STUDIES



### BIBLE STUDIES

Throughout the year, 98 women attended seven Bible studies.

30

ATTENDED  
ASPIRE

### ASPIRE WOMEN'S EVENT

30 women from our church attended this event at Springbrook Community Church in Huntley.



*Sewing Seeds*

MINISTRY



This multi-generational group of women (from 10 years to mid-80s!) meets monthly. Originally they started sewing dresses for little girls around the world who live in poverty-stricken areas, but have since expanded to making tote bags, stuffed animals and dolls, baby blankets and more!

53

WOMEN  
AGES 5-90

687

DRESSES  
MADE

300

DRAWSTRING  
BACKPACKS

86

TOTE  
BAGS

31

BABY  
BLANKETS

63

FEMININE  
KITS



## BOOK CLUB

A small group of 6-8 women gather monthly to read and discuss a variety of books.

6-8

WOMEN &  
8 BOOKS



80

FELLOWSHIP  
QUARTERLY

## MUFFINS, MUGS & MORE

80 gals of all ages met quarterly for muffins, fruit, tea and coffee and a time of fellowship.



## COMMON THREADS

6 women meet monthly for our knitting and crocheting group.

6

CREATIVE  
WOMEN

8

LADIES GO  
HIKING

## HIKER CHICKS

8 ladies, 40+ miles of hiking were logged over 8 hikes.



# MINISTRY TO WOMEN





**ADULT & CARE  
MINISTRY**

PASTOR TIM BRUNS

8

ELECTIVE  
CLASSES

52

PEOPLE  
BAPTIZED



## ADULT ELECTIVES

Adult Electives help you to passionately follow Jesus through increasing your Bible knowledge, promoting spiritual growth, training you to apply biblical wisdom to every area of your life, and equipping you to make disciples.

## RECENT OFFERINGS

1. Church in Crisis
2. Prayer: Talking to Our Creator
3. Rich Wounds: The Countless Treasures of the Life, Death, and Triumph of Jesus
4. The Great Commission
5. The Audacity of God's Love
6. Discipling As You Go
7. Crown Financial
8. The Sovereignty of God

20

YEARS OF CR  
MINISTRY



## CELEBRATE RECOVERY

January 2024 marked the 20th anniversary for our Celebrate Recovery ministry. We had a wonderful celebration praising the Lord for the great things He has done through CR!



## BENEVOLENCE PROGRAM

\$100,878 was given in financial assistance to help 112 families.

100k  
FINANCIAL  
AID

112  
HOUSE  
HOLDS



12  
LOCAL

33  
GIVING TREE  
FAMILIES

9  
EFCCCL

12  
HBMS

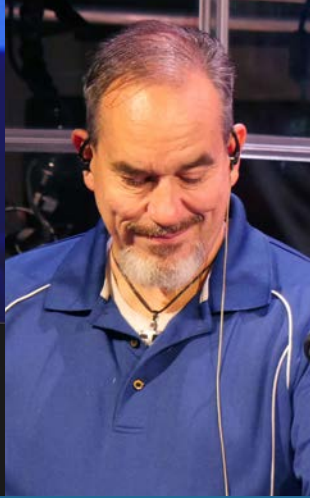
## GIVING TREE

A total of 33 families were helped through our Giving Tree program: 9 from our church, 12 from Hannah Beardsley Middle School and 12 families from the community.



# ADULT & CARE MINISTRY





**WORSHIP  
MINISTRY**  
PASTOR DOUG FRIESEN

56

CHOIR  
MEMBERS



300

LAST SEDER  
ATTENDEES

90+  
HELPERS

10

CHRISTMAS  
SONGS

WITH  
COOKIES  
& COCOA

## LAST SEDER OF JESUS CHRIST

MARCH 28, 2024

## THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

DECEMBER 8, 2023



## THE LAST SEDER OF JESUS CHRIST

Led by Christian Blumenfeld, this celebration is a humble and genuine attempt to bridge the Jewish Passover Seder to the Christian Eucharist, which is exactly what our Lord did during the Last Supper, the night before He became the sacrificial Lamb.





37

WORSHIP  
TEAM  
MEMBERS



49

TECH TEAM  
MEMBERS



38

ON THE  
PRAYER  
TEAM

8

HYMNS OF  
WORSHIP

PLUS  
SPECIAL  
MUSIC

10

TOP CHOIR  
ANTHEMS

AND  
ICE CREAM  
SUNDAES



HYMN SING

JULY 23, 2023

SUNDAE SING

MAY 7, 2023



WORSHIP  
MINISTRY



Planted and watered seeds  
will slowly sprout,  
extend roots and shoots,  
and grow to maturity—  
bearing fruit at the proper time.





# CHILDREN'S DISCIPLE- MAKING

HEATHER SOUKUP



# CHILDREN'S DISCIPLE-MAKING INVOLVES INCREMENTAL PROGRESS TOWARD CHRIST-LIKENESS



1<sup>ST</sup>

## PLANTING SEEDS OF FAITH

### EARLY CHILDHOOD

Our team of 74 loving volunteers in Early Childhood (birth – 4 years old) use bubbles, music, books, toys, prayers, and Bible lessons to emphasize the greatness of God and help children come to know Him.

## GROWING HEARTS OF FAITH

### KID'S WORSHIP

All things grow in Him. We hope that children give their life to Jesus early on. Through ECCL Kid's Worship (Kindergarten – 3rd grade), Children's Disciple-making builds on those early theological concepts and continues to challenge children to receive Christ, walk in Christ, being "rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught..." (Colossians 2:7)

2<sup>ND</sup>



## ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

This year our curriculum focused on the following theological concepts:

1. Jesus, God's Son
2. God's plan for families
3. Our need for Jesus, the Savior
4. God's Word, God's Message
5. The church
6. Live for God





## NURTURING FAITH HABITS

### POPCORN 45

A single kernel of corn, that once it is exposed to extreme heat, bursts inside out, never to return to the shape or color of corn again. In Popcorn 45, our class for 4th – 5th graders, we want our students to be completely changed by the gospel, never turning back again.

We lead 4th and 5th grade students through encountering God to transformation and discipleship. Each quarter we focused on a different name of God: Adonai, El Olam, El Shaddai and Emmanuel. Kids are learning to pray and watch for God's answers.

### AWANA

Awana reaches boys and girls with the gospel of Christ and train them to serve Him. Study and memorization of God's Word paired with fun games, engaging large group teaching, and friendly adult volunteers causes children to want to come back.

### VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are essential in encouraging children to nurture faith-building habits. Together we teach them to pray. Together we help children find verses and encourage them to read Scripture on their own. Together we search God's Word to find answers. Volunteers challenge the child's paradigms or faulty thinking and teach them through the Scriptures to trust God in the current circumstance.

3<sup>RD</sup>



# CHILDREN'S DISCIPLE-MAKING

**COLOSSIANS 2:6-7**, “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

**140**

FAMILIES  
SERVED BY  
EFCL  
KIDS

**160**

VOLUNTEERS  
NEEDED  
2024-25



**284**

UNIQUE  
SUNDAY  
KIDS

**100+**

PER  
WEEK

**75**

VOLUNTEERS  
HELPED

**20+**

NEEDED

### EFCL SUNDAY KIDS

EFCL Sunday Kids had a total of 284 unique kids reach on Sundays in 2023 with an average attendance of 100-120 kids on any given Sunday from birth to 5th grade. We have a team of 75 volunteers who serve on Sundays. To be fully staffed, we need another 20+ volunteers.

**20**  
IN KIDS  
CHOIR

**3**  
VOLUNTEERS  
FOR KIDS'  
CHOIR

**2**  
MORE



**142**  
KIDS  
ATTENDED  
VBS

**113**  
VOLUNTEERS  
FOR  
VBS

**160**  
KIDS IN  
AWANA

**46**  
ADULTS  
VOLUNTEER

**16+**  
NEEDED



**EFCCL KIDS**

## MISSIONS FAMILY EXPERIENCE

The 2023 Missions Conference focused on Bible translation. Our lower level was transformed into three separate geographic locations: Brazil, Hawaii, and North Carolina. Missionaries from each area greeted families in the immersive environment where they ate local food, participated in hands-on activities, and were challenged to take part in Bible translation. God's Spirit was at work calling various people from our congregation to be involved in Bible translation! The Missions Family Experience was a home run!

## FAMILY DISCIPLE-MAKING EVENTS

We use various events throughout the year to round out our educational programming and provide various approaches for children to be discipled. Our goal is to create fun, engaging environments with immersive activities so that people from our community can be bridged into our church.

### 1. Fall Fest

Each year the Fall Fest bridges people from all walks of life to our church.

### 2. Gingerbread Bash

Our annual Gingerbread Bash introduces families to the Nativity and the power of the gospel each December.

### 3. Vacation Bible School

VBS gives children the opportunity to receive Christ as Savior while having fun and learning about God's creation.



## THE AMAZING CHEMISTRY SHOW

On March 2, 2024, a total of 430 people from our church and community attended The Amazing Chemistry Show and Family Experience! It was a highly interactive event, allowing families to explore over 150 individual hands-on science experiences at their own pace. The day ended with a captivating, 1-hour presentation where the gospel was clearly shared with those in attendance.

## DISCIPLE-MAKING MILESTONES

Families who participate in our disciple-making milestones love the opportunity to teach and shepherd their children. We offer the following opportunities throughout the year:

6

**BIBLE SKILLS & THRILLS CLASS**  
6 Kids attended this fun class.

8

**BIBLE STUDY ADOPTION CEREMONY**  
8 Kids attended the ceremony.

3

**INTRODUCING YOUR CHILD TO COMMUNION**  
3 families attended.

2

**GOSPEL COMMITMENT CLASS**  
2 families attended this class for parents

5

**CHILD DEDICATION**  
5 children were dedicated.

**EFCCL KIDS**





# NEXUS STUDENT MINISTRIES

PASTOR RON KIRKEENG





**155+**  
WEDNESDAY  
NIGHTS

More than 155 students and leaders attend Nexus Youth Group on Wednesday nights.

We are studying the book of Philippians during the 2023–2024 school year. This curriculum (written by Venessa Morris, our Student Ministries Coordinator) includes 31 weekly sermons/lessons, devotionals, and reflection questions. It is used every Wednesday night during Youth Group!



**55**  
NOLA

**\$13k**  
IN RAISED  
FUNDS

**21**  
BC

\$13,242 was raised at our 2023 Next Up! Fundraising Dinner and Variety Show! That money went to fund students going on short-term mission trips.



**URBAN IMPACT, NOLA | JUNE 10–18, 2023**  
47 students | 8 adults | 9 days

Students and leaders served at a free, week-long day camp for inner city kids in New Orleans. This was our third year sending a team to Urban Impact.



**RED SOUL RISING, BC | JULY 12–26, 2023**  
8 students | 13 adults | 10 days

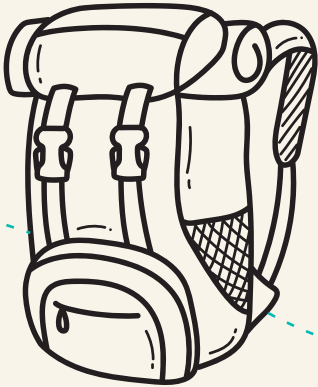
A total of 21 people traveled to British Columbia to work with First Nations kids at Red Soul Rising Camp.





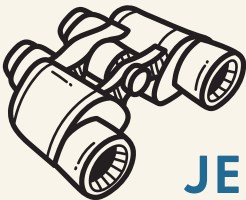
**105**  
BACK TO  
SCHOOL  
RETREAT

76 students and 29 adult/leaders attended the Back to School Retreat at Camp Timberlee over Labor Day weekend.



**157**  
WINTER  
RETREAT

119 students and 38 adults/leaders headed to Lake Geneva Youth Camp for the 2024 Winter Retreat over President's Day weekend.



**JESUS + YOU + ME = NEXUS**















## EL AYUDANTE



# OUTREACH

EILEEN PALSGROVE

38

PEOPLE ON  
EL AYUDANTE  
MISSION  
TRIPS



38 people went on mission trips to El Ayudante in Honduras in July and November 2023.



\$12k

MISSIONARY  
XMAS GIFTS



Missionaries were blessed with \$12,235 in Christmas gifts.

10

PEOPLE TO  
BUDAPEST  
ENGLISH  
CAMP

10 people went to the  
Budapest for English  
camp this past summer.



\$397

THOUSAND  
DOLLARS IN  
SUPPORT



\$297,349 went directly to  
supporting our missionaries.

OUTREACH









# FINANCIAL UPDATE

MARK KOLBE  
EMILY PETERSON

Our year-to-date income is \$2,020,595

Our actual year-to-date expenses are \$1,876,975

**\$2.0M**  
YTD INCOME

2024 annual budget is \$2,616,800.

**\$1.8M**  
YTD EXPENSES

**\$2.6M**  
ANNUAL BUDGET

Actual income for March 2024 was \$262,662.

**\$262k**  
MARCH INCOME

**\$225k**  
MARCH EXPENSES



Actual expenses for March 2024 was \$225,869.

# FINANCIAL UPDATE

In 2019 we made the final mortgage payment on our building loan—what an exciting accomplishment in the life of our church! Since then, we've been able to invest the mortgage fund back into ministry, outreach and mission trips, and long-needed upgrading of our infrastructure. The extra funds allowed us to add drainage and resurface our front parking lot, remodel our Activity Center, update our main lobby and Café, as well as tackle smaller projects around the church.

Because of your faithful giving, we have been able to set funds aside to update our Worship Center this summer! The Lord has shown His favor upon His people here at EFCCL and our leadership continues to focus on being good stewards of all He has entrusted us with.

Blessings,  
Mark

*Mark Kolbe*





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