

DeerGrove
Covenant Church
25 Years Strong

DeerGrove Covenant Church

2023 Annual Meeting

Sunday February 4, 2024

Meeting Materials

DeerGrove Covenant Church Annual Meeting Agenda - Sunday February 4th, 2024

Opening and Welcome

- Declare a Quorum – looking for at least 20 members present.
- Congregational reading of the relational Covenant
- Opening Prayer for the Annual Meeting
- Presentation of the 2023 Minutes
 - Approval of Minutes
- Chair Reports
 - Chair Report, Attendance, Membership Report
- Ministry Staff Reports
 - **Pastor Taylor**
 - **Pastor Rick**
 - **Allison Tealdi**, Children's Ministries
- Stewardship
 - 2023 Financial Report
 - 2024 Budget
 - Voting on the budget
- Nominating Committee
 - Leadership Team
 - Chris Killinger - 2 year term
 - Eileen Magnuson - 2 year term
 - Kait Berger - 2 year term
 - Pastoral Relations Committee
 - Denise Green
 - Deborah Inman
 - Nominating Committee
 - None needed
 - Vote for the nominations
- Thank You to outgoing Leadership Team and PRC Committee members
- Any Other Business
- Closing Prayer
- Adjournment



DEERGROVE COVENANT CHURCH 2022 ANNUAL MEETING NOTES

FEBRUARY 5, 2023

Leadership Team Members In Attendance: Lorin Michael, Kyle Stroner, Dave Green, Mark Johnson, Mark De La Paz, Jen Killinger, Pastor Taylor Sexton

Absent: none

Topic	Discussion/Conclusion	Action/ Follow up
Welcome/ Prayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lorin welcomed everyone to the 2022 Annual Meeting and announced that 27 members were present and we had a quorum to proceed. He then went over the agenda for the meeting.Pastor Taylor led us in reading together the DeerGrove Relational Covenant.Lorin opened the meeting in prayer.	
Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Minutes from last year's meeting: Lorin made a motion to accept the 2021 Annual Meeting Notes. Mark De La Paz seconded the motion, and the minutes were accepted.	
Chair Report (Lorin Michael)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lorin shared his reflections on 2022 with many highlights and photos from the year. He thanked individuals and teams for using their time and talents in many ways.Membership report: membership decreased from 56 to 52 individuals. Average attendance was 51 people. Peak attendance dates included 98 for the child dedication and 82 for the Christmas Eve service.Question: Someone asked if there is any way to track online watchers. Lorin answered that there are typically 5-6 people watching live per week. We aren't sure about those who may watch the service later.	

Ministry Staff Reports	<p>Pastor Taylor Sexton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastor Taylor thanked Lorin for all he does as chair and beyond, as well as Donna. • He read Philippians 1:3-6 and reflected on the past year; he asked the congregation to think of one word that comes to mind regarding DeerGrove. Words that were shared include: transition, faithful, community, steadfast, support, engage, abundance. Taylor then shared some of what came to mind for him. • He then shifted to focusing on the question "what did God bring us through for (not "if" anymore)?" His 3 main points were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Loving community; ◦ To be formed; and ◦ To be on mission. • Pastor Taylor then thanked the worship team and Jinny for their roles and support. • He shared that he wants and intends to be there for the congregation and to be able to talk with and get to know everyone. <p>Kids' Ministry Team (Gretchen Stroner and Alison Tealdi)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alison shared a review of all that took place in kids' ministry in 2022, including events that took place and other items that were accomplished. • Gretchen shared future plans and hopes the team has for kids' ministry in 2023. <p>Pastor Rick Fisk (read by Dave Green)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave Green read highlights from Pastor Rick's report. • Pastor Rick wears many hats at DeerGrove, including Pastoral care, life groups, preaching, grief group, adult CF, and committee work. <p>Pastor Peter Sjoblom (read by Lorin)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorin read some of the highlights from Pastor Peter's letter to the congregation. <p>Prayer for Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave Green prayed for the staff. 	
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Stewardship	<p>Financial Report (Mike Tealdi)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike shared 2022 Financial Results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ DeerGrove finished the year \$80,186 above budget. ◦ Total giving was \$31,074 higher than last year. ◦ Giving in December was \$12,670 higher than November to close out 2022. ◦ Income exceeded expenses every month since the last annual meeting. ◦ Cash reserves were up by \$62,985 from December 2021 and up \$82,630 from our lowest point in November 2021. ◦ Total unrestricted reserves were currently at \$106,748 (as of 12/31/22). ◦ A question was asked about how much of our income could have been from one time gifts. The finance team shared that while it is hard to know for sure, the fact that there were some large one-time gifts is accounted for in the new proposed budget. ◦ A question was asked about the timeframe of the reduction in mortgage payments. The payments will be increasing by \$500 for 6 months and then reassessed. <p>Budget for 2023 (Dan Palmquist)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan shared that compared to 2022, there are more known factors for 2023. • When budgeting giving, because of one time gifts that came in earlier in the year, the team looked at giving from September, October and November and used that average (\$21,500) to budget for yearly giving. • A question was asked about what is included in spiritual growth and nurture. This includes children's ministry, lead pastor ministry account, music, website, serve, hospitality table, etc. • A question was asked regarding bank fees. This includes Quickbooks and the monthly fee for online giving. • A question was asked regarding budgeting for properties and what projects does this include? This includes priorities involving the inside of the church including cleaning/visual updates. This could also include parking lot repairs/maintenance. • A question was asked about budgeting for youth ministry and are we thinking ahead to when we may have more students? Pastor Taylor responded that the youth ministry budget includes special events, confirmation, serving students we have and the age groups we have. • A comment was made regarding the 10% that goes to the ECC. It was noted that not all churches do this and that DeerGrove also gives to missionaries. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan shared that there is a change in the percentages this year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ In the past, 8% went to the ECC and 2% went to the Central Conference. ◦ This year 6.5% will go to the ECC and 3.5% to the Central Conference. <p>2023 Budget Vote</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A motion was made to approve the 2023 budget. The motion was seconded and then approved by the congregation. <p>Prayer for Finance Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Johnson prayed for the finance team. 	
Nominating Committee	<p>Ann Johnson presented an update from the Nominating Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the ballot for Leadership Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Lorin Michael - 1 additional year ◦ Mark Johnson - 2nd 2 year term ◦ Kristie Bizeau - 2 year term • On the ballot for Nominating Committee; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Linda Smith - 2 year term ◦ Donna Michael - 2 year term ◦ Kyle Stroner (LT representative) • Pastoral Relations Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Mark De La Paz (LT representative) • A motion was made for one vote to approve all of the proposed new LT and Nominating Committee members. This was seconded, and the new leaders were approved by the congregation. <p>Prayer for new leaders: Kyle Stroner prayed for the new leaders.</p>	
Thank Yous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorin thanked Jen Killinger for serving on the Leadership Team the past two years and being secretary the last year. • He also thanked Byron for his years as Chair of the Leadership Team during especially challenging times. • Lorin thanked Ann Johnson for her time and dedication as chair of the Nominating Committee. 	
Gather 2023	<p>Lorin shared about the Covenant's Annual Meeting, Gather 2023, which will be from June 28-July 1 in Orange County, CA. Two members of DeerGrove can go as delegates, and the budget covers the registration fee for those two members.</p>	
Other Business	<p>Welcome and Outreach Team (Jinny)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jinny shared that the team includes herself, Judy, Brenda, Kait and Pastor Rick Fisk. • The team welcomes ideas and/or other individuals who would like to join. • Small group lunches will take place later this month. • The Feed My Starving Children serving event will be on March 18th. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Global 6K will be re-energized this year and will take place at the church on May 20th. • The Palatine Jaycees organize the 4th of July Hometown Fest. DeerGrove will have a booth at the business expo during that weekend, with 2 hour shifts during which church members/attenders may volunteer. <p>Question about Shared Contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a question about an update on the shared contracts with other businesses/groups. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Tricon update: the plowing is going well, but they still have not signed the new contract. ◦ The Practice: sharing office space is going well. They use tables in the church 2-3 days/week. ◦ Brotherhood of Harmony 	
Closing Prayer /Adjourn	<p>Pastor Taylor thanked Lorin for all he does as chair and thanked everyone for coming. He then closed in prayer.</p> <p>Lorin thanked Gretchen and Linda for helping to arrange childcare for the meeting. He then declared the meeting adjourned.</p>	

Respectfully submitted by Jen Killinger

February 5, 2023



DECEMBER 2023

Hello Covenant Family,

Thank you for the many ways you have been partnering and praying with me and the Covenant denominational team this year. I send each of you my gratitude and thanks! We have been through a significant season of change and are just at the beginning of living into a new ministry structure. It is my hope and prayer that these changes will allow us to resource and partner with you more intentionally as together we join God in God's mission to see more disciples among more populations in a more caring and just world.

Please know that our denominational team is praying for you too! Each of our ministry teams has selected a regional conference to pray for this year. If you would like to send your prayer requests, we would love to receive them. We want you to know there is a concerted effort to lift you up in prayer. This is one of the many ways we can live into our Three Strand Strong commitment. I pray our good and faithful God will provide for all your needs and amplify the many ways you demonstrate the love of Christ in word and deed in your community. I pray you will be encouraged even when circumstances are challenging, knowing that God is always at work. I pray the joy of the Lord will be your strength.

The psalmist writes, "Your love, O Lord, forever will I sing; from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness" (Psalm 89:1). It is an honor, privilege, and joy to serve the Evangelical Covenant Church. This past year has been full of experiencing God's faithfulness to his beloved church; from the wonderful church anniversaries being celebrated to 100 years of the gospel coming to the Democratic Republic of Congo, God has been faithful. What a magnificent God we serve! Please continue to share your stories of how God is at work in and through your congregation with us. We love to celebrate these stories with you. They are a gift and encouragement to the whole church! Looking forward, I am excited to see how God will meet our youth as they gather for Unite 2024. I know there will be new and renewed commitments to Christ as well as responses to God's call to ministry and service.

I pray every blessing upon each of you this Advent and Christmas season. As you gather in your local church annual meetings, may you reflect and marvel at God's faithfulness to you this year.

For God's glory and neighbor's good,

Tammy Swanson-Draheim, PRESIDENT, EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH



CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

January 2024

Happy New Year! We are grateful to the Lord for each of the pastors, congregations, and many ministries of the Central Conference. Please know that we are praying for the 110 churches, over 300 ministers, and the movement of the Holy Spirit in the Central Conference.

We are gearing up to move forward in ministry in 2024. How do we do this? The Church is called to seek the lost, to empower the weak, to care for the sick, to disciple the believer, and to challenge the status quo. We continue to do this, while we also strive to plant churches, help strengthen current churches, walk with ministers, and continue to provide guidance to our conference ministries. We can only do this with your faithful partnership and contribution.

Paul, in Philippians 1:6, reminds us that we are in this together. “Because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Post-pandemic, churches are creating their new normal and growing comfortable once again in the mission of the church, to gather those who need the hope of Jesus Christ. This is the perfect time to “move mission forward” together, as this continues to be our theme for this year.

Church plants in our conference are also continuing to move forward in mission after the pandemic. We are seeing the movement of the Holy Spirit through the many people coming to Christ. These new believers are being baptized and joining the church to grow spiritually in community.

Things we accomplished together in 2023:

- In 2023, the Central Conference staff helped over 70 local Covenant pastors obtain their Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) credentials.
- We also walked alongside six Covenant ministers from our conference as they went through the ECC ordination process. These local ministers were ordained at the Covenant Annual Meeting (Gather).
- We continue to walk with churches in the Central Conference that are seeking interim / transition pastors and we offer coaching to these pastors as they step into these roles.
- The conference staff assisted four churches in 2023 with finding interim and transitional pastors. The staff is currently assisting two other churches with finding interim and transitional pastors.
- Currently there are eight Central Conference churches seeking lead pastors. The conference staff is walking alongside these churches’ pastoral search committees. Ten churches completed their search process in 2023 and have called new lead pastors.
- We continue to walk alongside three church plants, with the possibility of adding two church plants in our conference in 2024.
- We are checking in with our Covenant ministers on a regular basis. In 2023, the conference staff did more than 60 care check-ins with local Covenant ministers.

- We assist local churches as they look for information and resources that develop their ministries. This includes the pHCheck, which is a church assessment tool, as well as, Vitality workshops, Leadership Team discernment, and Living Legacy coaching. The conference staff is available to answer any questions you have about resources for your local church.
- Rev. Jill Lind concluded her time with our conference, and we are so grateful for her commitment to care for ministers and lay leaders. Rev. Nicole McClurg is now walking with our ministers.
- The Central Conference staff is just an email or phone call away. Feel free to contact the Central Conference office at info@centralconf.org or at 773-267-3060.

This year, the Central Conference is planning to hold the conference annual gathering, Celebration 2024, as an in-person event, until we are told otherwise. **Please save the dates: Thursday, May 2 – Saturday, May 4, 2024, at Batavia Covenant Church, in Batavia, IL.** We hope Covenant church members can make it to this very special event. We will gather to do Central Conference business, moving mission forward in our conference. More details will be sent to your church shortly, but you may also visit our website at www.centralconf.org/celebration for updates. At Celebration 2024 we are committed to sharing the good news coming from local Covenant churches in our conference. Great ministry is happening all around the Central Conference!

Please know that we cannot do ministry without your prayers and financial partnership. We are empowered by the local Covenant churches in our conference to move mission forward. However, we cannot continue to plant, strengthen, and connect churches without your support. You may find more information on donating to the Central Conference at our website: www.centralconf.org (click on the “Contribute” option).

Finally, we thank you, the local Covenant churches that are giving to the Central Conference from church budgets at 3.5% of the local church giving. If you have been unable to do so before, we invite you to become a financial partner with the ministries of the Central Conference now. We also invite you to consider giving additional funds, as the Holy Spirit leads you.

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” Ephesians 3:20

Grateful to be in the family of God.



Rev. Dr. Danny Martinez
Superintendent of the Central Conference of the ECC



Report to the Annual Meeting
Lorin Michael: Church Chair
February 4th, 2024

Dear Members and Friends of DeerGrove Covenant Church,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has been a wonderful blessing to serve as the Chair of this church and to work closely with our Leadership Team and so many of you who give of your time so generously. Our church has shown commitment to God's mission and to each other. I continue to receive encouragement from our church congregation, our leadership team, and our staff.

As I reflect back on this past year, it has been a joy to see how we work together in harmony. Every month when the Leadership Team meets, we are led in devotions and prayer by Pastor Taylor. Our agendas have been full of topics that range from our ministry areas, concerns of the congregation, properties usage, and praying for our congregation, just to name a few. I want to thank our Leadership Team: Pastor Taylor, Kyle Stroner, Dave Green, Mark Johnson, Mark De La Paz, and Cara Yavaliollah. Thanks to Pastor Taylor for his gift of leadership and Kyle as Vice Chair, for stepping in when I was on vacation this summer. I have observed, as many of us have, that Pastor Taylor has supported us as he has continued to grow into his role as Lead Pastor. It has been a delight to see his leadership and vision for our church develop.

A great deal of gratitude is due to our Pastoral staff. Pastor Taylor has been instrumental in organizing all of our worship services this year, and coordinating and scheduling guest speakers, as well as carrying the load for preaching multiple Sundays a month. It has been a delight to hear his insightful and scripture-based messages. Keep in mind that Pastor Taylor was called as our bi-vocational pastor, meaning, he has another job! It is obvious that this job alone fills an incredible amount of his time. We continue to pray that Pastor Taylor and his family can strike a good work/life balance, as the needs of our church and congregation can often add a toll to family schedules. Thanks Pastor Taylor!

As Pastor Rick is volunteering his time to DeerGrove, he has been a gift to us in so many ways. He continues to schedule and support the Adult Christian Formation, as well as leading Pastoral Care ministry, visiting people and being available for them as has been needed. He has also been the organizer behind the many Life Groups our church provides, which is perhaps the glue that holds our congregation together. We thrive in community! Many of us have seen this first hand. Thanks Pastor Rick!

Speaking of volunteering, thank you for *your* volunteer efforts throughout the year. I specifically want to thank Jinny Koide for her work in the role of our Administrative Assistant. She spends many days doing things behind the scenes at our church on everything from communications, coordinating, scheduling our church calendar, stocking our building with supplies, and so much more. You may recall that we asked for some help in offloading Jinny with some tasks this year? Heidi Corral has stepped in to create our church bulletins and ACE. Keep that in mind when working on something that needs full church communication. Thanks to Heidi for this transition.

Thanks to our wonderful volunteer Children's Ministries team of Jen Killinger, Gretchen Stroner, and Alison Tealdi! This team has planned curriculum, organized rotation of volunteers, and just

generally loved on our church children in a big way this entire year. Planning the Easter Egg Hunt, the Christmas Gift bags, and several other outings and kids functions that have engaged our children and given them an experience of what a loving church family looks like. Thank you to this team once again! Be sure to thank them personally when you get a chance, even if you don't have children in their care.

Another highly functioning team has been our Welcome & Outreach Team. This team planned many outreach events this year including the Global 6K walk, the Fourth of July booth, and the Chamber of Commerce booth, to name a few. They are also responsible for our signage and website and social media updates. Thanks to Brenda Welker for her dedication to timely updates on our website and social media. If you haven't visited our website lately, I encourage you to take a look. I would say the same for our social media. If you're not already subscribed to our Instagram and Facebook groups, I would encourage you to do that as well. Many events and activities are posted throughout the month and it's a great way to share these events with others. I do want to make sure to thank the entire team for their ideas and their dedication to this ministry. A big thank you to Jinny Koide, Brenda Welker, Kait Berger, Judy Amundsen, and Rick Fisk. This team has continued to help us become a welcoming community that values relationships with one another and with God through Jesus Christ.

The work our DeerGrove volunteers are doing at the Partners for Our Community in their community clothing closet has been another way we have embraced our community involvement. I want to extend our thanks to Barbara Fisk (and Rick too!) for organizing the team and for being there to work closely with Kathy Millen and staff several weeks a month. If you have some time on Tuesdays and would like to volunteer, I believe there's room for more helpers. Partnering with this vital outreach mission is a tangible way to be the hands and feet of Jesus to our neighbors.

It is a pleasure to see how our building use has increased throughout the year. What a joy it is to have multiple events on some weeknights. We continue to host some outside groups in our facility, and we have increased the number of small group meetings that are held weekly. We continue in the partnership with the Tricon Group across the street, as they provide us snow removal and care in the winter and basic landscaping in the Spring/Summer months. We also have had a dedicated group of people within the church that care for our building and are available to fix things when they're broken. I want to thank Byron Amundsen for spending several days at the church repairing windows and working on the roof and gutters. He also provided much-needed landscaping and weed/tree removal. I would also like to thank Kyle Stroner and Chris Killinger as they have helped on projects around the church building that mostly go unnoticed. Finally, much thanks to Mark Johnson for the numerous phone calls and trips across the street to work on the partnership with Tricon. This was not an easy task and Mark persevered through contract negotiations with them. Thanks Mark.

Our Tuesday night prayer team has acted as much as a small group as it has a supporting group for our church. We come together and pray over the local needs of our church, our community, our denomination, our missionaries, and our world. We consider prayer one of the important ways that we can worship God and uphold our congregation. God has richly poured out blessings on our church through our congregation's tithes and offerings. This year we have switched from praying about our financial situation to praising God for His provision and seeking His guidance in becoming good stewards of these finances to further His Kingdom. We are truly grateful for how generous our church has been and how the burden of worrying about our finances has been lifted from us in the past year.



There are many others to whom we owe a very sincere and heartfelt “thank you” for giving of yourself in volunteer ministry to this church community. I would like to thank the people and families that are serving on the music worship team, technology team, hospitality team, small group leaders, finance team, usher team, and leadership team. I know I have not even scratched the surface of listing the people that are volunteering, nor the areas of ministry that are being fulfilled by volunteers. If I were to list them all, it would be a very long list; nearly as long as the list of our congregation as a whole because so many of you are involved, and many in multiple capacities.

I’d like to convey my thanks to Kyle Stroner and Dave Green as they end their terms on the Leadership Team this year. They have provided keen insight and guidance throughout their four years on the Leadership Team. Their devotion and dedication to leading our church has been a blessing. Thank you both for your service!

I want to close with a selection from 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.”

In His service,
Lorin Michael
Chair

DeerGrove Covenant Church 2023 Membership Report

Membership Report, 2023

Active Members, 12/31/2022	54
New Members, 2023	6
Reductions, 2023	6
Active Members, 12/31/2023	54

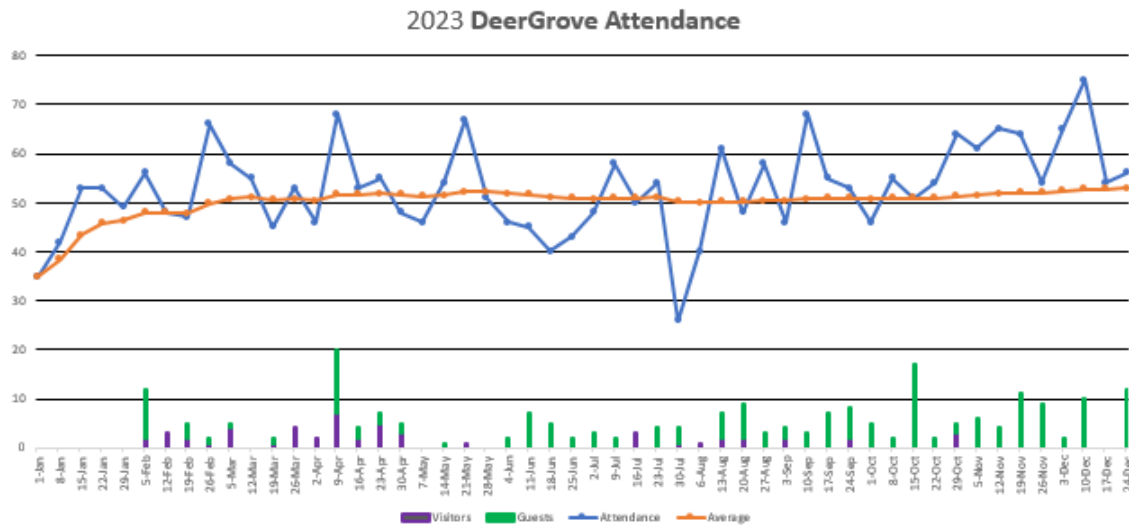
New Members:

Cara Yavaliollah
Kait Berger
Alex Corral
Julia Inman
Ben Jenkins
Varden LaPan

Reductions:

Pat & Dave Schmidt moved to Wisconsin
Chris & Gayle Banakis withdrew their membership
Wally & Susan Kelley no longer attend

DeerGrove Covenant Church 2023 Attendance Report



Notable points from 2023:

- Largest attendance was 85 for the Christmas Program
- Lowest attendance was 30 for "fifth Sunday", July
- Average attendance hovered around 50-51 most of the year, but took an uptick toward the end of the year, finishing up with over 52, near 53
- Compare to last year where we hovered around 47-48, but ended the year at about 50 on average
- Total attendance for the year was 2791, with 53 visitors, 183 guests, grand total: 3027
- Similar figures for 2022 would be 2640, with 45 visitors, 144 guests, grand total: 2829

Report to the Annual Meeting
Taylor Sexton: Lead Pastor
February 4th, 2024

Philippians 1:3-6

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

The Apostle Paul's words to the Philippians perfectly summarizes my own thoughts about DeerGrove Covenant Church. This first year in the role of lead pastor has been such a joy and honor. I am so gratefully to partner with each of you as we seek to follow the Holy Spirit's leading for the church and our own lives.

If I could summarize my first year as lead pastor in one word it would be, '*grateful*.' I am grateful to God for carrying on the good work He began in DeerGrove 29 years ago. I am grateful that God continues to use this community to build up one another in Christ, to grow deeper in faith through the study of the Word and community worship, and to shine the light of Christ to our community. I wholeheartedly believe that together we have lived into Jesus's call to let our light shine before others so that they may see and glorify God. (Mt. 5:16) Finally, I am grateful for the countless ways so many of you use your unique giftings to serve DeerGrove steadfastly. Your spirits of service and generosity continually point me to the goodness of Jesus. Thank you.

Key Areas of Leadership:

Preaching: We continued to follow the Revised Common Lectionary in 2023. I trust that consistently following the lectionary guides us well through the breadth of Scripture, both the Old and New Testaments. In 2023 we had a strong focus on the key events of the life of Jesus and what they mean for us. We also spent time in the parables of Jesus focusing on how Jesus used parables to bring us to a deeper level of faith and commitment to God. One of the unique gifts of 2023 was the wide range of speakers we were able to welcome. In total we heard from 10 different voices this year. This diversity of voices brought us unique perspectives and new insights into God's Word. It has also been a gift to hear consistently from three of our lay-leaders, Bridget Jeffries, Mark De La Paz, and Rev. Dave Green.

Corporate Worship Planning: We continue to be blessed by our volunteers that serve on worship team. Their commitment to leading well and using their gifts to invite us all into the presence God each week is truly a gift. In 2023 the worship team remained committed to being led by the spirit in both song selection and leading community worship. One of the goals of 2023 was to solidify a strong repertoire of familiar songs, while also introducing current worship songs people might hear online or on the radio. Another goal was to make sure the worship was engaging and welcoming to our entire community through embracing both contemporary and traditional worship elements. We continued the rhythm of having an intergenerational Sunday

on the second Sunday of each month. These Sundays were marked by upbeat worship the kids could play along to as well as powerful and engaging children's messages given primarily by Brenda Welker. (Thank you, Brenda!) Another gift of 2023 was our continued practice of Sabbath on the fifth Sundays. These Sundays have become an important piece of our identity as a church community where we worship God through prayer, resting, and building stronger bonds with one another. The fifth Sunday's are a great vision of the family of God.

Leadership Team: It has been my honor and pleasure serving with this leadership team. Each member has stepped up in big ways to help guide DeerGrove to a very bright future. Each month we prayerfully considered both mundane and important decisions for the life of the church seeking God's guidance every step of the way. I want to acknowledge and thank those leadership team members whose terms of service are coming to an end, Lorin Michael, Kyle Stroner, and Dave Green. These three leaders have put in countless hours of work and prayer for the past 4-5 years serving DeerGrove. Their efforts have truly helped solidify the foundation of DeerGrove for years to come.

DeerGrove Covenant Church
Report to Annual Meeting
Rick Fisk – Assistant Pastor, Congregational Care
February 4, 2024

Since I will be able to attend this year's annual meeting my report will be shorter; covering general comments and brief updates within my areas of responsibility.

Comments:

This has been a great year for DeerGrove with Pastor Taylor Sexton serving as our lead pastor. I believe his preaching and leadership have greatly benefitted DeerGrove. As a staff member, I have appreciated the opportunity to work closely with Pastor Taylor this year.

We have adapted well to being a bi-vocational church. One of the needed distinctives is high and quality volunteerism and I think we have exceeded expectations in this area, my thanks to each of you who has assumed responsibility as a volunteer, well done!

Proof of both above comments can be seen in increased attendance and in dedicated generosity in meeting the financial needs of DeerGrove. To God be the glory.

Areas of Responsibility:

Congregational Care covers mostly meeting the needs of individuals needing an ear to listen or someone to pray for/with them. These areas have covered health issues, dealing with grief, relationship issues, work concerns, depression, and related topics. Often it is simply coffee or a meal and finding out how someone is doing, encouragement.

Life Groups (Small Groups) have been thriving this year. We launched a small group targeted toward seekers (thanks Jeff & Lee). We reorganized the men's group which now meets on Saturday mornings (thanks John). We have joined together the former Flock and Herd groups which has resulted in new life and

vitality for attendees from both former groups (thanks to Judy for her leadership in providing the needed structure and communication). We hope to soon have a new name for the group. A monthly (Tuesday) group for young women has been meeting at the church (thanks to Kara for her initiative and leadership). In addition to these group changes; the women's SRT group, informal meetings of the young families have continued random Sundays after church, and adult Christian formation meets Sunday mornings. Thanks to all who attend these meetings and to those who offer leadership to them.

Adult Christian Formation has undergone some significant changes with the addition of Mark and Bridget as discussion leaders. The offering of varied topics, as well as schooled and interesting voices to lead, has attracted some new attendees. It has personally been fun and invigorating to be able to assist Mark and Bridget as they have broadened their skill sets into the area of teaching. I will also continue to share in leading the group, but it is also awarding to have a chance to sit in the class as a participant.

Committee Work is sort of a staple for a staff position. I am no longer attending Leadership Team meetings nor serving on any transition or search committees. I do continue to be the staff liaison for the Welcome Team and serve on the nominating committee. I enjoy attending weekly staff meetings where Pastor Taylor and I discuss all aspects of the functioning of DeerGrove. In addition, we coordinate our individual responsibilities and regularly pray for our congregation's needs. I regularly attend three of the small group functions.

Closing Thoughts: Ask anyone who regularly preaches about how rigorous the preparation is and how draining the delivery of a message can be. For those reasons, as other preachers have become available, I have requested that they be given preference in preaching assignments. I appreciate that Pastor Taylor keeps me involved but have also appreciated that I am not in a regular rotation. I still love to periodically share the Word with God's people. Thanks for being a receptive group and for your encouragement.

Over the last two years one of the hidden forces in our church has been the Tuesday evening prayer time. My thanks to Lorin for seeing the need and engaging

the opportunity. I have personally been blest by this discipline. To those of you who have attended on Tuesdays, and for those of you who have faithfully prayed for DeerGrove from your private places of prayer, thank you. This is perhaps the most important thing that DeerGrove has undertaken.

Psalm 122:1

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

Respectfully,

Rick Fisk

Assistant Pastor

DeerGrove Covenant Church 2024 Budget

	2023				2024	Increase/Decrease	
	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Under/Over Budget	% of Budget		From 2023 Actual	From 2023 Budget
Income							
Donations							
4000 General - Tithes and Offerings	\$201,525	\$176,040	\$25,485	114%	\$192,400	-5%	9%
4205 Building Fund/Mortgage	\$90,500	\$81,960	\$8,540	110%	\$99,600	10%	22%
Total Donations	\$292,025	\$258,000	\$34,025	113%	\$292,000		
Other Primary Income							
4010 Other Miscellaneous Income	\$13,130		\$13,130		\$0		
4012 Interest Income	\$519		\$519		\$0		
Total Other Primary Income	\$13,649	\$0	\$13,649		\$0		
Total Income	\$305,674	\$258,000	\$47,674	118%	\$292,000		
Expenses							
Administration: Casualty Insurance, Office supplies, Equipment, Phone, Postage, Printing, & Hosting	\$14,203	\$13,870	\$333	102%	\$15,750	11%	14%
Staff: Compensation, benefits and expenses for Lead Pastor, Associate Pastor, proposed Children's Ministry Director and Administrative Assistant	\$59,861	\$77,028	-\$17,166	78%	\$88,809	48%	15%
Ministry Partnerships: Links DeerGrove to ministries beyond ourselves.	\$24,194	\$20,874	\$3,319	116%	\$23,100	-5%	11%
Facility Usage: Utilities, & Maintenance	\$30,218	\$42,865	-\$12,647	70%	\$40,990	36%	-4%
Building Fund: Mortgage Payments	\$61,009	\$90,000	-\$28,991	68%	\$99,600	63%	11%
Spiritual Growth and Nurture: Materials and supplies for nursery through adult, Discipleship, Training, Worship, Fellowship. Does not include staff expense.	\$8,478	\$12,989	-\$4,511	65%	\$16,355	93%	26%
Total Expenses	\$197,963	\$257,626	-\$59,663	77%	\$284,604		
Net Operating Income	\$107,711	\$374	\$107,337		\$7,396		

Sunday, Jan 14, 2024 12:43:30 PM GMT-8 - Cash Basis