



HILLSIDE CHURCH

2023 Ministry Report

A NOTE FROM DURWIN

With gratitude and joy, I am honoured to present to you our annual general report, reflecting on the journey of our congregation over the past year. Together, we have witnessed remarkable growth, deepened our faith, and embraced opportunities to serve our community with love and compassion.

Here are some obvious ways God has been working:

Deepening Faith. We saw evidence of spiritual growth this year, with a number of people starting out on their journey of faith. It has been inspiring to witness the hunger for spiritual nourishment and the commitment to personal transformation within our community.

Completion of our Building With a Mission Renovation. Upon completion of our significant building restoration and renovation, we rededicated our facility to God and his purposes. We are so grateful for a church building that is better equipped to minister in and thrive for decades to come.

Growing Diversity. Hillside grew over the last year and much of that growth was both multi-generational and multi-cultural. With each passing day, our congregation blossoms into a healthy mosaic of diverse cultures and backgrounds, enriching us as a church family.

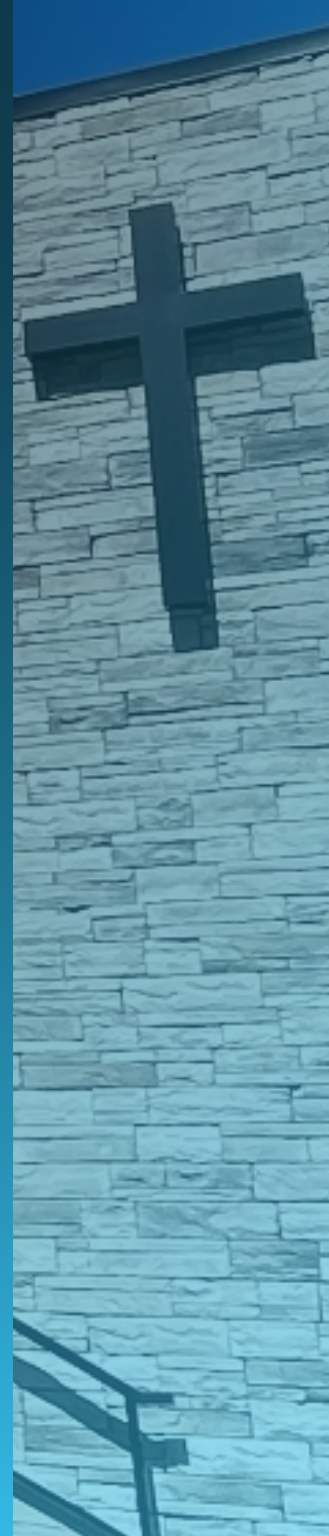
Children's Staffing Transition. We celebrated Marnie Gordon's retirement this last fall, noting with joy her faithful service directing our children's ministry for 15 years. We are so grateful for God's provision of Daniel Mulder into an expanded children's ministry role as our children's pastor.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every member of our congregation, staff team, and elders for your unwavering dedication, commitment, and love. It is through your faithfulness, prayers, and generosity that our church has grown and flourished over the past year, and I am excited to see what the future holds for us as we continue this journey together.

May God bless you abundantly, now and always.

Yours in Christ's service,

Durwin Gray, Lead Pastor





SMALL GROUPS

A highlight to celebrate is the birth of two Life Groups that emerged from taking the Alpha course. In the winter of 2023, a group of relatively new attendees to Hillside embarked on the 9-week Alpha course that significantly impacted their faith journey and drew them closer together as their trust in each other grew. They were keen to continue to gather weekly after the course ended. So, it just seemed fitting that they transitioned into a committed Life Group. Thanks to Craig Luckenbill and Amy Lee who were Helpers in the Alpha Course and are providing the leadership to this newly formed Life Group.

The fall 2023 Alpha course experienced the same outcome. Michel Proulx hosted a group of very engaged group of people, who like the winter Alpha, were made up of new attendees to Hillside. Paco and Sandro Romera graciously volunteered as Helpers and their presence provided great support to Michel. As the course was coming to completion the sense was that this group, who had connected relationally with Jesus and with each other, wanted to continue to meet weekly. This could not have happened without Paco and Sandra stepping up to lead this newly formed Life Group.

2024

PRAYER REQUEST

Pray for newly formed Life Groups along with the established Life Groups as the Leaders provide space for group members to grow relationally with Jesus and with each other.

HOSPITALITY

A 2023 highlight in Hillside's Hospitality ministry has been the efforts of over 35 volunteers that serve at our Sunday Services. This team of volunteers are flourishing with the help and supervision of Lynne Bourne. As guests and regular attendees come through the doors of Hillside on a Sunday morning, we are so blessed to have dedicated volunteers whose aim is to provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Their hospitality contributes to the reason guests are returning.

Another expression of the Hospitality Ministry is the Meet and Greet event that was offered twice in 2023. The Meet and Greet event welcomes newcomers to Hillside with a short reception to meet Hillside Staff and Leaders and provides them with a better understanding of who we are as a Church.

2024 PRAYER REQUEST

Pray that Hillside's Hospitality team will continue to flourish in 2024 as new volunteers are added to meet the growing needs in our Sunday Service.





KIDS MINISTRY

This year saw kids at Hillside weekly taught, disciplined, and brought into community through our Sunday morning program. Additionally, this year we updated the nursery for the youngest in our congregation.

Hillside Kids also provided opportunities to reach families in our community through our annual Easter Egg Hunt and Candy Bonanza. Finally we had monthly Kids Night Outs to connect with kids, welcome new families and to have fun!



2024 PRAYER REQUEST

Pray that the children at Hillside would be disciplined and equipped richly through their families and through the gifts of the Kids Ministry volunteer team over the coming year.

YOUTH MINISTRY

A big highlight of our year in youth ministry is always our spring retreat. This last May, we spent a weekend away at Camp Kawkawa with two of our neighbouring churches. The sun shone warm on us and so many laughs were had. Jaden Neufeld, a good friend of ours, helped us to think seriously about Jesus's love for each of us and how that gets played out in intentional relationships with other followers of Jesus.

Youth ministry is always changing and a change this year has been in how we have organized our Friday nights. Our group has grown and so this fall we began to experiment creating separate spaces for the middle school and high school groups. While we all get together at different points in the evening, this has created more opportunity for peer-friendships to develop and for discussions that are more focused. This has meant a bigger emphasis on small groups and so we've felt the need of more small group leaders to help care for these students as they follow Jesus.

2024 PRAYER REQUEST

As you're praying for our students, would you pray that their eyes would be opened to the reality of Jesus Christ and his love for them: pray that they would see clearly the real cost of following Jesus, and that—seeing it—they would wholeheartedly believe him to be worth it!





MUSIC MINISTRY

Lots has been going on in music ministry this past year! It's been exciting to see God's answer to prayer in bringing in new musicians to our team; and it's been bittersweet to see God answer the prayers of other churches as he calls some out of our midst to serve them. This is part of the life of the church: welcome hellos and hard goodbyes. Christmas Eve for me represented a great time of welcome as we enjoyed the sound of strings, horns, and woodwinds from several new team members.

A real highlight for me in caring for this ministry has been the continued eagerness from our church to sing. God has called us to praise him and I think he meets us as we do. I am so profoundly grateful—week in and week out—to be part of a church that loves to bring praise to Jesus.

2024 PRAYER REQUEST

If God answers our prayers in the ways we'd hope, this will be the last report I'll be making for the area of music ministry. Would you join us in praying for our new worship director? Pray that God would be so kind to them in guiding them to us. Pray that they would experience his favour upon the entire process. Pray that we as a people would receive them well. Pray that we would be easy to lead. Pray that ultimately God would form us into a people whose worship is truly pleasing to God.

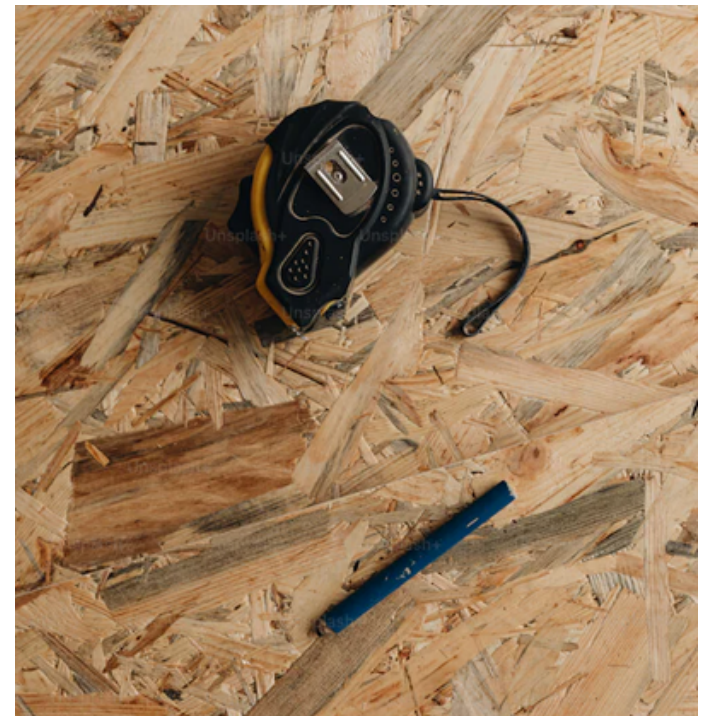
OPERATIONS TEAM

The Operations Team saw two significant changes in 2023. The building renovations were completed which allowed the Team to start shifting their focus from reactive measures to more proactive plans. Woodpecker infestations are a thing of the past!

The second change was the addition of great people. Peter Froese joined and immediately we have benefited from his experience and snow clearing equipment. Brad McChesney now looks after the weekly maintenance tasks and he has been an immense blessing our whole church.

2024 PRAYER REQUEST

As we look forward to 2024, we see that more upgrades to our building and property are needed in the near to medium term. Parts of the roof which were not replaced during the renovation are coming to the end of their life and pavement in the parking lot is crumbling. We look forward to continuing to serve Hillside to make it a safe and welcoming place for all who come here.





LOCAL OUTREACH

Expanding Community Need: The needs of vulnerable people in our community continue to grow, and so we continue to press into our partnerships with **Share Family and Community Services, Centennial Secondary School, and Pregnancy Concerns.** Each of these groups do amazing work in serving the 'least of these' and we are honoured to serve alongside them. The Christmas Banquet for food bank clients was again such a beautiful expression of compassion and hospitality.

English Language Learning Program: In responding to the growing numbers of new Canadians in our church family and community, we launched a new ESL language learning program on Fridays. This new ministry is already expanding and helping a significant number of new Canadians.

Refugee Sponsorship. We raised close to \$30,000 in 2023 towards the sponsorship of a long-time displaced refugee family from Burundi. We continue to wait and pray for God to open doors and provide for their successful application and integration into Canada.

2024

PRAYER REQUEST

Let's be praying that God will continue to multiply our resources (compassion, money, time, and service) so that we might be used to bless people with the healing, hope, and compassion of Jesus.

GLOBAL OUTREACH

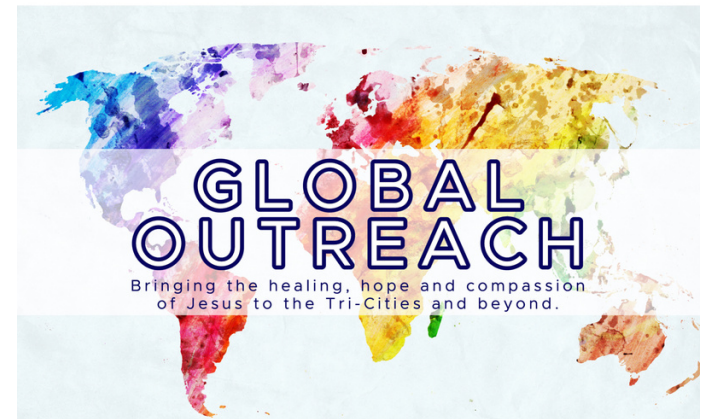
Our workers across the globe are continuing to do God's work throughout the nations, and that continues to be our highlight. And while we have heard of God's faithfulness, hearing the stories in person makes it a little more special for us.

2023 we were blessed to have two significant visits, one from Garrett and Rebekah and one from Ken and Carolyn. The visit from Garrett and Rebekah was especially nice as we had multiple Global Outreach workers join us, including Laura, Adam, and Lauri. It was an opportunity to hear of God's great work across the Pacific, while also giving the workers a chance to connect with one another. We were blessed to hear from Garrett and Rebekah, and all the workers remarked on how blessed they were by your prayers and support.

Likewise, we also had the opportunity to hear from Ken and Carolyn as they continue to train the next generation of global outreach workers. To have them share what God is doing in training and also their insights and experiences in global outreach was truly a blessing.

2024 PRAYER REQUEST

Continue to pray for our brothers and sisters across the globe. Please pray as we think about opportunities to visit them. Pray also that there can be a time this year when Gwen and Sheldon can share more at Hillside about their work. Pray that we at Hillside would be spurred to action either in supporting or going ourselves. Pray that together with our brothers and sisters across the globe we would continue to work to see his healing, hope and compassion spread through our region and beyond!



ELDERS REPORT

It has been a privilege for the Hillside Elders Team to serve Hillsiders throughout 2023. There were so many wonderful moments, and ways that God has been working in the community and with His people, that it is challenging to limit it to a few key highlights. However, one that the Elders and Staff have been excited about, and leaning into, is the Discipleship Pathway. This has been the building and clarity around the intentional steps and journey that Hillsiders are on through connection with one another, growth in their faith and participating through service, the key elements of the Hillside mission.

Another highlight is the theme the Elders worked through this past year of 'becoming family'. God is at work in our community, and with many new faces joining Hillside each week, there has been an intentionality around connecting with one another as we move from 'doing church together' to truly becoming family. We have sensed that God has been faithful in this theme and has really been stitching us together in a beautiful, creative and meaningful way, for His glory.

And finally God has been so faithful. Through challenges and what could have been roadblocks, his faithfulness and love for Hillside has been so evident. For that we are grateful. The Elders also are grateful to work alongside a wonderful staff team, key volunteers and the Hillside community to bring His healing hope and compassion to our communities and beyond.

2024 PRAYER REQUEST

Looking ahead, our theme for the coming year is 'Digging Deeper'. Our prayer request is that together, we dig deeper into our faith, deeper into relationship with one another, and deeper into loving our wider community. We are anticipating that although we know that there will be work in the 'digging', we pray that His burden is light and there is joy and fruit in this journey that we are privileged to take with one another.



LOOKING FORWARD

By God's grace, we continue to dream and plan and pray for a God-shaped move through us a community so that we can continue, to **Connect Deeply, Grow Fully, and Serve Passionately**. I am more confident than ever we are better together; that together we can accomplish more as we pool together our time, our treasures, and our talents.

This year we have identified some specific goals to help us accomplish this vision:

Heathy Staff and Volunteers: Our goal is to work to provide greater role clarity to staff and key volunteers for vibrant, effective, and sustainable ministries.

Hiring a Worship Director: We plan to hire a part-time worship and music director to help resource and support our Sunday worship ministry.

Prayer Ministry: We are working to refine and grow our Sunday morning prayer ministry to better facilitate opportunities to respond to what God is doing by His Spirit.

While we celebrate all the great things God is doing, we are also mindful of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. As we look to the future, let us remain steadfast in our faith, united in our purpose, and open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Together with Christ, we can overcome obstacles that may come our way and continue to be a beacon of hope and light in our community.

Yours in Christ's service,

Durwin Gray, Lead Pastor