



WAGGAWAGGA
EVANGELICAL CHURCH



WAGGA WAGGA EVANGELICAL CHURCH



ANNUAL
REPORT
2023

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2023 Annual Report of Wagga Wagga Evangelical Church Incorporated
ABN 16 626 431 746

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Turvey Park NSW 2650

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FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

Tim Flint

Welcome to the 2023 Annual Report for Wagga Wagga Evangelical Church! The aim of this report is to give an insider's view of some of the significant things that have happened in the life of our church family in 2023. As the Senior Pastor, I'm delighted to reflect on and read the contributions of so many of our members and am grateful to God for the way He continues to act in, on and through us as a church, for His glory.

A significant and positive change at the beginning of 2023 was the addition of Mitch Kingsland and Dave Shannon to our pastoral staff team. Mitch, with the support of Hannah, started his two-year MTS apprenticeship with us in early January. Dave, with the support of Emily, began an Associate Pastor position with us midway through January. The combined contribution of Mitch, Dave and their families has been an incredible blessing of God to our church. In terms of character, conviction, chemistry, capacity and competency (you all know I love alliteration), these men and their families have been exemplary. We can, and should, all praise God for the way He has gifted them to help deepen us all as disciples of Jesus. This change in staff roles and dynamics has also meant that some of our 2023 goals needed to be altered or paused as we rightly allowed time for them to settle in and begin to understand the role they play in church life. We also intentionally dedicated time to re-clarify our **Purpose, Vision** and **Values** as a church (more on this in the *Future Focus* section). This will prayerfully help us to be more effective in working toward generational gospel witness and growth in Wagga Wagga.

The growth of our staff team has also included the addition of more high level volunteers giving significant time to ministry and leadership. Whilst these people ask not to be mentioned by name, it is right that we acknowledge the contribution they make and recognise it as a fabulous example of kingdom priorities lived out. Praise God! As we continue to grow, we will continually need to be identifying and training people for volunteer leadership from within our church family. We do so trusting that Jesus equips His body with every gift necessary for growing us in unity, maturity and servant-heartedness (Eph 4:11).

As you read on, please do so with great thanks in your heart for God's grace to us in Christ. Praise Him and pray for His steady hand to guide us in 2024 as we continue to live out our purpose... *to make and mature disciples of Jesus!*



THE 5 M'S

Magnification, Membership, Maturity, Mission, Ministry

The Christian life is a journey. Colossians 2:6-7 puts it like this: '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'.

The 5 Ms - Magnification, Mission, Membership, Maturity and Ministry - break this journey down into stages, each one building and overlapping with the others. Together, they remind us how God works to build his church. They also help us to focus holistically on people and all aspects of our ongoing journey: from seeing people saved to helping them continue as mature disciples of Jesus.

The 5 M purpose model has been adopted and used at WWEC since 2011. It ultimately enables us to be intentional as we seek to live out the Great Commission to make disciples, and the Great Commandment to love God and each other.



MAGNIFICATION

Glorifying God by loving, worshipping and delighting in Him.



MEMBERSHIP

Connected into the church family to express our unity in Christ.



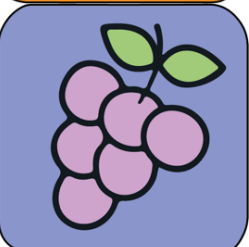
MATURITY

Transformed by God's word to honour Him and love others.



MISSION

Glorifying God by sharing the gospel of grace.



MINISTRY

Equipping the church family to use their whole lives in service of God and each other.

MEMBERSHIP

Director of Membership - Tim Flint

Quick Stats...

- 75 potential new adult members
- 30 new adult members at church and Bible study
- 28 adults remain contacts
- 6 babies born
- 20 adults left WVEC (12 moved from Wagga, 8 to other churches in Wagga)
- Newish ran 3 times with 24 adults attending.

God continues to grow our numbers at WVEC both through the miracle of newborn babies (6 in total) and through others joining our church.

In 2023, we had 75 people fill in C&C cards and marked "I'm new". After follow-up from our Welcoming Team, it was great to see that 30 of these people became regular members of our church family. These people have joined us from different places and for different reasons; 15 moved to Wagga, 10 relocated from other churches in Wagga, and 5 coming along to church for the first time. We also have added another 28 people to our contact list (people who have visited WVEC and come along occasionally). We prayerfully hope to see these people connect and matured in their faith in 2024.

While it's great to welcome newcomers, it's also sad to see people leave our church family. In 2023 we saw 20 adults leave; 12 moved away from Wagga and 8 to other churches in Wagga. Regardless of the reason people may have to leave Wagga or WVEC, one of our core values is that they leave better equipped to be ministers of the gospel, wherever they go.

As our church family grows, the complexity of welcoming people, helps to establish new relationships. Our Membership Team continues to adjust to meet these needs. Mitch Kingsland has stepped in to lead our Welcoming Teams for 9am and 11am with a bunch of faithful team members who lead our congregations by example: Trudy Riley continues to coordinate generous volunteers who serve at Joint Morning Teas and Lunch@Ours. Rebekah Wade has stepped in to coordinate other catered events, such as our AGM, Training Lunches, Newish, Jesus-Seriously?! etc. Be sure to read the experiences of people who have been part of these Membership activities.

One of the other real Membership highlights of 2023 has been the way that CAF (Care and Assist Fund) has been utilised as a tangible, material support for people in our church family. The skills auction, used to raise money for an assistance dog for Patrick Fallon, was an excellent example. The night raised over \$15,000 through the generous donations of skills and money from within our church family and meant that training of Pat's future dog has commenced.

PARTNERSHIP

Members who have attended WVEC for some time are invited by the Senior Pastor to consider becoming formal Partners. Being a Partner of WVEC is about committing to the mission of our church through prayer, service and financial support. Partners also have the responsibility for appointing people to fill offices and to vote at formal meetings. In 2023 we had seven (7) members join us as partners. Two (2) partners left WVEC as they moved from Wagga. At the end of 2023 we had 83 partners.

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others (Romans 12:4,5).

MEMBERSHIP

Welcoming Team

Many visitors have described WWEC as a 'welcoming' church – praise God! But what does that mean? Is it just about handing out bulletins and talking to newcomers? Or is there more to it than that? I have been thinking through these questions since taking on the role of Welcoming Team Leader this year. In particular, I have been reviewing our process for connecting newcomers into our church family and establishing pathways to help this happen more smoothly. I have also developed a new welcome card which can be given out to newcomers. The idea was to have something that is small and simple, but also communicates the important information about WWEC – who we are and what we do. I pray that we will continue to be a church that genuinely welcomes others and that we will welcome many new people into our church family in 2024..



Mitch Kingsland, Welcome Team Leader

I've always believed in God and Jesus but I am finally building a relationship with him and that's super special. WWEC has been extremely welcoming without being intimidating at all. From the moment I entered the door on a Sunday, I felt a warmth from everyone involved. I felt increasingly supported as I was disciplined through Newish before joining one of the beautiful Bible study groups- it is here that I have had the opportunity to make friends with so many wonderful women and have asked so many questions that have been patiently answered.

Eliza Wheaton

We both love being on the *Welcoming Team*. We see this not only as a worthwhile ministry but a vital one. It is an utter joy and privilege to be able to warmly welcome people at the door and help them to feel comfortable, accepted and loved. As a direct result of our involvement in this ministry, we in turn feel encouraged and blessed.

Rodney and Marian Dobinson

CATERING

The Catering team has had a successful year of serving God by providing meals and refreshments at WWEC events in 2023. With a very committed handful of regular team members, the ministry has been able to provide catering for a diversity of church events. The ministry has been able to show support for families by providing meals upon the birth of babies, for those suffering prolonged illness and for those mourning the loss of family and friends. Helping to touch base with people outside of Sunday services has brought much blessing to those involved and in doing so, has brought glory to God.

Rebekah Wade, Catering Coordinator



Throughout 2023, I had the privilege of working alongside a team of faithful volunteers. My role included coordinating church events and liaising with pastoral staff and members of the catering team. I was encouraged by the faithful church members who were using their gifts of hospitality to bless others. Being part of this team afforded me the opportunity to meet a range of people across WWEC and invariably made me feel part of the WWEC family and more broadly, the body of Christ.

Emma Herps

MEMBERSHIP

'Above all, love each other deeply because love covers over a multitude of sins'.
1 Peter 4:8

NEWISH

Our Newish program ran three times throughout the year with 24 new people attending for a series of 'welcome lunches' with an open chat about how we function together and our goals and values for our church family.

Our time at Newish gave us a better understanding of some of the foundations and principals that shape how WWEC operates. We were able to ask questions and get to know some of the leaders in a different context. It gave us an opportunity to repeatedly meet with a set of fellow 'newbies' and form some ongoing friendships spring-boarding out of the commonality of being new to the church.

Mark and Karen Burge



LUNCH@OURS

Our congregation continued to show hospitality and warmth by opening homes for Lunch@Ours. In 2023 over 125 adults and children enjoyed a communal meal, surrounded by like-minded people in the comfort of their homes.



I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Lunch@Ours. I was blessed to attend Pete and Nic's home and found it to be very welcoming and generous. I particularly appreciated becoming better acquainted with people from the church whom I might not otherwise have had the opportunity to get to know. The whole experience helped me feel part of the church in a meaningful way and I felt a strong sense of acceptance in the environment. The food was great and so was the informality and friendliness from everyone involved.

Viv Townsend

We went to the Anderson's home for Lunch@Ours. It was such a great time of fellowship with an intimate group of top people. It was a fantastic opportunity to spend time together and learn more about each other.

Dean & Kirralee Owers



GOALS for 2024

- Continue to develop our culture of welcoming and other-person centredness as we invite and connect with people.
- Continue to build a church family where everyone is connected and cared for, providing members with opportunities for ongoing fellowship.

MATURITY

Director of Maturity - Dave Shannon

SERMON SERIES

God speaks to us through his word, the Bible, which makes us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 3:15). For this reason the Bible is at the centre of all we do because it helps us make and mature disciples of Jesus. Thus we structure everything we do around God's word, prayerfully desiring to see people grow deeper in knowledge, love and service of God. Our aim is to teach the Bible expositionally, dealing with whole books of the Bible at a time. We continue to plan our Bible teaching calendar a year in advance to ensure that we are listening to the whole counsel of God including different genres, historical contexts and authors. In 2023, we finished a series in 2 Corinthians, dug deep in 11 Psalms, worked through Titus and Joshua and continued Luke's gospel.

One of the sermon series that really challenged me was the study of Joshua. I learned that the book of Joshua is about God's faithfulness and how in response to that, God's people must respond by serving God. In this series, I learned that we need to be careful to always be obedient to God, to stay on a straight path, meditate on the law day and night, fear God and rid ourselves of idols. Joshua reminded me that God always keeps his promises (Joshua 21:45) and we should meditate upon those promises (John 14:1-3). What a peace it is to know we have the privilege to love and serve the one and only true God- who always keeps his promises!

Christina Callander

PREACHING GROUP

The Preaching Group had several opportunities to grow their gifts in teaching God's word in 2023. It has been great to see the way God is equipping people through this ministry. A valuable aspect of the group is the feedback given to each other in what could be called 'sharpening sessions'. Here the preacher is able to do a run-through of their sermon with the group and get feedback prior to preaching to the congregation. These times often result in deep engagement with the text, robust discussion and questions, and helpful suggestions and feedback. One of the other benefits of these sessions is how they assist in growing humility in the preacher as it's harder to develop an ego when godly men are offering loving feedback, and when you know that what has been said on Sunday has been, in part, a result of their insight and not just your own. I believe I can speak for the group when I say that we are deeply thankful to God for the gift of His word and the opportunity and privilege to grow in our ability of explaining it to others through this group.

Jeff Ward

2023 Quick Stats

- 16 Bible Study Groups
- 28 Bible Study Group Leaders
- 167 WVEC Members in a Bible Study Group (87% of members)



WVEC has a Preaching Group known affectionately as the 'Band of Brothers'. There are 13 men involved including the Pastors. We meet to review each other's sermons. It is a privilege to witness up close, how God is working through blokes who faithfully preach His precious word.

Rob Owers

MATURITY

BIBLE STUDY GROUPS



Being a member of a men's Bible study group at WWEC, allows me to gather with my fellow Christian brothers during the working week to talk, fellowship and encourage one another whilst spending concentrated time reflecting on the precious Word of God. In this environment, we are able to equip, edify and direct one another along a godly path. This time layers my understanding about God and helps me to gain new perspectives which work to enrich my spiritual maturity and knowledge. As brothers, we are bonded through prayer and in praise to God and are able to offer genuine support and love to one another. In this way, we collectively build the Church. Meeting in this way energises me, enabling me to face the trials and triumphs that the week unfolds. I walk confidently in the knowledge that the one true God and the Holy Spirit, carries me each and every day.

Darren Verus

Being a Bible study leader in 2023 was a great joy and encouragement. I'm thankful to God for the privilege of witnessing how other group members have ensured reading the Bible and attending Bible study is a priority. Seeing busy mums making the study of God's word a priority and them being willing to sacrifice their time to invest in relationships with each other has been a real highlight for me.

*Rachael Harland
Bible Study Leader*

This year I had the wonderful opportunity to be part of two weekly Bible study groups. A women's Bible study during the day was a tremendous blessing as it allowed for strong Christian fellowships to be forged. Having friendships built on Christ, His Word and prayer is so crucial as we seek to walk obediently in the roles and callings God has given each of us. The evening Bible study was a glorious mid-week display of Christ's body- the church! Each of us with different backgrounds, different callings and yet Christ's love always on display. Thank you for faithfully showing Christ each week.

Liz Poulos



MATURITY

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing
Thessalonians 5:11

SINGLE-MINDED

In most churches there is little opportunity to hear teaching on what the Bible says about living as a person who is single. It was therefore really encouraging this year to have WWEC family of different ages and situations of single life, meet together and watch Bible teachers explore the theology of singleness. The viewing reminded us that just as marriage points to Jesus and his church, so too does singleness have an inherent purpose in demonstrating the sufficiency of Christ. Living out God's purpose is never easy and so the opportunity to chat together about the practicalities and challenges of being single, afterwards, was also of enormous value.

Jodi Culbert

ALBURY CONVENTION

The Albury Women's Conference offered an opportunity to participate in a day full of teaching, worship, praise and fellowship. We were presented with opportunity to learn about new podcast and book recommendations as well as a variety of other useful resources. I enjoyed being surrounded by like-minded women whose desires were also to grow in their walk with the Lord, seek opportunities to be fed, learn what it means to quieten their soul and in all things, honour the Lord. I look forward to attending again in 2024.

Karen Burge



Attending the Christian Men's Convention in Albury was a transformative experience for me. Engaging in fellowship with other believers created a strong sense of community and camaraderie among us. The event deepened my understanding of my own spiritual journey and provided challenging and valuable insights into how to strengthen my walk with God.

Wayne Poulos

MATURITY

BAPTISM

God has given us the symbol of baptism as an important reminder of His faithfulness to save people through the gospel. Each year we run baptism information sessions for those considering taking this step. In 2023 we celebrated baptisms in February at the Murrumbidgee river and on Easter Sunday at church. 9 people were baptised, 6 adults and 3 children. It was a wonderful witness and encouragement to hear how God has worked in the life of all those who shared.



I chose to be baptised this year along with my brother. We were blessed to have many family and friends come to witness the event. The decision behind getting baptised was simple; to show others that Jesus has washed away my sin and saved me. I found the preparation for baptism very helpful-meeting up with older Christians and Tim Flint in the weeks prior, helped me build a proper understanding on the reasons behind baptism. The decision to be baptised has impacted my life by highlighting to me, all the people in my life who have prayed, guided and taught me of the love God has for all of us and how it has been first demonstrated through Jesus' amazing sacrifice on the cross. Mostly though, baptism was an opportunity to give all glory to God.

Ben Carmichael

I made the decision to be baptised after suffering a lot of grief over losing someone because even through all the grief I was going through, I had never felt God so close to me and I knew I wanted to commit my life to knowing Him and sharing His gospel.

I was baptised (as an outward expression of an inward heart change). This has given me an even deeper desire to completely surrender to God's will for my life because I know the hope we have in Him. I also recognise that there is no greater joy than knowing and serving God so that others can experience the same joy and peace.

Maddi Hewson

I was baptised at the age of 12 but Christ did not mean to me then, what he does now. Having followed the path of the prodigal son and going astray in the later years, I felt it was important to publicly show my allegiance to God. This was necessary in recognition of who He is. I appreciated the preparation time with the Pastors and the emphasis on fully understanding what baptism is and recognising our motives in choosing to be baptised. The impact on this decision has been great to me- I am reminded each day of Christ's perfection and of how short I fall. In the words of Paul Washer, 'if salvation was 99.99% Jesus and 0.01% us, we'd all be damned'.

Megan Schrag

Goals for 2024

- Teaching nights - to run some teaching nights on Monday nights throughout the year
- To raise up potential future leaders in our bible study groups
- To see an increased number of people in bible study groups.

MISSION

Director of Mission - Dave Shannon

Quick Stats

- 3 sessions of Jesus-Seriously!? ran
- 26 attended (13 christians, 13 non-believers)
- 5 new expressions of faith
- 6 remain in contact wanting to discover more.

JESUS SERIOUSLY?!

Jesus Seriously?! is the dominant focus of the Mission Teams activities. It is WWEC's evangelistic course where people who are considering faith can explore further the claims of Jesus and ask all their questions. Each Jesus Seriously course runs for five sessions. Tim Flint who hosts the Jesus Seriously courses states, 'Jesus Seriously...it doesn't cost you anything! It's your chance to come and weigh the historical claims, to get behind the hype and the heresy, and work out 'what has Jesus said, what has he done, is it fair-dinkum and what difference does it make?'. At WWEC we long for many more in Wagga to place their trust in Jesus and pray God will use the Jesus Seriously course to bring about His plans.



Jesus Seriously was a great course for a couple of reasons- the environment and the format that it was conducted in is both welcoming and not intimidating, which allows believers and those sussing out Christianity to explore their world view. Jesus Seriously is conducted in a warm and friendly environment which allows for easy conversation and discussion. The study topics were presented in a way that non-believers can relate to and understand. There is both an opportunity to question and also strengthen followers of Christ. I know we picked on new things and were able to question things we had never thought of before. I would definitely recommend Jesus Seriously and I am keen to try and get people to come along.

Abby Van Honk

I was raised a Catholic and have always had a deep appreciation for the reverence of church. Coming to Jesus Seriously helped me to realise that personal relationship I can have with Jesus which has changed everything! I'm excited now to be learning more and more about God through His Word, coming to church and meeting people who actually want to discuss what God is on about... those not just content to be a 'Sunday Christian'!

Brayden Ambler

After reflecting on my time at Jesus Seriously, these are some of the main things I have appreciated:

1. Learning about the historical accuracy of the New Testament was mind-blowing- the proof is there and it is crazy to think that people still deny it!
2. Learning about how a perfect and selfless Jesus paid the price for us was deeply saddening and gut-wrenching but I was also filled with hope and love because I knew that I was saved because of it.

Emily Blake

GOALS FOR 2024

- Run Jesus Seriously?! each term with a strong number of participants.
- Increase the men's and women's outreach events.
- Partner more closely with Wagga's Uni Christian group (CF) in the national *Meet Jesus* mission.

MISSION

*The mind of the prudent
acquires knowledge. And the ear
of the wise seeks knowledge
Prov 18:15*

Mission remains a primary focus at WWEC. Our Mission Team exists to provide avenues for our church members to get involved in the task of being 'on mission' personally and corporately. The team also seeks to promote and develop genuine Gospel partnerships with Christian ministries outside of WWEC.

As a church family WWEC partners with other Christians and organisations in God's mission – locally, nationally and overseas. We have been blessed financially and want to be faithful stewards of that money, spreading the gospel by supporting the work of ministries that share in our vision of seeing others grow in Christ for God's glory. We commit to a personal partnership that is expressed through prayer, financial support & practical assistance. Currently WWEC commits 11% of our annual budget toward our mission partners.

It is the WWEC Mission teams responsibility to select and manage WWEC's mission partnerships. Each year they review the current WWEC mission partners, and either renew partnerships or select new partnerships based on key criteria. They ensure we have a mix of partners who work in three key areas: proclaiming God's word globally, show God's love to those near and far and equipping the church. The Mission team ensure mission partnership news is relayed to our church family so we can pray collectively (& individually) for our fellow gospel partners.

The Mission Partners for 2023 included:

- **Pioneers:** Blair Family: sharing the gospel amongst people groups in South Western Sydney amongst refugees and new migrants
- **Australian Fellowship of Evangelical Students (AFES)** - Wagga Wagga campus: supporting Christian students & sharing the gospel at CSU in Wagga
- **Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC)** - planting new churches and grow existing churches
- **Singleton Evangelical Church** - supporting the work of a church plant in a small rural town
- **Special Religious Education (SRE)** Wagga Wagga - contributing to a ministry which aims to share the news of the gospel within the public schools of Wagga
- **Voice of the Martyrs:** helping and encouraging persecuted Christians by providing Bibles, ministry resources, medical aid, practical assistance and advocacy
- **Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF)** - Newth Family: serving isolated people by using aircraft to bring in the essentials of life as well as medical care, emergency food, and Christian hope
- **Local Leaders International** - supporting theological colleges in the developing world, to train a steady supply of competent Christian leaders.

PERSONAL EVANGELISM

"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few" is what comes to mind when I think of the way God used me this year to bring a friend from work to know Christ. An openness about faith, genuine relationship, and an invitation to church are all he used, because her heart was ready and the seed of faith had been waiting to grow for many years. It has been the greatest privilege and joy to be a vessel for the Lord this year.

Kate Hodgson



MINISTRY

Director of Ministry - Mike Lance

What an exciting year we had in ministry in 2023! Praise God for all the gifts and abilities with which He has blessed our church family. It was amazing to see people really stepping up and jumping into all the ministries that make our church run. Our desire is that everyone will be involved in service at church, as each of us has been uniquely gifted to help build up the body. There really is a place for everyone in ministry.

By the end of 2023 we had 15 ministry teams, with 137 people actively involved in serving. Our goal has been to move from a roster based system to a teams based ministry system where teams take ownership over their ministry area and can support, train and disciple each other as they use their gifts to build the kingdom. With this in mind we have been encouraging people to serve in one area of ministry and really commit to just that area rather than serving across multiple areas.

- **Morning tea** has been exceptional and growing as 2023 progressed. I have particularly enjoyed the delicious home made snacks lovingly prepared and brought around after the service. There was also several “Joint Morning Teas” throughout the year where we enjoyed fellowship together between the services.
- Our **roadies, open up, set up and pack up** teams have reorganised their roles and times which has streamlined the process of setting up church on a Sunday morning. We now have a storage slider for the kids and youth storage which has significantly improved storage space and usability for our teams.
- Our **computer team** has had several new recruits join and continues to make improvements to how our AV systems operate.
- Our **music teams** continue to grow. It is lovely to see some talented youth coming in to serve in our church in this ministry. Recently we have purchased EMU music’s Hymnbook program which is excellent.
- Our **sound** has continued to prove challenging. The school generously allows us to use their equipment but this means that there are many factors which contribute to the state of the system on a Sunday morning. Praise God for the many new knowledgeable and skilled recruits to this vital ministry, we look forward to them finding solutions to make sound a much more reliable aspect of our ministry.

Growth in all areas always comes with changes and challenges. All of our ministries could do with more volunteers so please continue to pray that everyone who calls WWEC home will have a heart for serving as we work together to make and mature disciples of Jesus in Wagga Wagga.

‘Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord’ (Ephesians 6:7a)

2023 Quick Stats

-15 Ministry Teams

-137 people serving
in Teams

-16 new people serving

-71% of members serving



MINISTRY



It is such a privilege and joy to continue to use our musical gifts to present God's Word and truths in songs each week at WWEC. We are so encouraged to be able to sing to our great God and sing together as a church family. We are so thankful for the opportunities to grow in this ministry through the training of EMU Music, and continue to work on ways to improve and develop.



*Annie Cox
Music Team Leader*

ROADIES

Around 2 years ago I spoke to other members of WWEC in ministry and listened to how other ministries work together and about the effort individuals put in to make the Sunday service run smoothly. Those conversations helped me to realise that the workload of setting up the church each Sunday was becoming too much for the Set-Up Team and Music Team. With the help of some young men and other members of the congregation, I started to streamline the set-up process and created a new ministry team called 'the Roadies'. Roadies has been a great ministry for myself and other ministries because it helps give me a practical way to serve God and my brothers and sisters at WWEC whilst also lightening the load of others by getting things ready on a Sunday morning. Roadies has been a great way to connect, serve and glorify God!

*Shaun Riley
Roadies Team Leader*

MORNING TEA

The Morning Tea Ministry enables us to bless our church family, both existing and new, by connecting with people through food. The simple act of providing something to eat and drink is a natural way to bring people together. Serving is a wonderful and fulfilling way to do God's work of service. We have enjoyed getting to know people who we may not otherwise get to meet.

Toby and Youngju Anderson



MINISTRY



In 2023 we developed a new pattern for our ministry training.

In **Term 1** we had our main in-house team training lunch (kids and youth on one day and all other ministry areas on another).

In **Term 2** we ran a Team Leader training lunch and encouraged teams to meet up for a social get together.

In **Term 3** we ran some external training through 'Youthworks'. Youthworks is a Christian organisation specialising in kids and youth ministry. They came to Wagga and trained our kids and youth leaders in 'Discipling the Next Generation'. We also encouraged our music and sound teams to attend the EMU music training in Canberra and Wollongong during this term.

In **Term 4** we held an end of year lunch for team leaders where we reflected on 2023 and planned for 2024. We encouraged our teams to also catch up socially to celebrate God's work in ministry at WWEC in 2023.

We are really thankful to God for our wonderful ministry Team Leaders and their enthusiasm and commitment to lead teams and ministries.

What a privilege, honour and joy it has been to be able to serve our great God and Saviour alongside wonderful brothers and sisters in Christ this year.

MTS- MITCH KINGSLAND

In 2023, I had the opportunity to begin a 2-year ministry apprenticeship through Ministry Training Strategy (MTS). My goal for the apprenticeship has been to work out whether or not I should pursue a life of full-time ministry - a goal which I am still working towards.

My experience so far has been overwhelmingly positive! I have really enjoyed being freed up to do ministries that I enjoy, such as Youth Group and SRE. I have also had the opportunity to try new things such as preaching, service leading and welcoming. All of these things have given me a good grasp of the behind-the-scenes work that is required to reach the people of Wagga with the gospel.

Whilst I haven't completed any formal study during my apprenticeship, we have been working our way through the MTS Curriculum - a series of discussion papers which address many aspects of theology and ministry. Discussing these articles weekly has sharpened my understanding of the 'why' and the 'how' of ministry.

Through MTS, God has also been challenging me and showing me my weaknesses. For example, I have learned that ministry is all about people. As someone who loves being organised, I have realised that leading a team is not all about calendars and emails. It's about helping people be captured by the goodness and the urgency of the gospel. I have also learned that God is a generous Dad who cares for His children. Having a lower income this year has brought about challenges, but also great joys as we have seen God come through for us time and time again. I am really looking forward to my second year of MTS in 2024. Please be praying for our family, particularly as we make decisions about what's next.

RECRUITMENT

It's been a real joy to work alongside Mike in recruiting people to serve in ministry this year. As we have begun to move to teams-based serving, I have often been stopped in my tracks wondering how are we going to fill each team with the right volunteers- time and time again, I have been amazed at how God has both gifted our body and compelled our members to willingly step into roles to be trained, equipped and unleashed to use their gifts in volunteer ministries each week. In 2023 there has been an additional 25-30 WWEC members join serving teams. This has included those who have been coming to WWEC for 3-6 months, have attended Newish, partaking in a ministry interview and then being trained by a Team Leader. At WWEC, we serve the body of Christ as a response to the grace shown to us in Jesus and as an investment into God's kingdom.

Tiana Flint



Goals for 2024

Establish a Magnification team.

Expand the training that we run for our region to help equip like-minded churches for ministry.

Develop our team culture by supporting, equipping, training and encouraging one another in service.

Have at least 75% of adults actively involved in a ministry team.

KIDS & YOUTH CHURCH

Director of Kids and Youth - Mike Lance

2023 Quick Stats

Average weekly attendance

-16 Preschoolers

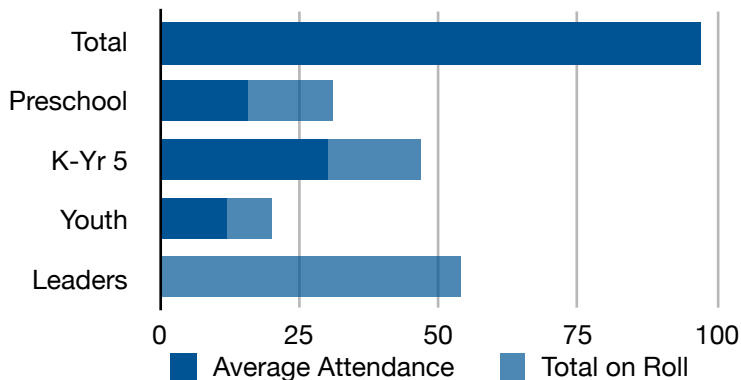
-30 Kinder - Year 5

-13 Youth Church

-Total of 54 Kids & Youth Church Leaders on the serving roster

As a church we aim to be making and maturing disciples of Jesus. This means in kids and youth church, we want to see our children coming to know and love Jesus and then share this good news with their friends and family. We do this by prayerfully teaching and modelling the gospel to children, pointing them to Jesus as Saviour and Lord and supporting parents in their role as primary shepherds.

Kids & Youth Church



KIDS CHURCH K-5

Our K-5 group had also grown significantly during the year, particularly in the 9am service, and this required the doubling of leaders for this group so that they could split in two for the teaching time. In 2024 we are looking to move to separate K-2 and 3-5 groups at 9am to best care for and teach our children. Our kids' church writers have continued to do an amazing job writing bespoke lessons following along with our sermon series so that families can discuss together what they have been learning.

PRESCHOOL

At the end of 2023 our Preschoolers group expanded to the point where we required extra leaders rostered on each week. During 2023 the review and revamp of the Preschoolers program was completed. We give thanks to all those involved in completing this large task. It was a huge effort by those involved and has yielded great results with a program that is clear, Biblically faithful and pitched well to the Preschool age range. We will continue to review and sharpen these lessons as time goes on.



YOUTH CHURCH

Youth Church has been growing and now has a separate team of leaders looking after 9 and 11. It has been wonderful to see the growth in maturity of the kids in this group as they continue to ask great questions and respond to the great teaching program which continues to evolve.

LISTEN & PLAY

At the end of 2023, we set up a live video link to our Listen & Play room (creche) so that parents are able to see as well as hear the sermon whilst caring for their babies. This has really improved how we are looking after this growing group and has been greatly appreciated by parents.



KIDS & YOUTH CHURCH

Train children in the way they should go; when they grow old. They won't depart from it.
Proverbs 22:6

I can't exactly remember when I joined the Preschool Church Ministry at WWEC but it was in the foundational years of our church and well before I had children of my own. We now have so many children joining us, from different backgrounds- some of whom hear the gospel at home and others who do not. Our biggest challenge in recent years has been having enough leaders to accommodate the volume of children so that lessons are meaningful. Our focus in Preschool Church is pretty simple; teach the gospel to the little ones and leave the growing to God! It's so encouraging to seeing children at this age putting Bible verses to memory and learning God's plan of salvation from the Old Testament to the New. The questions they ask and the connections they make never fail to encourage me. Serving in this way helps my own children understand the commitment it is to be in a church family. Our children see the preparation being complete at home, turning up to church early on a Sunday and then witnessing our preparedness to extend the gospel through the Kids' Church program. I am blessed to use this avenue to reinforce to my own family, the importance of the gospel.

Jacqueline Hibbard
Preschool Teacher

Preschool church has benefitted our family greatly in helping to continue to reinforce what we are teaching our children about Jesus at home. We love seeing our children grow in their love and understanding of Jesus and we are very thankful for this program and those working behind the scenes to make it all happen. As parents, we are thankful for the craft the children bring home because we can use this, alongside the prayer points and lesson summary sheet, to help continue the conversation and learning that has been initiated in the classroom.

Kelly & Jake Anderson
Parents



I just love doing Kids' talks! When I get to act, I feel like I'm helping make the Bible come alive so that the smaller kids can understand it better.
Joseph Dolan



KIDS & YOUTH CHURCH



In early 2023, Kids Church K-5 learned that only Jesus can perfectly rule and reign as God's forever King. We looked at the book of Psalms and made connections between the kings of ancient times and God's forever King, Jesus. We discussed what it would be like to be made a king; would we be able to rule perfectly like Jesus had? Kids' Church is great for fostering deeper thinking and encouraging discussion on biblical passages, connecting the Old Testament with the New Testament and understanding how that applies to us today. It is a pleasure and a privilege to teach sound biblical principles to the children at WWEC.

*Kim Baker
Kids Church Leader K-5*

We were so incredibly thankful that God made the path clear for our family to return to WWEC in 2023. We wanted to come home because we felt that this church was unique in being so intentional and unwavering in the purpose of teaching our children the love of Christ and the true gospel. We have not been disappointed. Our children have individually benefitted from their time in the Kids' Church program. We know that those involved seek treasure in heaven but we extend our gratitude to each and every teacher for their preparation and delivery of the curriculum this year. May God continue to be glorified through such dedication to this program.

*Jeremy Wade
Parent*

I like going to Youth Church each week to catch up with my Christian friends and dig deeper into how to live as a disciple of Christ. I especially like the series of 'doubts and worries'.

*Joey Cox
Year 6*

I've enjoyed Youth Church this year because I've learnt new and interesting things with my friends. I enjoyed looking at different names in the Bible and what they mean, like the way God's name is written in Hebrew and how Joshua = Yeshua = Jesus!

*Grace Flint
Year 6*

Being a Youth Church Leader in 2023 was a really fulfilling experience as it enabled me to create a supportive and engaging space for the young members of our church community to grow in. We were able to not only share the teachings of our faith but encourage active participation and thoughtful questioning from our youth. I believe this approach has enacted spiritual growth in our youth but it has also strengthened the sense of community we have within WWEC. Prepping lessons and teaching Youth Church has deepened my own understanding of our faith for which I am thankful to God. Furthermore, being engaged with youth has enabled me to understand their challenges and perspectives more clearly- this has resulted in enthusiastic, engaged and quality questioning from the children. In my time in the classroom, I have witnessed increased curiosity, a continued sense of belonging and a growing awareness of historical and present moral dimensions of faith from our youth. Serving as a Youth Church teacher at WWEC has been a rewarding journey both personally and in terms of community impact. I am excited about the prospect of continued engagement and growth in the upcoming year.

Tim Owers -Youth Church Teacher

Goals for 2024

That our kids and youth would continue to come to know Jesus as their King and Saviour

That God would continue to raise up enthusiastic leaders for kids and youth church for His glory

Train up leaders in creating kids' church materials which are age appropriate, engaging and biblically faithful.

Improved transition and integration between kids, youth and adult church.

CY (Christian Youth)

CY Team Leader - Mitch Kingsland

2023 Quick Stats

42 Youth on Roll on average
20 families do not attend
WVEC
5 new Youth Group Leaders

Have you ever wondered what the youth get up to on a Friday night? Well, the CY recipe is fairly simple: hang out, have fun, learn about Jesus.

In 2023, we looked at the following topics:

- Term 1 - 2 Ways to Live
- Term 2 - The book of Joshua
- Term 3 - Curly Questions
- Term 4 - God's Big Picture

Some highlights from the year included:

- CY Camp at Tumbarumba
- Wagga Combined Youth Night
- CY Up Late (movie/games night)
- Girls' Night (vintage formal)
- Guys' Night (outdoor night games)
- Trivia + Q&A with the pastors of WVEC
- KYCK
- CSU Christian Fellowship visit
- CY Christmas Party

It is my prayer that in 2024, CY will continue to be a place where the youth of Wagga come to know God through reading His word. If you are interested in joining the Youth Team as a Youth leader, please come and chat to me. **Mitch Kingsland**

"I love going to CY because it means I get to go and hang out with my Christian friends on a Friday night"

Sam Everingham

I started youth group leading as a part of the Gap Program. It was a great opportunity to get alongside younger girls, praying together and getting into the Word with them. It has been a great highlight to see the girls grow in their understanding and love for God.

Miffy Everingham



Goals for 2024

- To see 5 Youth become Christians
- Recruit 3 more Youth Leaders
- Train up a new Team Leader
- Develop a 3-4 Year teaching program which is suitable for all youth (no matter their age or level of faith).



CY (Christian Youth) & SRE



I have really valued CY this year mostly because I feel really supported. There hasn't been a Bible study I haven't enjoyed and learnt from. I have really benefitted from hearing about other people's journey with God and feel really grateful for all the CY leaders and the youth.

Jemima McDowell
CY Member

Bring involved in CY last year was encouraging for me. I've learned so much about how to relate to and share the gospel with teens, and I have been involved with some really thoughtful discussions with the girls in my group that have helped develop my own faith and understanding. It's incredible to get to be part of a group that shares the gospel with young people, particularly those who haven't ever explored Christianity for themselves.

Caitlin Carmichael
CY Leaders



SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SRE)

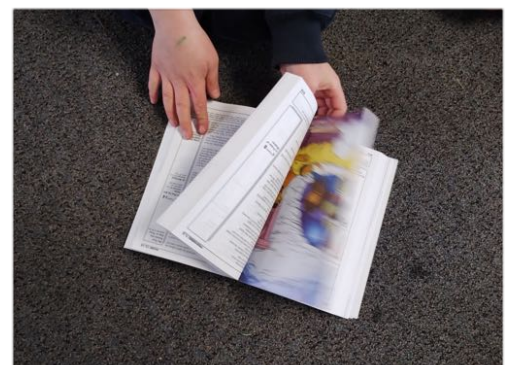
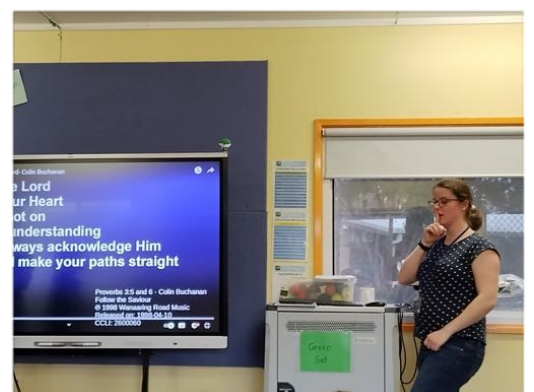
In 2023 we had 6 SRE teachers teaching across a few of our Primary Schools (Forest Hill, Wagga Public, South Wagga, Koorling, Lake Albert Public)

As leader, it was my role to support the ministry and encourage people to consider teaching SRE as well as promoting SRE in churches.

I have valued serving in this way because it is an amazing opportunity for the gospel to be shared in Wagga to hundreds of children, as well as their teachers.

I have valued having Annette Cork (SRE Primary School Coordinator) come to WWEC to share more about the value of the ministry. I also have enjoyed talking to people who may be interested in teaching SRE.

Lexi Ward
SRE TEACHER



WVEC STAFF 2023

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As in any organisation, the pastoral staff and some key volunteers from WVEC, participate in networking and development opportunities throughout the year.

REACH CONFERENCE AUSTRALIA

Our staff team attended the Reach Australia National Conference in May with over a thousand other gospel workers from all over Australia (and the world!).

I found the conference particularly helpful in generating ideas about how to improve connection, community and care at church (and particularly for me, at youth group). Tim, Dave, Mike, Hannah and I all returned from the conference with fresh convictions and full of ideas about how to help WVEC be a richer, gospel-driven community.

Mitch Kingsland



WVEC STAFF CONFERENCE



In October we had our WVEC Staff Conference which took place at the Lance's house. Bruce Bennett - FIEC Chaplain joined us for the week and provided many helpful insights about how to lead a growing, regional church.

We want to be a church that seeks to win more and more people for Jesus but also one that cares for its current members and helps them to grow in godliness. It was eye-opening to look at our projected growth over the next five years and to plan accordingly so that we can keep making and maturing disciples of Jesus.

Mitch Kingsland



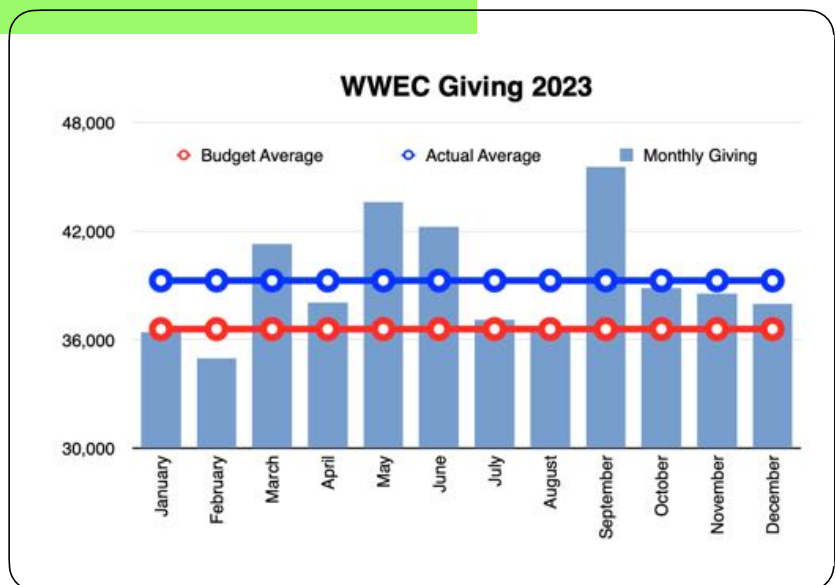
FINANCE REPORT

Treasurer - Sheridan Evans

GIVING

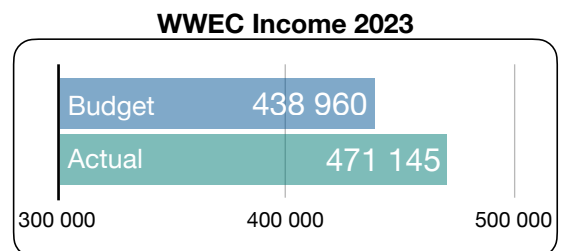
At WWEC our income comes from the generosity of regular church members supporting our church financially. In 2023 the Administration Committee determined that the giving required to meet budget was \$36,580 per month. This amount would allow us to be 'budget neutral' at the end of the year (ie cover all budgeted expenses).

This was an increase from the previous year of \$3,720 because we employed our 3rd pastor.



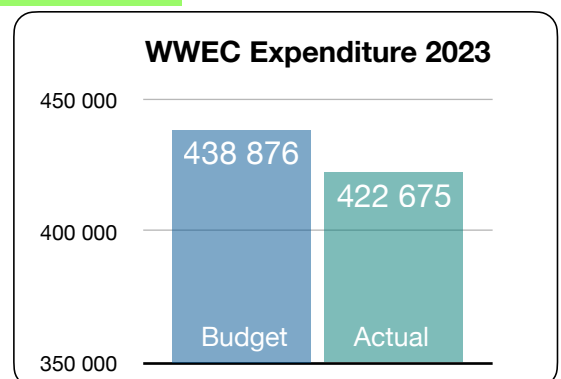
INCOME

Praise God for the generosity of his people here at WWEC. Throughout 2023 we exceeded our required income in 10 of 12 months. Our actual average income per month was \$39,262. This meant that at the end of 2023 we had received \$32,185 more than we budgeted for.



EXPENDITURE

In 2023 the budget for WWEC needed to cover 3 pastoral staff wages along with the costs of running church. Detailed information about these costs can be found in the supplementary documents to this report (see 2023 Budget). In 2023 our planned expenditure was approximately \$438,876. Our actual expenses totalled \$422,675 (note: this takes into account income for specific budget items eg. Youth group).



Goals for 2023

- To receive an income of \$43,500 per month from our regular members.
- This is an increase from what we received in 2023 of \$4,238 per month.
- With this money we can cover all of our church expenses AND invest in growing God's Kingdom through staff and/or property in future years.

Giving @ WWEC

Cash / Cheques

via the red toolbox at church

Online giving

via direct deposit to our bank account:

Wagga Evangelical
BSB: 032 769 Acc No: 321387

WWEC COMMITTEES

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

WWEC's Administration Committee is charged with the responsibility of managing the financial and legal affairs on behalf of the members of WWEC. The committee met on a bi-monthly basis (six times) during 2023. Unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances we were unable to host our usual online meeting with WWEC's Board of Reference in 2023.

The committee met to pray and consider a number of issues in relation to the financial and operational needs of WWEC. In 2023 agenda items included; WWEC's budget, policies and procedures (including the adoption of a new guideline and procedure), MTS, staff support, safe church, incident reporting and management, partnership, venue needs, WWEC's AGM, staff continuing professional development, resourcing, finance and staff planning.

Minutes of the Administration Committee meetings can be inspected by partners upon request to the Secretary of the Administration Committee. WWEC's current Policies, Procedures & Guidelines, our Code of Conduct and Constitution can be accessed on our website: wwec.org.au under 'resources'.

In 2023 the Administration Committee was made up of Tim Flint (Senior Pastor & Chair), Nicole Russell (Secretary), Sheridan Evans (Treasurer), Ian McDermott & Murray Baker.

WWEC BOARD OF REFERENCE

The WWEC Board of Reference (BOR) is an external group of godly Christian leaders with a range of experience in ministry who can share with us their wisdom and experience. The Board are available to WWEC with the power to mediate a dispute or even call a General Meeting to resolve serious issues. Details of the 2023 BOR are below.



Chris Little- Chris was a WWEC Board of Reference member for many years whilst leading Albury Bible Church. At the time of publishing this Annual Report in January 2024 we received the sad news of Chris' death from cancer. Chris faithfully supported the work of WWEC and personally provided guidance to our pastors over several years. We give thanks to God for him and the assurance that Chris is with our Lord.



Jason Veitch- Jason is married to Heather and they have three adult daughters. Jason is the senior minister at Campbelltown Anglican Church in Sydney's rapidly growing south-west. Jason grew up on a small property outside of Goulburn and since becoming a Christian as an adult has had a great desire to support Jesus being proclaimed not just in Sydney but also right across regional NSW.
jasonveitch@campbelltownanglican.org ph.0401998448



James Leitch James is married to Sarah and they have five children. James serves with FOCUS Military Ministry at the Australian Defence Force (ADFA) in Canberra as an AFES associate staff member. James is completing his theological studies through SMBC.
james@focusmilitary.org.au ph. 0413088975



Belinda O'Shae- Belinda is married to Connan, the Lead Pastor of Lighthouse Church on the Central Coast, which they planted in 2006. Belinda loves teaching the Bible to women and children of all ages & is currently the 'purpose leader' of Next Gen church. Connan and Belinda have 3 adult children. Belinda also works part-time as a maths teacher.
belinda@lighthouse.net.au ph. 0404 482 093



Archie Poulos- Archie works at Moore College leading the ministry department since 2004 & founding the Centre for Ministry Development in 2014. Before that he planted & led ethnic church plants. He has spent many years researching clergy competency.
Note: Archie stepped down as a WWEC BOR member at the end of 2023 and a replacement is being sought.

FUTURE FOCUS

Senior Pastor - Tim Flint

What a big year we've had under God's hand! Hopefully as you've read through this report you get a sense of the story God has been writing through His people at Wagga Wagga Evangelical Church. As I read, reflect and pray about all that has happened in the last year, I'm immediately excited about the future that lay ahead- and there's lots to consider.

The first big step forward is to trial the governance changes that I suggested at the AGM in 2023 (ie. the introduction of an *Advisory Committee*). Though significant time was spent shaping and tweaking these suggested changes with the help of a consult group, the implementation of a trial period was set back due to my ill health mid-year. I'm excited to see this move forward in 2024 and am confident that we will be in a good position to adjudicate the benefit of these changes by 2025.

At our staff planning retreat in October 2023, we spent significant time clarifying our **Purpose** (why we exist as a church), our **Vision** (what we want to see as a result of our existence), and our **Values** (core principles that underpin what and how we do everything).

Purpose: to make and mature disciples of Jesus

Vision: to see disciples of Jesus made and matured in increasing number

Values: as per the outline on the adjoining page

I'm keen for everyone at WWEC to know, love and share this Purpose, this Vision and these Values. They need to be the constant reference point for reminding us why we do things at WWEC and the framework for deciding what we say "Yes" or "No" to in the future.

It's being clear on these that also help shape another significant future step that I want us to be prayerfully taking in 2024. As I look at our growth rate at WWEC, I'm both blown away by what God has done and terrified about the implications if this trend continues! We have the really excellent problem of needing to consider both property needs and pastoral staffing needs to cater for future growth. The simple equation is that we will need both (more staff and a plan for property), in the close future. The big decision for 2024 is to navigate the particularities of these needs and the priority order. Though this is very daunting for me as the Senior Pastor, I'm really encouraged by the generosity of our church family which means that even considering these needs has become far more realistic in the last 12 months. As you have hopefully noted, our monthly giving in 2023 exceeded our budgeted spending- praise God the generosity of His people...you! This has given the Administration Committee a solid basis from which to begin exploring future options and this will be a focus in 2024. Whenever I speak about *church growth*, I always want to clarify- we don't, and shouldn't, seek church growth for our glory sake- we want to see the church grow because more people are being made and matured as disciples of Jesus...for His glory! Should God keep us at our present size...praise be to Him! My sincere encouragement to all of us is to continue to be prayerful, faithful and fruitful in the work that God has invited us to be co-workers in (1 Corinthians 3:5ff), and therefore to be confident that God will continue to grow His church in both number and depth of maturity.

Praying for the Future

- Please pray for the trial implementation of the proposed governance changes (Advisory Committee). Pray for wisdom to assess these changes well, regardless of whether that means formally making, future tweaking or totally scraping the changes altogether!
- Pray that the clarification of our **Purpose**, **Vision** and **Values** will have a galvanising effect on us as a church family as we get on with the task of making and maturing disciples of Jesus, together.
- Pray for wisdom for the pastoral staff, Administration Committee and the Advisory Committee as we consider decisions about the needs for future staffing and plans for property.

WVEC VALUES

VALUE #1 THE BIBLE

The Bible is God's inspired word and He speaks to us through it, so it is at the centre of everything we do.



VALUE #2 PRAYERFUL DEPENDENCE

We aren't in control but God is & so we pray to Him, at all times & in all circumstances.



VALUE #3 TRANSFORMED LIVES

We're convinced that God transforms His people, by His spirit, through His word, so we expect to grow into the likeness of Christ.



VALUE #4 MISSION

God sent His Son on a mission to save the lost & commands us to join Him in it.



VALUE #5 CHURCH AS FAMILY

As God's adopted children, we welcome & love one another as family.



VALUE #6 CHILDREN & YOUTH

Following Jesus' example, we love and value children and so intentionally teach them to be his disciples.



VALUE #7 SACRIFICIAL SERVICE

Jesus loved & served others at great cost to himself & so we are called to love & serve one another in the same way.



VALUE #8 EQUIPPING & SENDING

We equip & mobilise disciples for gospel work in our church & beyond.



VALUE #9 GENEROSITY

God has been extravagantly generous to us & so we give generously of our time, money & energy.



VALUE #10 GOSPEL PARTNERSHIPS

We support gospel ministries beyond our immediate church family; locally, nationally & internationally.



Additional Documents to this Annual Report include:

Audited Financial Accounts - 2023

2024 Draft Budget

2023 Budget

Draft Minutes of AGM held 7th May 2023

These are available as a separate document.

If you require a copy please contact:

Nicole Russell

Secretary, WWEC Administration Committee

admin@wwec.org.au



W A G G A W A G G A
E V A N G E L I C A L C H U R C H

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