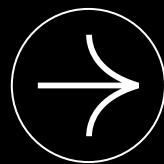


COOPERSVILLE REFORMED CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



**A word from
Pastor John**

**Evidences of
Grace**

Ministry Reports

and more



2023

ISSUE NUMBER 02

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OUR 2023 LEADERSHIP



LEAD PASTOR

JOHN HINES

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH

DORI KELLER

DIRECTOR OF SENIOR ADULT MINISTRIES

ARNOLD VAN BEEK

DIRECTOR OF DISCIPLESHIP

HEATHER MEKKES

DIRECTOR OF KIDS HOPE USA

COOKIE SPEET

DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES

DAVE VAN KLOMPENBERG

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

BETHANY COURSON

DIRECTORS OF WORSHIP

FRANK & AMANDA RUSSELL

DIRECTOR OF CHOIR OF PRAISE

TERRY METTEN

TREASURER

BETH MAST

DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

AMANDA CASLER

DIRECTOR OF YOUNG ADULTS/CREATIVE ARTS

CONNOR MAKI

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

TAMI SCHOOLCRAFT

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

HEATHER SMOES

ELDERS

BENNETT BASSETTE

BOB BOOM

RACHAEL KUNNEN

MATT MEKKES

DOUG SIETSEMA

STEVE SMITH

DICK VAN DOP

RON VELDMAN

DEACONS

TOM BERGY

DOUG CASLER

DAVE COURSON

ZACH DEMULL

HOMER HILL

JASON KUNNEN

RORY RIBNICKY

RODNEY TIBBE

CORY VISSER

A WORD FROM PASTOR JOHN



**REMEMBER, WE
EXIST TO MAKE
MORE AND
BETTER
DISCIPLES, AND
WE ACCOMPLISH
THIS BY LOVING
GOD, LOVING
PEOPLE, AND
LIVING SENT.**

This Spirit of God has been on the move at Coopersville Reformed Church! On any given day, you could find a full parking lot at 423 West Randall St, as opportunities to bless God and impact people are happening daily. God has raised up a multi-generational community of worshipers who are yearning to see him glorified in Coopersville and beyond!

God's faithfulness has been on full display all around us in 2023. People have gone from spiritual lethargy and death to spiritual awakening and life. God is reclaiming his gospel in the hearts of people all around us. Through His grace, we have seen our church family rise up to have a more fervent commitment to the great commandments and the great commission.

Remember, we exist to make more and better disciples, and we accomplish this by loving God, loving people, and living sent.

God's kindness to all of us who call CRC "home" is scattered throughout these pages. In this report, we will recount evidences of God's movement among us, share ministry updates from anointed team members, and provide opportunities for prayerful focus in the next season of life and mission together. We hope this annual report will lead you to marvel at what God can do when his people humbly submit to Him.

God's hand is all over our ministry. It is our desire and prayer that CRC would embody the beauty of an authentic Christian community in a way that is both compelling and attractive to those around us.

God does the drawing while we do the beholding.

He longs to work through all of us, and we are excited about all of the ways you have and will be used for His glory in the season to come as we serve as faithful witnesses to his goodness!

In Christ alone,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Hines". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "John" and "Hines" being capitalized and prominent.

Lead Pastor

EVIDENCES OF GRACE

Reflecting on the Blessings of 2023, this year has been a one filled with God's favor, and we can't wait to see what else He has in store for us. We want to take a moment to acknowledge and reflect on all that He has done amongst us in 2023. How do we know that God is moving in Coopersville? Through His "Evidences of Grace." These are measurable indicators that we are on the right path.

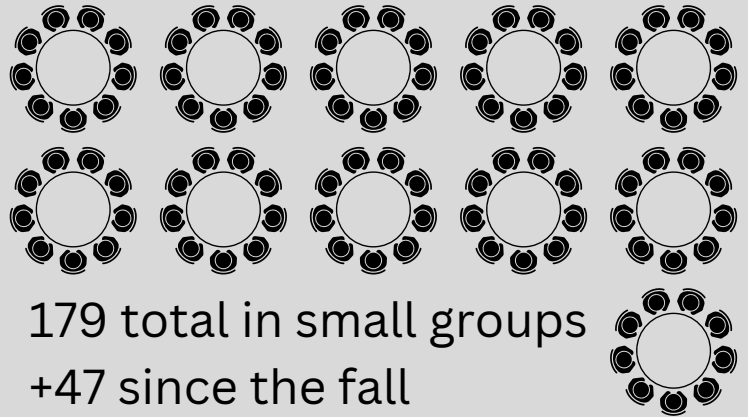
We've seen God's hand in the abundance of spiritual growth and transformation within our community. While all of these changes can't be quantified, we can observe His "Evidences of Grace" that can be measured. These statistics are a testament to how God has continuously blessed our ministry at CRC.

37

NEW MEMBERS

...and a whole lot of children

NEW SMALL GROUPS



SENIOR ADULTS ENGAGING IN COMMUNITY THROUGH S.A.L.T.

50

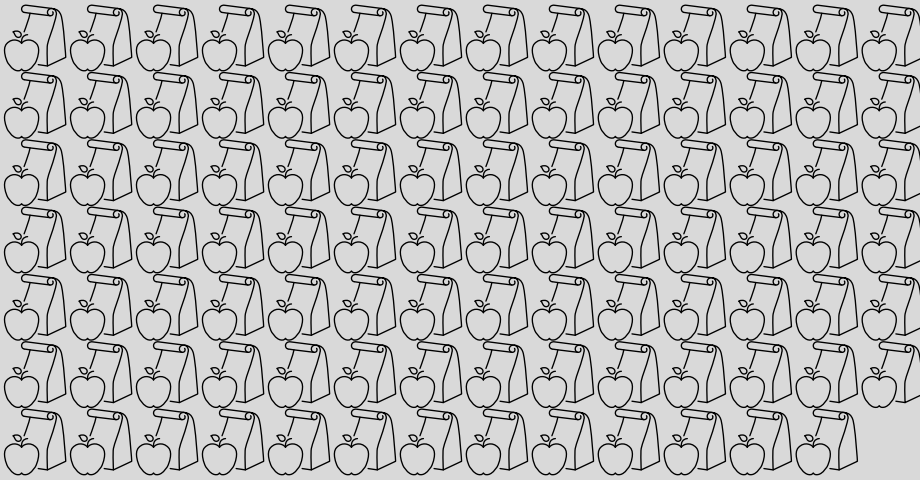
THIRTY-THREE

KIDS PRAYED "YES I WANT TO FOLLOW JESUS"

AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE



KIDS FED BY HAND2HAND MINISTRIES

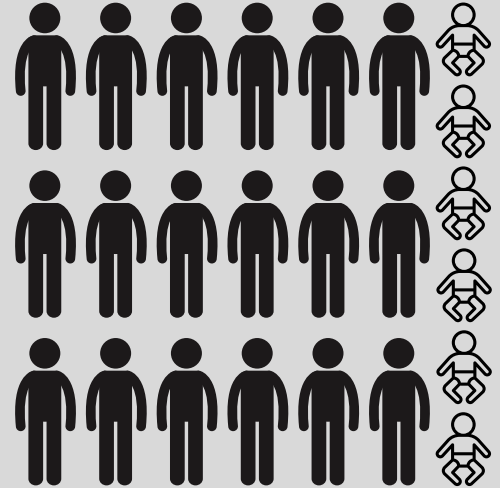


That's 97 and counting.....

250+

INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY GROUPS

BAPTISMS



18 adults | 6 infants

All 8 elders taught at CRC. Three taught stand alone messages for the first time.

KIDS ENROLLED IN

VBS



WOW

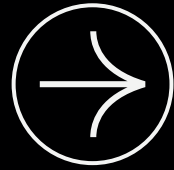


That's 165 and 125 respectively

OUR FACEBOOK CONTENT WAS VIEWED:

31,914 times.

DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES



Neil Cole, in his book Ordinary Hero's: Becoming a disciple who makes a difference writes, "Ultimately, each church will be evaluated by only one thing - its disciples. Your church is only as good as its disciples. It does not matter how good your praise, preaching, programs or property are; if your disciples are passive, needy, consumerist, and not moving in the direction of radical obedience, your church is not good." Wow! This is a sobering concept. I share that quote to remind us of the importance of our mission at CRC....to make more and better disciples.

The evidence of God's grace is all around us, and there is so much to celebrate and thank Him for! Throughout this past year we experienced an increase in the number of small groups meeting, new facilitators leading, and an increase in the overall participation of adults connected to community groups of some kind, ranging from young adults to seniors. These groups serve to train, equip, and encourage us to be authentic followers of Jesus, and offer accountability about how to live it out.

As I reflect on this past season of ministry, not only am I in awe of what God has done, but I look forward with anticipation to what He is going to do! My prayer is that through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit working within us, that we will continue to become a community of radically obedient disciples who take the great commission seriously.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

May we continue to seek God first in all that we do, resting in the confidence that He goes with us and is in us, always.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Melles". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Director of Discipleship

In the past year the vineyard has seen a complete restructuring of the way we operate. Four years ago when we started this program, we set out with the intention of building a community of young adults lead by young adults. This year that intention has been actualized in a more dramatic way than previous years. We've seen incredible buy-in from volunteers, with 29 regular volunteers who serve the Lord and others each week through worship, serving, and welcoming.

Every year we have to be asking the question of “how do we best equip young adults for a life of faith.” It seems like every time we ask that we come back to the basics. We are saved by faith alone, through Christ alone, by his grace alone, and for his glory alone. All of this is taught to us through the Scripture, which alone is the highest authority for our lives, and equips us for everyday living of the faith. Traditional teaching usually looks like a single person standing in front of an audience and teaching from Scripture. This is good, we love this. However, this year there has been a conviction to make sure the students are being equipped with the tools necessary to read and interpret Scripture on their own. This means more awkward silences where they have to answer hard questions. It is all worth it, because at the end they are walking away with both the knowledge and wisdom of Scripture, and the practical ability to read Scripture at home.

The word that has been on my mind lately is the word “retention”. How do we capture the interest of people who may be new to our group, which in and of itself is relatively new? I can only give a partial answer, because we are still working on this idea, but for now the partial answer is “community”. Young adults, although very social, are also very lonely. What we look forward to over the next year is a community of young adults who is able to accept others into their group, and be living missional—inviting those who do not know Jesus yet.



Connor Mahi

Director of Young Adults

VINEYARD



YOUTH MINISTRIES

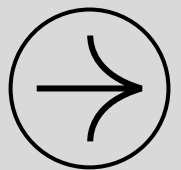


2023 has been a year of the unexpected, a year when we had to figure it out again. Times are changing, which means kids are changing. We're moving from Gen Z to Gen Alpha and discovering what connects with them all for the sake of them knowing and falling in love with our savior, Jesus. This year has been one when we had to go to the desert to find God's Holy Spirit fire and call out to Him with desperation because sometimes we just had no idea what to do. And then I thought, "Isn't this desperation for Jesus supposed to be where we are ALL the time?" I thank God for changing times, when the next move is dependent on Him, when leaders come together to listen for God's direction in prayer, and for kids who are worth fighting for.

I'm seeking God's presence more than ever, or maybe it's that He is seeking me more than ever. I'm learning that nothing about youth ministry is about Dori Keller or about the leaders or about the students. It is all about Jesus! It is all about Him coming after us and showing us what to do. We just get to follow. I'm letting go of my expectations and expecting God to show up, to do what only He can do. At the same time, I'm trusting who God created me to be and that He will use the gifts He gave me to show middle-school and high-school students who He is. When I watch our new group of middle schoolers, I see what it looks like to have freedom in worship. When I talk to my high schoolers about life and direction and where God is in all of it, I remember what it's like to dream and to have the whole world ahead of you. So that is my prayer – that at CRC youth ministry we would function in the freedom we have in Christ and that we would dream with Jesus about where we're going and what we're doing.

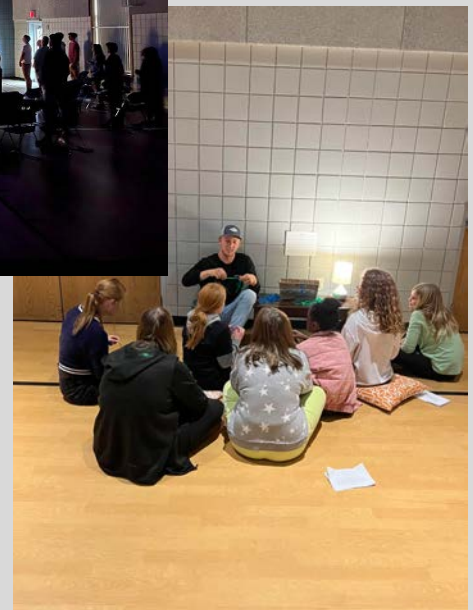


I'm trusting God to create real-life change in our youth. There are lots of statistics out there that say that 60-80% (depending on the survey you read) of our students will leave the church after high school. I believe confidently that this will not be the case for our students. I pray that while they are in CRC Youth Ministry that they will encounter the Holy Spirit and that their lives will be changed. I have faith that they will fall more in love with Jesus, that they will be disciples who make disciples, and that the next generation of the church will be vibrant and strong. Our kids are amazing, all the way from sixth graders with endless energy to seniors in high school who are seeking the Lord with deep questions. Talk to them! I promise you will be blessed by what they have to say!





I want to leave you with a story of a girl who is now a freshman in college. I'm going to call her Brittany although that's not her real name. Brittany came to youth group with her friends in middle school. She loved it and did all the things with us. She did not have a Bible at the time, so we gave her one. One of her friends sent her Bible verses often. I didn't know what her background was in terms of faith, I just wanted her to have a relationship with Jesus. When she was in eighth grade, Brittany was no longer allowed to be a part of our youth group. We missed her and prayed she would come back. She lives in Coopersville, so when I would drive past her house, I prayed for Brittany. I just hoped that she would know Jesus somehow. In the fall of 2022, Brittany was a senior in high school, and she showed up at One Way! I was so excited to see her and many of the students were too! She ended up being in my small group, and I could see that real spiritual growth had happened over the past four years. I asked her how she continued to grow when she wasn't allowed to attend church or youth group. She said, as if I was a bit foolish, "Well, you guys gave me a Bible!" And how foolish I was to forget how powerful and active the Word of God really is! This past summer at Lake Michigan, I had the privilege of baptizing Brittany alongside the friend who sent her Bible verses in middle school. It was beautiful, and I am forever grateful that God allowed me to be a part of that young woman's life. This is why we do what we do. We get a front-row seat to watch what God is up to. He truly is worth all the glory!



Please pray for our ministry – for us to focus on Jesus, for walls to be broken down, for us to know the direction God is sending us. Pray for my family and for the leaders' families – the spiritual warfare can be strong. Pray for our students – that their faith would be real and authentic, that they would want more of Jesus, that they would continue to invite and love their friends well.

Dori Keller

Director of Youth

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES



I have the opportunity to walk down the halls of Coopersville Schools at least once a week and it gives me SO much joy to hear, “Hi Ms. Bethany!”, “Hey WOW lady!” or “That’s the lady who stands on the stage and says, ‘Thank you Jesus!’” and then receive hugs, smiles and waves. I absolutely love it! My heart overflows!

What a blessing it has been to reflect on the past year! God is doing even more than we could ask or imagine in the lives of the children and families who step foot in Coopersville Reformed Church. We have so many opportunities to pour into the lives of these families and for that I am so grateful. This could not happen without the sacrificial time and energy of our faithful volunteers and leaders who love on and serve the kids and their families. Our faithful volunteers and leader’s love and excitement for Jesus pours over into the lives of the kids, which then pours over into their homes and into their everyday lives.

The cool thing is not only are the lives of the kids being changed, but the life of each volunteer is as well. I am so glad to be a part of it all. The many volunteers that serve each week are vital to the life of Children's Ministry here at CRC. Thank you to those who serve!

The kids are continuing to learn important Biblical truths that they can take with them, hold tightly and share with others. They are inviting their friends to come and learn about Jesus and they are excited to share it. We are raising up kingdom leaders for the next generation. So, it is my prayer that as we go throughout this next year, this excitement will keep growing and every kid that steps foot in CRC will know that they are loved and valued by Jesus.



Director of Children’s Ministry



Director of Early Childhood

WORSHIP MINISTRIES



In 2023, I am thankful for all of our choir volunteers. Throughout the year they have shown great commitment to the service of the choir. We are truly blessed! I am especially grateful every week for the voices of the congregation. Together, we have been singing God's praise and filling the sanctuary with our voices.

Time and time again, the hymns we sing fill me with great joy and awe. There is something about a hymn that draws me closer to Him! Music means so much to me. Hearing the congregation sing and singing them as a body of believers unified in Christ brings me great joy. I long to inspire others to sing in a way that glorifies God.

This year, I am looking forward to more commitment, more dedication from our choir, and more joy in singing. I look forward to more songs that overwhelm me with God's glory and His goodness.

Similar to last year, I am incredibly thankful for the legacy being built here at CRC. I have grandchildren who are involved in music. They are involved on Sunday morning and also at events during the week. As I depend on the Lord above, it is comforting to see that legacy carry on.

Terry Mellen

Director of Choir of Praise

God has been so good to us in the contemporary worship ministry! We joke that we have the best volunteers in the world, but we actually really do feel that way. We are in awe of the ways God met our team in rehearsals, on Sunday mornings, but also in the ways that we encouraged each other week after week. Our weekly habit of “happy’s and crappy’s” on Thursday night rehearsals help us know the good things happening in each others lives, but also the hard things that give us a chance to pray for one another and encourage one another in the Lord.

This past year- a primary focus was continuing to grow alongside one another as well as trying new things. We added some incredible vocalists and band members to our ministry! We added new music to our repertoire of songs, thinking deeply about the kind of music we sing and the message it brings. We strategically did things different by doing one acoustic Sunday a month to shake things up a bit. We focused on excellence in musicality, improving our equipment, and trying to streamline and simplify processes for our volunteers both on stage and in the tech booth.

This year, we are considering what is next for the worship ministry. We want to continue to think about how we can use the gifts and talents of our volunteers to edify and encourage the body of believers at CRC. We want to continue making adjustments to our equipment to relieve stress on our volunteers and to help them focus on the reason why we all come to Church, to worship! We want to encourage and see our volunteers continue to develop in their gifting and use them to not only serve our ministry, but see them flourish in other aspects of the church as well! We look with anticipation to see what God does with this ministry and pray that God will use it to have the hearts of those in our church stirred with affection towards Jesus.



*Frank &
Amanda Russel*

Directors of Worship

KID'S HOPE USA

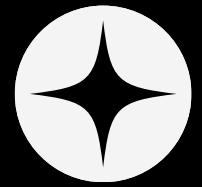
This year at Kids Hope USA we have 28 mentors going into the school. These mentors are committed to making a difference in the lives of 28 kids from kindergarten to 5th grade. The mentors spend one hour with their child each week. That is 28 hours of time each week that our Kids Hope USA mentors are in Coopersville Area Public Schools! Every mentor has a committed prayer partner praying for their time with their mentee. Over two thirds of our kids do not live with their biological dad. Many of these children have no male role model at all. Two of our kids are homeless. Eight of our kids have experienced the death of a parent. Teachers have a waiting list of children that would benefit from a mentor. Someone who will sit with them and spend time with them. Sometimes this means listening to their stories and meeting them where their needs are. I am thankful for Coopersville Reformed Church and your willingness to support and cheer on these volunteers, who are ready to inspire these children to be all they can be. To God be the glory!



Cookie Speet

Director of Kid's Hope USA

UPCOMING BUILDING PROJECT



Following two years of gathering ideas and feedback, developing multiple layout and budget options, and sharing these with the congregation, the church has approved a facility master plan and a budget for a proposed project to improve our campus facilities. With a focus on children's spaces, fellowship, and accessibility, this proposal is built on a vision of providing a facility that allows for continued growth of our mission to make more and better disciples in Coopersville and beyond.

So what happens next? Our goal is to launch a fundraising campaign in the spring of 2024, which will kick off our effort to raise the at least \$1.1 million needed to move into construction. As we move toward those next steps, we invite you to continue surrounding this project in prayer and seeking God's guidance in how you may play a part in supporting this vision!

PROPOSED LAYOUT

- Highlights:
 - Larger lobby with wider stairs and new barrier-free lift to Sanctuary
 - New, updated restrooms adjacent to lobby
 - All program spaces on same level as lobby
 - Classroom wing and lobby connects Activity Center to the rest of the building
 - Church Admin office on main level



Kevin Wieringa

Facility Team Leader

**COOPERSVILLE
REFORMED
CHURCH**

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