



ANNUAL Report

23

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01

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE THE CHURCH...



I will build my church and nothing will stop it .
– Matthew 16:18

As I reflect on the last year and the season of ministry we have been in as a church, I'm reminded of those words by Jesus in the book of Matthew. 2000 years ago, Christ set the church in motion and it has been growing and changing the world ever since. His words are still as powerful and relevant for us today.

"I will build..."

I love the emphatic voice Jesus uses. There is no question He is going to build His church here on earth, but we get to partner with Jesus in this work. Everyday we are given the chance to bring hope to those who have none. To show the world what freedom in Jesus really looks like, and to be light in a world filled with far too much darkness. He is building His church, but we must never forget he does it with our hands and feet.

"...my church..."

Life Stream belongs to Jesus and that is great news. It's His church, always has been and always will be. And His love for this church

took him to the cross. He gave himself away and set the example. Over this past year we have given ourselves away and the results are exciting...

This past year:

- We baptized 28 people
- We dedicated 22 children
- We saw 47 people make first time commitments to Jesus
- Nearly 1500 people attended our Easter Sunday services, with another 400 watching online
- On average, 100 plus kids participate in one of our kids ministry environments every Sunday
- We have approximately 130 people in small groups doing life together and growing in faith
- Our food pantry serves over 40 families each month
- We send out 260 Manna Meals per week to benefit kids at Allendale Public Schools
- And so much more!

"...and nothing will stop it..."

And this is a promise. A promise made by the God of the universe, that nothing can stop the expansion of His church on earth. There is no crisis, no economic downturn, global pandemic, or unexpected transition that will stop Jesus from moving his message into the world. Why? Because it's His church and He will build it.

So as we turn the corner on a new fiscal year, we look forward with hope and anticipation at what JESUS will do. His promise still stands true and Life Stream is still His church. We only need to stay desperate for the Holy Spirit and trust that Jesus is moving in our midst to do greater things than we can expect or imagine.

I believe what Jesus has always known....

The best is yet to come.

Pastor Aaron
Executive Pastor

Aaron Spratling

02

MEET THE TEAM!

"Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ." - 1 Corinthians 12:12





1. **Wes Coffey** - Interim Senior Pastor
2. **Aaron Spratling** - Executive Pastor
3. **Jeff Bond** - Worship Arts Pastor/Technology Director
4. **Josh Dollendorf** - Generations Pastor
5. **Chandler Stevens** - Young Adults Pastor
6. **Lori Bond** - Creative Arts Director
7. **Jaime Sheridan** - Facilities and Guest Services Coordinator
8. **Nancy Dyke** - Office Coordinator
9. **Chelsea Darling** - Executive Assistant
10. **Lexi Hunt** - Communications Coordinator
11. **Duke Schut** - Finance Coordinator
12. **Lexi Keur** - Middle School Director
13. **Katie MacDonald** - Kid's Director
14. **Megan Postma** - Generations Assistant
15. **Brett Cullen** - Production Engineer
16. **Braden DeVree** - Video Engineer
17. **Duane Roach** - Online Campus Coordinator
18. **Katelyn VerStrate** - Worship/Tech Assistant
19. **Rob Coffey** - Facilities
20. **Steve LaBrecque** - Facilities
21. **Mikal MacDonald** - Custodial
22. **Rachel Hugg** - Custodial
23. **Joan Kleinjans** - Custodial

03

NEXT STEPS

The importance of taking steps in faith...

We deeply desire to connect with people to invite and encourage them to walk ever forward on their faith journey. These next steps in faith are pathways that have been developed to help people take their next step... & their next... and their next!

BELIEVE

The most important step you will ever take is to believe that Jesus is your Lord, Savior and King, through whom you can receive forgiveness of sins and become a child of God.

BAPTISM

Baptism is a public and spiritual response to what God has done for you and will continue to do through you. Baptism is a defining moment in your story.

BIBLE

Reading and understanding the Bible helps to deepen your relationship with Jesus. Studying the story of God found in the Bible helps you take steps in your own faith story.

47 NEW MEMBERS

20 ELECTIVE CLASSES OFFERED

47 SALVATIONS

28 BAPTISMS

BELONG

Being connected to others is a vital piece to living and sharing the story of God. Life Stream has groups for people of all ages, life experiences and faith backgrounds.

STEWARD

In offering your time, talents, and resources, you are able to grow personally, discover your gifts and invest in the lives of others. You also get to be a part of what God is doing in your church, community, and world.

SHARE

By sharing what God has done for you, the Spirit of God is able to move in others, helping them to take their own steps in faith. We believe testimonies are a powerful tool to share what God is doing in our midst.

SERVE

An important aspect of relationship with Jesus is using the gifts we have been given to serve others. Life Stream offers many opportunities to plug in, ranging from hospitality to grounds keeping, to serving in the nursery and much more.

277 CLASS ATTENDANTS

86 COUPLES NIGHT ATTENDEES

04

WORSHIP & TECH

"For I am confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Psalm 27:13

GOD IS GOOD!

We continue to praise God for our many faithful volunteers in audio, video, computer, worship, and creative arts, who give many hours of their time on weekends to serve the people of God. God continually blesses our team as they serve with such joy and dedication. One of the biggest blessings is watching people worship!

We're always excited to see what new and creative ways we can tell God's story in worship. Singing, dance, visual arts, spoken word, and much more are used in our worship services. We are creative because we serve a creative God.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- Braden DeVree and all the videos made this past year
- Brett Cullen for audio work and production direction
- Katelyn VerStrate for behind the scenes worship and tech support and chaplain duties
- Chandler Stevens, Tumaini Sango, Emily Denbow, Katelyn VerStrate, and Lexi Hunt for worship leading and co-leading responsibilities.



04

WORSHIP & TECH

"For I am confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." Psalm 27:13

WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS!

- Started having a praise choir once a month
- Backyard Worship with LeAnna Crawford and Jeremiah Carlson
- Mother's Day: children from the HUB joined the worship team
- Worship/Tech appreciation and update night took place in March

EXTRA SERVICES

- Night of Worship (September)
- Feast of the Tabernacles (November)
- Ash Wednesday (March)
- Good Friday (April)



28

MUSICIANS ON PRAISE TEAM

7.5

HOURS SERVED EACH WEEK

5

MUSIC VIDEOS MADE THIS YEAR WITH LIFE STREAM VOLUNTEERS

65

SONG SUGGESTIONS ON THE GREEN ROOM MARKER BOARD

120+

CHILDREN & ADULTS PARTICIPATED IN THE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

05

LIFE STREAM KIDS (BIRTH-5TH)

“The mission of Life Stream Kids is to help children and families learn what it means to LIVE and SHARE the story of GOD.”

Life Stream Kids is our Children’s Ministry (Birth- 5th Grade) that gathers Sunday mornings year-round. It consists of B3 (Birth - 3 years), Kid’s Club (3s - 5s), the Hub (K - 3rd Grade) and Studio 45 (4th & 5th Grade). We partner with parents to help kids build an authentic relationship with the living God, who loves them and wants to be their forever friend!

We also have a Wednesday night program called Journey that gathers during the school year for our Kindergarten through 5th Grade students. There, kids are encouraged to memorize scripture, have fun, and learn how to live and share the story of God.

We have seen a huge desire to learn more about God and be in the Bible. We have had kids attend in-person, as well as engaging in our online weekly curriculum. Kids have been helping each other find passages of scripture and asking for prayer for their friends and family members, really coming together as the Body of Christ to lift one another up.

Our Life Stream Kids leaders have been so intentional about building Christ-Centered relationships with the kids in these programs and we are so excited to see what happens in the next year!

“

I absolutely LOVE working with the kiddos! They have taught me patience and also how amazing our God is that he has created these kiddos so unique. I was so amazed how much grace the kids gave me as I was figuring out my role as a volunteer. God truly blessed me with this amazing opportunity.

LYNN HELMS



I thoroughly enjoy working in the HUB! I love that the kids come in and they are so ready to learn about God. They love to sing the songs and do the dance moves in worship. Not only do I feel good about teaching the younger generations about God, they have also taught me things myself!

DANA PEARSON

64

VOLUNTEERS

16

BIBLES HANDED OUT

22

CHILDREN DEDICATED

3

FAMILY EVENTS

112

AVERAGE SUNDAY MORNING ATTENDANCE

56

AVERAGE WEDNESDAY NIGHT ATTENDANCE

06

STUDENT MINISTRY

"A MOVEMENT of youth seeking authentic faith in Jesus, hungry for revival, through the living word, solid relationships, and passionate worship"

Shift

is the Middle School Ministry at Life Stream Church.

This year, the students have been working on strengthening the foundation of their faith. Through teaching topics such as "We can have questions and still follow God," "Be the friend you want to have," and "Knowing Jesus changes everything," this year focused on how to bring faith into every area of our lives.

The middle schoolers have had a lot of fun, participated in great discussions, and asked some big questions about what it really means to follow Jesus!



Student Stats

125+ STUDENTS PER WEEK

58 WEEKLY VOLUNTEERS

17 STUDENTS BAPTIZED

12 BIBLES GIVEN OUT

24 SALVATIONS

180+ LEADER APPRECIATION LUNCH ATTENDEES

“

I love going to Shift because it's a good environment and a place I can go and talk to someone about anything. I love the leaders and people there. They have really helped me grow in my faith and realize that I need to make it my own. I think that they have really helped me understand more about God and helped me grow into a stronger relationship with him.”

MADDIE DOEZEMA, 8TH GRADE

“It has been such a privilege to work with the students in Shift. If God is speaking to you and encouraging you to offer your time into building into the lives of young people, I strongly encourage Life Stream Shift!”

BEN PIERCE, 8TH GRADE BOYS LEADER



Identity

is our High School Ministry which meets on Sunday nights.

The theme of "Revival" has been at the heartbeat of our ministry this year and we have seen God do some amazing things through this. Students have said "Yes" to following God for the first time, built Christ-centered relationships with our amazing team of invested leaders, and have even heard God calling them into ministry!

In our MDWK Wednesday night program we dove deep into the Bible and addressed topics about Christ and Cultural Issues, "How to Church", and a walkthrough of Genesis. Sunday nights have had powerful moments of worship, prayer, and surrender. Christ is moving in this generation and revival is coming!

“

Identity has been a really good place for me to go to deepen my relationship with God and ask questions about my faith. One of the best parts of Identity is having leaders who have gone through what you're going through, and aren't afraid to be open with you. Being able to openly talk about things I might be going through and where I'm at in my relationship with God is huge. Another great part of identity is being able to relate with people my age, who are experiencing the same things I am, when it might be harder to relate to adults at a normal church service.”

CADEN SCRIPSEMA, 9TH GRADE

“Being a small group leader was always something that I wanted to do - to pay it forward so to speak. My small group leader was a big part of my life and I always knew I wanted to be that for a group of high school girls. We have a large group of freshman girls every Sunday night, and it's been so much fun to watch them grow, hear their conversations, and the questions they ask. To come alongside these girls and help share the love of Jesus with them has been such a gift.”

**KORTNEY NIEWIADOMSKI (9TH GRADE GIRLS
SMALL GROUP LEADER)**

07

YOUNG ADULTS

Life Stream Young Adults is a brand new ministry that we started to meet the need for community in those aged 18-30 in our midst. Additionally, our hearts were burdened for those at GVSU right down the road who do not yet know Jesus! On November 13, 2022 we gathered for the first time after church for a free lunch and were thrilled to have about 40 people in attendance. Since then, we have continued to meet each month and see between 25-45 young adults at every gathering.

Our heart was to create a place where young adults could meet friends, and meet Jesus. We have done this by launching 5 small groups that meet twice / month. There are groups for male, female, co-ed, and engaged / married young adults. This is where community, accountability, and spiritual growth happens on a deep level! Then, twice per month our small groups all gather together into one room for a worship night on the first Tuesday of each month, and for a free lunch after church later in the month.



We have seen God's hand all over this ministry already, and have heard awesome testimonies about young adults who have met new friends and met Jesus as their Savior (a few of them for the first time)! Our prayer is that God would continue to grow and to bless this group, and that we would see revival break out in the younger generations.

I attended youth group at Life Stream in high school. Upon graduating college, I came back to West Michigan where finding a church and regularly connecting in the local body of Christ was top a priority for me as I navigated life post-graduation. Amidst the search, a friend from high school texted me about Life Stream starting a Young Adult ministry. I attended the Young Adult Lunch where Pastor Chandler introduced his vision for the ministry, shared his experience of young adulthood, and related to my personal struggle to find community after graduating college.

He expressed his desire for this ministry to be a place where all who come can feel seen, welcomed, and known while personally encountering Christ. I knew at that moment that this was the spot the Lord had for me and left that lunch gratefully praising God for answering my prayer.

Fast forward to the end of first semester, I look back in awe to see how the Lord has provided. In a matter of months, the brothers and sisters attending my small group have become my genuine friends and I look forward to each time we gather. The ministry of Life Stream Young Adults is tangible evidence of answered prayers for my heart personally, and it is so awesome to see my brothers and sisters in Christ genuinely loving the Lord, wanting to seek Him together.



BECCA JONES

08

SENIORS MINISTRY

Life Stream's Senior Ministry provides many opportunities for our seniors to grow in their relationship with God through a variety of bible studies, serving opportunities, prayer groups, and fellowship.

“ This group has begun to feel like family, a place where I can share my thoughts and feelings which my family/children do not want to hear.

SENIOR MINISTRY MEMBER



JOY Ministry

Our "Just Older Youth" meet every 3rd Wednesday through the months of September-May enjoying delicious lunches and good company with one another.

Hope Ministry

Helping Others Persevere (life) Experiences. Our Hope group met every other Monday evening. HOPE is intended to "fill the gap" for adults who find themselves alone for whatever reason (i.e., a different type of middle space). A safe place that allows individuals to process their feelings, to share their journeys, and to encourage each other.

09

HOSPITALITY

"Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!" - Hebrews 13:2

The mission of our hospitality team is to create irresistible environments where people feel known, wanted, and welcome.



From Greeters and Ushers, to Welcome Center and Cafe Team members. Our heart is to open the doors of Life Stream Church as wide as possible to everyone in our community.

We are incredibly grateful to the amazing and dedicated teams who help us create welcoming environments and exceptional experiences. We have over 100 volunteers serving on one of our hospitality teams and

We can't do it without them!

10 COMMUNITY CARE

The Community Care Team is dedicated to providing comfort, hope, and support in the name of Christ to individuals and families in our church and community.

They lead a compassionate group of volunteers that provide spiritual and emotional support in times both good and bad. They also discern and provide practical help in the form of groceries, emergency financial assistance, and more.

We are blessed to be the hands and feet of Christ

32 CHAPLAINS

52 MEALS SHARED

21 FRUIT BASKETS DELIVERED

12 PRAYER SHAWLS SHARED

576 CARDS SENT OUT

\$15,068.40

SHARED TO HOUSEHOLDS
WITH DIFFERENT NEEDS

44 BABY ITEMS DELIVERED

11 BABY BOOKS DELIVERED

43 PLANTS/LANTERNS/GIFT
BASKETS DELIVERED

11

LOCAL & GLOBAL PARTNERS

The Mission Action Team of Life Stream is honored to serve in the capacity of stewarding and steering the missional direction of Life Stream. Even in difficult times faithful and sacrificial giving has led us to be generous with our resources- We give God all the praise!

Thank you for choosing to partner with the numerous local and global people and organizations we call "partners". These missionaries help Life Stream to "live and share the story of God" in our own local town and around the world!



\$120,865.88

WAS GIVEN BY THE THE MISSION TEAM TOWARDS LOCAL AND GLOBAL MISSIONS IN 2022/2023.

MINISTRIES:

- Bethany Berendsen Medical Missionary
- Blessing Bags/Mattress Ministry
- GVSU CRU
- Hope for Tela
- Keys for Kids
- Living Giving Tree/Food Pantry
- Love Inspired Outreach
- LS Help Fund
- Moriah Ministries
- Operation Christmas Child
- Positive Options
- Reach the Forgotten
- Remembrance Ranch
- Samaritan's Purse
- Summer Mission Trips - Shift & Identity
- The Healing Loft

12

RIPPLE EFFECT

rippleeffect.org

Ripple Effect is so much more than a resale shop. Since opening eight years ago, Ripple Effect has donated more than \$200,000 to local and global missions. From supporting sustainable farming in Asia to building wells for clean water in Central America, the impact of our collective Ripple Effect is making a difference around the world. Here at home, we have been able to generously support many local organizations, community programs and area residents in need. We are honored and humbled to be making a difference in the lives of people in our community. We do this by meeting people where they are and showing them the love of Jesus,

To learn more about the ministry, visit us at:
www.rippleeffectweb.org

OUR MISSION

Building God's Kingdom through local and global missions

STATISTICS

- 56 Volunteers
- 10,500 Volunteer Hours
- 32 Partnerships and Collaborative Initiatives
- 18,106 Customer transactions
- 500 Blessing bags
- 85 Mattresses & box springs to families in need* (2 yrs)
- 125+ Backpacks to students in need*
- More than \$10,000 In-Kind donations
- \$500 Holiday Food Pantry tree sales
- 499 Positive Options points redeemed
- 239 Blankets to animal hospitals & rescues
- Hundreds of fresh fruits and vegetables to local food pantries

**Partnership with Love INC & OCSN*



AND WE KNOW THAT
IN ALL THINGS GOD
WORKS FOR THE GOOD
OF THOSE WHO LOVE
HIM, WHO HAVE BEEN
CALLED ACCORDING TO
HIS PURPOSE.

Romans 8:28

13

LET'S CELEBRATE

FEAST OF TABERNACLES

This fall, we celebrated “The Feast of Tabernacles” and enjoyed an ancient modern experience along with a friendly family style meal.

COLORS OF COMMUNITY

Colors of Community was a huge success highlighting numerous artists in the community! We had over 77 registered artists and displayed their incredible works of art over a 2 month period wrapping up with an awards ceremony in mid November.



CHRISTMAS TREE WALK

Our annual Christmas Tree Walk took place for the 3rd consecutive year! This serves as an opportunity for us as a church to reach out to people in the West Michigan area and invite them to reflect on the beauty of the Christmas season and the gift of Jesus Christ to our world. Over 40 evergreen trees were decorated by various businesses, families, and individuals in our community. Retired teachers served as guest readers and we even had visits from Santa himself!



CHRISTMAS EVE 2022

One word we have spoken often during this ministry season is “PIVOT”! Four Christmas Eve services were scheduled, but thanks to Michigan weather, we were only able to have one. Even through the blizzard conditions, there was an attendance of 343 people for the 3pm service including a variety of volunteers who served with a smile and were excited to celebrate the birth of our Savior!



EASTER 2023

We had a beautiful Holy Week and Easter at Life Stream this year! Our Good Friday service brought 242 people into our building and outside into our “tree walk” area to view a variety of artwork painted by artists from the congregation as well as acted out stories from Christ’s last week of life. One Saturday night service and two Sunday morning services brought nearly 1500 people into the Worship Center to hear about the Resurrection of our Savior!



14

GETTING CONNECTED

This past fall we invited the church family to attend our ministry fair/church family picnic.

It was a beautiful day outside filled with a variety of different ministries and their leaders explaining the best ways to get connected! There were tons of games and prizes (including one of our very own Pastors in the dunk tank) as well as wonderful food and fellowship!



20

OF MINISTRIES

50+

**# OF TIMES PASTOR JOSH WAS
DUNKED IN THE DUNK TANK**

100+

OF VOLUNTEERS SIGNED UP

15 GROUP LIFE

Groups are the life-blood of our church, and throughout this year our small group ministry has continued to grow! We have recently begun calling them “Life Groups” since these are spaces where we are meant to do life together. We now have groups for every age and stage of life and are continuing to add more leaders and groups. This year alone, we are celebrating growing from 8 groups to 16 groups! However, we are hoping and praying to add many more as we continue to connect those within our church family into a life group of their own!



“Since joining Life Stream and being given the opportunity to lead a small group of young adults in February, I have experienced a transformational journey of faith and fellowship. Through leading this group, I have been inspired to dive deeper into scripture, reflect on God’s word daily, and live out His teachings in all aspects of my life. The small group has been an incredible source of community and fellowship for me, particularly during the challenging young adult stage of life.

Whether you are still in school or transitioning into the next phase of your life, this time can be difficult to navigate on your own. Through leading this group, I have found myself empowered to be a mentor to those who are going through similar struggles that I once faced. We have become a tight-knit support system for one another, encouraging each other in our faith journeys and offering a safe space to share our challenges and triumphs.”



DUSTIN NEYER

16

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHTS



Our Men's, Women's, and Couples Ministries are a space to intentionally share our lives with others to help us strengthen our faith together. These ministries are the friends we grow, laugh and serve with. Here's what these groups have been up to this past year!

A Spotlight on The Men:

- ManUp Bible Study happens year round on Wednesdays at 6:30am and 7pm with Bob Fevig and Bill Rozema leading.
- Summer golf league at Gracewil Country Club signed up 22 teams this year!
- Fall Men's Breakfast events held at Main Street Pub or the Life Stream Cafe with a variety of special guest speakers!

A Spotlight on The Couples:

- Two Couples Night's took place this past year including a night of Ax Throwing at Flannel Jack's in Grand Rapids and Murder Mystery Night right here at Life Stream!

A Spotlight on The Ladies:

- Wednesday morning Bible Study at 9am led by Jamie Kragt, Lexi Snip & Tamara Nichols.
- Wednesday evening Bible Study at 6:45pm led by Sandy Morgan.
- Allendale Women's BSF on Thursday mornings.
- Women of Adventure hosted a variety of biking, kayaking, hiking, game nights, cookie baking, and more!
- Water's Edge event with Guest Speaker, Sara Krieg of Ada Bible. Special music performed by Lori Bond and an all women's worship team!

44

IN THE SUMMER GOLF LEAGUE

43

COUPLES INVOLVED IN COUPLES NIGHT

127

WOMEN REGISTERED FOR WATERS EDGE



17

BUILDING & GROUNDS

As we continue our Fully Restored Campaign, we look forward to the future of our space and what God will lead us into in this next ministry season!

THIS PAST YEAR, OUR BUILDING RECEIVED A FEW UPDATES!

- “The Commons” got a new look with updated furniture.
- A new sound system and recording area were built upon to be able to record sound for music videos, podcasts, and more!
- New signage throughout the building.
- Reroof project to repair a variety of leaks in the building.

This past year, we held 6 wedding ceremonies in the Worship Center. We hosted “Colors of Community” throughout the building bringing in members of the community to admire the incredible works of art. The backyard hosted numerous events including: Backyard Worship Evenings, Ministry Fair/Church Family Picnic, Family Fun Nights, Christmas Tree Walk, Easter Walk, and Community Easter Egg Hunt. What a joy to be able to share our building and grounds with our community!





Connect With Us



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LIFE STREAM
CHURCH