



WORSHIP



LOVE

SERVE



# 2021 Annual Report

### *From Your Pastor*

Recently I took a day of solitude; a spiritual discipline which I engage in from time to time in order to keep focused and listen to God. This was a particularly foggy day, and as I was walking through the woods, I came to an open area with a sign which read “scenic overlook.” As I approached the sign, I found myself laughing as you really couldn’t see



more than a dozen yards through the thick cloud which had descended. So, I stopped and stood peering over the cliff, imagining about what it must look like in the distance. It had to be so very beautiful.

In some ways, I feel my visit on the overlook, brings “clarity” to the type of year we have been through together. We have faced many challenges together of ongoing pandemic, isolation, distance, and differing experiences of community life. At times life felt confusing, and it has been difficult to navigate beyond just a few yards, wondering what might lie ahead of us. Sometimes the way seemed arduous and slow going, and yet when we look back, it truly is amazing how far we have come. The word that seems to come to mind is “miracle.”

We truly are blessed as a church, and there are many throughout 2021 who stepped up, sometimes in challenging roles to keep the ministries of the church moving forward. Throughout the year, we were able to maintain multiple venues of worship, meet the challenges of keeping our facility safe, continue in the ministry of making disciples, develop new ministries for caring for our community and church, the merging of two churches, continuing to support the start of a new church work in Gloucester County, as well as see significant upgrades to our building, which included a much-needed new roof. This is evidence of God’s faithfulness as He continues to bless Ashland Church, as we keep focus on the vision and mission given to us, and I am thankful for those who sacrificed so much, working and leading even when we couldn’t always see our path as clearly as we would like.

When I stood on the edge of that overlook, envisioning the beauty of the things which existed beyond where my view would allow, there were evidences not seen which allowed me to develop a picture in my mind. For one thing, I had stood in that very place before, and marveled at God’s creation, carrying these memories like screenshots I didn’t want to forget. Also, I could hear the sound of a swift flowing river, its water streaming over and around rocks. In life and ministry, we don’t always see what is in front of us, yet when I remember our church, I think of you all. I’m reminded of how I’ve watched you reach out to one another when was someone hurting, how you laugh together sharing and celebrating joy, our occasions of worship and singing out the praises to our Lord, simply taking seriously Jesus’ command to “Love one another.” God has placed a generous love in the people of Ashland, and you are the evidences of what God has created, and it is so very beautiful.

It's Great to be your Pastor,

Jamie



## ***Worship Arts***

“Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!” Psalm 34:3

It is indeed a blessing to begin to hear our voices blending together in praise of our God during Sunday morning worship! I am grateful that God did enable Ashland Church to worship together in the sanctuary, outdoors, or in fellowship hall during the entire year of 2021. Again, I wish to thank everyone who worked to broadcast the service via livestream, and who extended hospitality to Ashland's congregation.



Many thanks as well to our worship teams (including audio and visual support) who served faithfully and blessed us with their talents all throughout the year. In addition to weekly worship services, we gathered for Thanksgiving Eve worship, which was held in the sanctuary after dinner. We also met together for both family and candlelight worship services on Christmas Eve. I'm hopeful that we will be able to move forward with more opportunities for corporate worship (seasonal worship experiences for all ages) as this year progresses. I thank everyone for the privilege of serving at Ashland Church.

Respectfully submitted by Carol Holmes

## ***Missions***

The missions committee has continued to meet during 2021. We were sad to see Claudia Tahan have to step down as our chair when she and Fred moved to PA. We would like to thank the following members for their contributions to the committee this past year: Fred Acheampong, Erin Fleming, Jamie Cupschalk, Stephen Cupschalk, Dennis Cesare, Brittany Emmel and Rebecca Colacot. We started meeting again in October using Zoom and are looking forward to in person meetings in the near future. Our main priorities are:

1. To build relationships with each of our ministries or individual missionaries.
2. Communicate the vision, needs, and prayer requests to the congregation.

Each of our members have chosen several ministries to build relationships with, and then we do a missionary moment once a month during the worship service. The committee also recommends and works with our session to complete the annual budget. Several years ago, session decided to fund the giving to missions by taking 12% of our regular giving and setting it aside before any other expenses are paid. Last year we were able to give \$46,000 to twenty ministries.



Did you know? At least one of our missionary couples have been overseas for over 40 years- Al and Mary Ginter in Romania and Thailand. Two of our ministries came directly out of our congregation: Bill and Faith Foust, with Wycliffe Bible Translators, and African Book Challenge, Fred and Esther Acheampong (see ABC Update on page 5).

If you have any interest in either getting to know and praying more specifically for one of our ministries, please let us know and we would certainly welcome more members to our committee. Please reach out to Darrell Proctor or any of our members mentioned above.

-Darrell Proctor

## Children & Youth Ministries

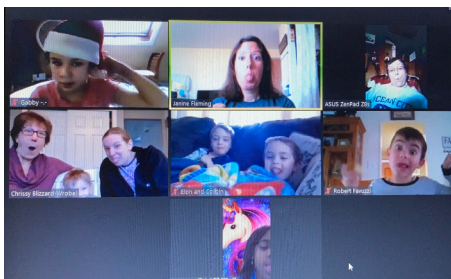
When I look back over all that God has done in 2021 at Ashland Church, I see a family working together even in the midst of a global pandemic to love God with all that they are and love their neighbors as themselves. The children, youth, families, and volunteers that are our Children's and Youth Ministries are no exception.

I witnessed families gather for worship in any way they could, whether in person inside, outside, or from home. I saw parents spend time together and support each other from Zoom small groups to outside activities all over our area, from playgrounds and zoos to winter hikes and bonfires, to the weekly visits on the church playground Sundays after church. We gathered, and we were also blessed, to have opportunities to serve together! Our children and youth served at Urban Promise,

made gift bags and Christmas ornaments for the residents of Laurel Brook, filled Thanksgiving baskets, and Christmas Caroled to our seniors.

As always, I am blown away by the faith of our children. Children and youth in Zoom Sunday School, Kids Church, and Youth Small Groups have the most amazing questions and insight into the love of Jesus and how we can show others it. As more opportunities arise in 2022, I cannot help but be even more excited about what God has in store!

-Janine Fleming





## ***Social Justice Team***

Over the course of 2021, the Social Justice Team began to consider a shift in focus and intent. When the Team began in 2018 we felt compelled and called to see how we might be more intentional as a church body to be involved in issues of justice and equity, near and abroad. In 2020, as many of the same people on this team began to take training for what would later become the Care and Counsel ministry (more on that below), we saw that perhaps this specific area of social involvement, mental health, was what God was calling Ashland to in a more specific way.

As Care and Counsel needed more attention and time to get running, we determined that, while we did not think the time of the Social Justice Team was done, its role was one of support and supplementation. Consequently, over most of 2021 and into this year we have looked for ways as a team to continue to help our ministries as they follow God's calling to provide for the poor, love the immigrant, and care for the sick. We were blessed to be able to do this through helping the Deacons with the Thanksgiving Food Drive, to become involved with members of the Mission's Committee to help with refugees, and to send care packages put together by our Children and Youth for our neighbors in the Laurel Brook Assisted Living (to name a few). We continue to seek God's leading, both as a team and as a church, in pursuing the righteousness and justice that God calls us to, while celebrating the specific call we feel He has given us in the Care and Counsel ministry.

## ***Care and Counsel***

After more than a year of discussing, planning, and training, the Ashland Care and Counsel ministry launched in September 2021. We felt humbled, and nervous, to stand before the congregation while Jamie prayed for our team and those who might come to us. At that time, four of us had completed the training provided through the American Association of Christian Counselors, with others working diligent to finish courses as well. When we slated that first block of open appointments we did not know how God might use this ministry to help. We weren't even sure if we'd have anyone respond to the information we sent out.

Now, seven months later, we are still humbled to think of what God is doing. We have been blessed to be able to come alongside people, both those from our church family, and those outside of it. As all of us can so easily say, this has been a difficult time, whether you're a child in school, or an adult taking care of your loved ones. However, we are not alone when we are part of the body. And in fact, we see that God calls people to just this type of ministry, such as in 2 Corinthians 1:3-5, where Paul wrote:

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ.*



We are thankful for this ministry, and we continue to look forward to see how God will use it going forward. We continue to ask for your prayers, as well as invite you to reach out to Care and Counsel if you are in need. Our coaches welcome adults, young adults, teens, and children. If you would like more information about meeting with a coach, please email [care@ashlandchurch.org](mailto:care@ashlandchurch.org) (all inquiries will be kept confidential).

-Chris Slone

### ***ABC Update***

African Book Challenge (ABC), the outreach ministry of our Ashland Church to the children at Kwabeng, a rural community in Ghana, continued to make a big difference in the life of the kids in the town. Some of the major events during the year were:

- Fred and Esther went back home in July and distributed to all the schools large quantities of donated items, including used computers, laptops, soccer balls, cleats, jerseys and sneakers. Others were books, school supplies, Bibles, Sunday School materials, children's clothes, toys, kids, video-tapes, and CDs (educational & religious). The beneficiaries were Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, Islamic and Zion (Elementary & Middle Schools), and one Senior High School.
- ABC provided scholarships to three ABC scholars attending Nursing Training School, Teacher Training College, and University.
- The ministry donated more books and computers to the well-stocked ABC Library.



The ABC Committee would like to give special thanks to the following people and companies for their support during the year:

- Mr. & Mrs. Winther donated large quantities of children's books, clothes, bag packs and shoes.
- Voorhees Middle School donated a large quantity of Vikings soccer uniforms.
- Mr. Randy Smith of Collingswood donated sixty-four PATCO T-Shirts.
- Darrell Proctor's company, Source One Systems Solutions, for evaluating and fixing donated computers.
- Gallagher Business Development - for enhancing the ABC website and setting up PayPal feature for easy donations.

### ***Special Thanks***

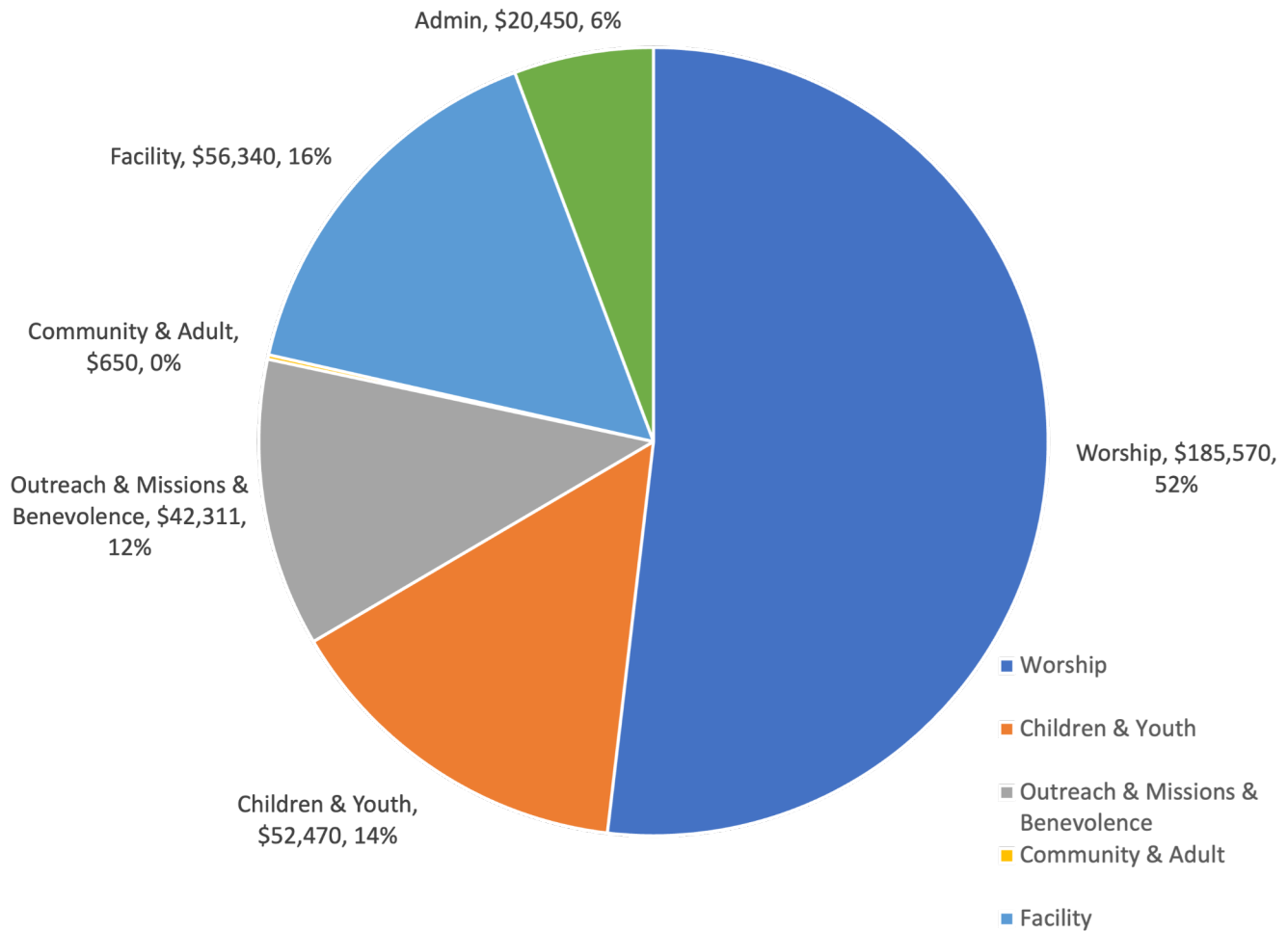
All of the ministries highlighted in this report are incredibly blessed by the many volunteers who contribute to our body. So much has happened over the course of this past year that would not have been possible without your work. While not everything can be found in these pages, we want to especially thank the boards, teams, and groups below.

- Deacons
- Park Avenue Committee
- Re-Opening Team
- Small Group Leaders
- Trustees





## 2022 Total Budget



### Category

Worship	\$185,570	51.9%
Children & Youth	\$52,470	14.7%
Outreach & Missions & Benevolence	\$42,311	11.8%
Community & Adult	\$650	.2%
Facility	\$56,340	15.7%
Admin	\$20,450	5.7%
<b>Overall Budget</b>	<b>\$357,791</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 2021 Budget

- Budget shortfall of approximately 15%
- Expenses in some categories were lower due to pandemic
- Expenses in other categories were reduced
- Final budget shortfall of less than 2%

### 2022 Budget

- Overall budget is 10% lower than 2021
- Adjustments (+/-) made in many areas of the budget
- 5% staff salary increases this year to account for inflation

## ***Ashland Church Staff***

Jamie Cupschalk - **Pastor**  
Carol Holmes - **Worship Arts Director**  
Janine Fleming - **Children and Youth Ministries Director**  
Kim Hodges, Renee Lieb, Chris Slone - **Office Team**

### **Elders**

**2022:** Linda Buzard, Darrell Proctor  
**2023:** Randy Buckley, Barb Cesare, Kevin Gallagher  
**2024:** Mike Greco, Chris Slone, Dave Witt

### **Trustees**

**2022:** Jim Fleming, Tom Seitzinger, Robin Thompson  
**2023:** Dave Cesare, Liam Fleming, Deb Ford  
**2024:** Rob Favuzzi, Kelvin Satterfield

### **Auditing Committee**

Dave Witt: Chair, Melissa Gallagher, Robin Kerth, Taral Shah-Oware

### **Deacons**

**2022:** Conner Fleming, Marilyn Ford, Gloria Proctor, Elia N. Rosario  
**2023:** Peg Buckley, Nancy Cominsky, Stephanie Wiley  
**2024:** Jen Bello

### **Treasurer**

Linda Fleming

### **Financial Secretary**

Rebecca Emmel

### **Assistant Financial Secretary**

Donna Blizzard

### **Nominating Committee**

Kevin Gallagher: Chair, Randy Buckley: Vice-Chair, Brittany Emmel, Wendy Griffin, Elia A Rosario, Tim Strong, Chrissy Blizzard-Wrobel

### ***Our Mission***

To seek the lost and grow disciples who worship and enjoy our Lord.

### ***Our Vision***

To be a Covenant family in our community which is transformed by the Gospel, empowered by the Spirit, and focused by our Mission.

## ***Ashland Church***

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856-429-8844 [AshlandChurch.org](http://AshlandChurch.org)