



"Life Together—With Jesus, With Each Other, With Our Neighbor"

Riverside Covenant Church Annual Report

May 19, 2023

Year in Review (Pastor Ara)

To the faithful church at Riverside Covenant...what a wonderful and exciting 2023-2024 year this has been for our church family! I was approached by a few people in the last several months and asked about my time so far at Riverside (coming up on three years!). As I shared with those individuals, I often times have to stop and give thanks for where God has led me and my family. I have been called by this beautiful community, to serve at a church that I saw planted, in the community that I grew up in, while being engaged in the school corporation that I love to support. It is too cliché to say that this time has been a dream come true, but it certainly feels like it!

In this 2024 year, we focused on the word "proximity" for our church. What does it mean to be proximate to those that we are not close to and share very little in common? How can our lives transform for the sake of Christ as we intentionally move into proximity with those around us? These are the questions we have wrestled with as we have looked at passages in the Bible around the proximate God, traveled the road to Resurrection Sunday, and experienced the trials and troubles of the prophet Jonah.

In addition, this past year we celebrated new life in Christ as we baptized 7 individuals at our yearly river service at Fort Ouiatenon. We also welcomed 6 individuals into our church in membership during our worship service. Thanks be to God for new life in Christ, and new membership at Riverside.

As we move into the rest of 2024, we will continue to consider the proximity of our relationships with others in our community. How might God encourage, challenge, and change us as we step into his calling for our church the rest of this year?

RiverKids (Melissa Polk)

It has been my pleasure to head up RiverKids this past year. Each week I planned lessons and activities based on the same scripture as the sermons. My hope is that this helps facilitate discussions at home. The plan is to continue to do this in the coming year.

I am thankful for the volunteers who come downstairs to serve the children of the church. Each week requires at least four people to come spend time with the children. I am almost always one of them, but I can't do it alone! The children split up into three classes by age so they can have age-appropriate stories, games, and activities. Splitting up also helps keep class sizes small enough to foster connection with the children. RiverKids is always in need of additional volunteers!

One Sunday morning, RiverKids did a service day where the children made lunches for a Lafayette Urban Ministries (LUM) program. The kids were excited to have an opportunity to serve the community in a tangible way.

Youth (Jess Murphy)

As the Youth Group intern, myself along with Pastor Ara, and volunteer leader, Andrew Murray have helped in facilitating youth group gatherings on Sunday afternoons after church. The youth group gatherings would include games, worship, a short message, and small group time.

As a team, Pastor Ara and I lead Journey and Odyssey, groups. I led Journey which consisted of four 7th graders who completed an Old Testament course. Pastor Ara led Odyssey a New Testament course with students in 9-12th grade. Students in both Odyssey and Journey would read books, examine scripture, and discuss how to apply the readings in their daily lives.

In January the youth group partook in Winter Camp at Covenant Harbor. The students learned about God's abundant love. During winter camp students participated in games against other youth groups, attended 4 learning sessions, and spent quality time together as a group. Throughout the year the students were involved in volunteering in activities such as the 5k at Camp Tecumseh, raking leaves at the church, and participated in church workdays. There were also other fun activities sprinkled in throughout the semester such as a church sleepover and game night.

Still to come a handful of the youth will be going to Ecuador with some of the congregation along with other summer activities. We are thankful to all of the parents and leaders who have continued to support our middle and high school students.

Women (Kim Wood)

“Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always.” (1 Chronicles 16:11)

This has been our guiding verse this past year in Women's Ministries. As we continue to serve together, we are reminded to seek His face always in all that we do. The Women's Ministry's Leadership Team consists of Lauren Dorn, Jamie Jones, Maria Koliantz, Brandi Moeschberger, Rita Riggenbach, and Kim Wood. Together, with the women of Riverside, we've had a full year of learning, growing, fellowshiping, laughing, and seeking God together.

Here's a recap of our past year:

- June/July 2023 – pool nights at Leanna Giltmier's home
- August – Ice Cream Social at the Moeschberger's barn, to “kick off” the season together
- September – we read through the Gospels together via listening to Annie Down's podcast (Let's Read the Gospels) and sharing our thoughts/responses via a Facebook group
- October – Progressive Dinner
- November – Women's Retreat with ECC at Camp Tecumseh
- December – Socks and Songs Christmas Event (gift exchange, cookies, and singing)
- January – Our “Winter Walk” turned into a “Cozy Coffee,” due to bad weather!
- February – We heard from Crystal Kirgiss on “Whole and Holy Discipleship in a False and Fractured World”
- April – Pottery and Unfinished Projects Night

- May – Vintage Bingo returned!

As we move into summer, we will once again have swim nights – this time at Stacy Grove’s home. We will also be offering a summer Bible study on the book of James, at Kim Wood’s home (and occasionally Jamie Jones’ home).

We look forward to seeing what God has in store for us this coming year. We will be meeting together as a team for our annual planning retreat in June.

Worship (Mike Tetrault)

The past year has been fruitful and steady for the worship ministry at Riverside. All credit goes to the selfless volunteers who have served excellently and consistently for the edification of Riverside’s congregation. Many members of the worship team have served in their roles for years, and their long-term participation and support are greatly appreciated. I am especially grateful that the members of the worship team include both youth and adults, because our varying gifts and experiences testify to God’s provision across all His people.

This year, we had some key team members graduate or move away, and I am so thankful that several new volunteers have stepped up to fill the gaps and serve the congregation. Josh Hembrough, Jon Polk, Ben Mangrich, Danny Stanley, Jonah Stanley, Ryan Burnette, and Cameron Brennan have all started serving with us since last summer.

In terms of updates and equipment, we are planning to phase out the halogen lights on stage, replacing them with LED lighting. The older halogen lights have had reliability issues, and using a phased replacement approach will reduce having to spend a large amount of funds all at once. We are also expecting to replace the lighting computer and migrate lighting to a more user-friendly software, LightKey. Lastly, the digital piano has some failing keys and we are looking at a potential replacement option in the coming year. A huge thanks is due to Bobby Dorn for his creation of sermon graphics, lighting schemes, and help with updates and troubleshooting. He has been instrumental in envisioning how we can make things work smoother on the technical side.

I want to extend an enormous “thank you” to Teresa Wah and Becky Wellner for the ways they lead the congregation in worship. I want to recognize Teresa in particular, as she and Wei Siong will be moving to the Pacific Northwest soon. Teresa has been an integral part of the worship team since she started serving with us in early 2020. She has always been willing to learn something new and serve where she is needed, even if it was not always comfortable or easy. Her presence and gifts will be greatly missed as she and Wei Siong start their new chapter!

We are blessed to have many talented and generous individuals at Riverside who are willing to lend their gifts and time with the congregation. Moving forward, I believe the worship ministry is in a great position to support the kingdom work taking place at Riverside.

Finances

	2023-2024 Actuals YTD	2023-2024 Budget	2024-2025 Proposed
200 - Administration	\$39,504	\$59,060	\$66,867
300 - Staff Wages	\$126,926	\$168,894	\$161,382
400 - Staff Benefits	\$38,308	\$48,984	\$48,984
500 - Program Supplies	\$11,483	\$25,855	\$24,280
600 - Missions	\$19,120	\$25,932	\$27,312
Total	\$235,341	\$328,725	\$328,725

200 - Administration: building insurance, maintenance/repair, equipment, utilities, and administrative supplies.

300 - Staff Wages: Wages for all full time and part time church staff

400 - Staff Benefits: Health insurance, retirement, payroll expenses, etc.

500 - Program Supplies: Program supplies for RiverKids, PODs, Youth, Worship, Fellowship area, and other church related events.

600 - Missions: Missionary Support, Community Missions, Denominational Support.

*As of 5/1/2024. Fiscal year ends 6/30/2024.