

ANNUAL REPORT

Annual General Meeting
6 February 2022

³ *I thank my God every time I remember you.*

⁴ *In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy⁵ because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now,⁶ being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 1:3-6

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Welcome

The Annual General Meeting of our church is a time for us to reflect on the year that has been, and turn our hearts and minds to the year ahead.

This Annual Report presents a snapshot of some of the aspects of church life over the past 12 months. You will find brief updates to various ministry areas, as well as statistics in how we are tracking in certain measures. Of course, not everything that can be measured is of the same importance—and not everything that is important can be measured—but this data can be helpful in getting a feel for where things are at, and what needs attention.

I hope this report will encourage you in what God is doing in the life of our church, as we pursue the mission of Jesus in the city of Blacktown. And may we give thanks to God in our prayers for the significant things he is doing among us, represented by the pages ahead.

Our Mission & Vision

In September 2019, we launched a Mission and Vision for our church. This was a way for us to place a marker on the map, and clearly define where we are going and what we are seeking to do. We defined it this way:

Our Mission is to grow people who Know Jesus, Treasure Jesus, Depend on Jesus and Represent Jesus.

This is our way of expressing what Jesus meant when he told us to make disciples in Matthew 28. This is the way we describe what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

Our Vision, then, is an expression of what we believe could happen if we pursue that mission.

Our Vision is to see our city flourish in God's good design through a Jesus shaped community.

Under God, this is a picture of what success in our Mission will look like.

Importantly, our expression of our Mission and Vision isn't tied to one particular method. We pursue this Mission and Vision in our ever-changing context, navigating around opportunities that arise, as well as the challenges that confront us.

Our goal is always clear: Jesus. To grow in our depth and breadth, as individuals and as a community, into all that he has designed and called us—and all people—into.

On the following pages, you will see some of the ways our Mission and Vision has landed in practice and some of the plans we have for the future as we continue to pursue this together. In bringing all things together under our Mission and Vision, our hope is to be as effective as possible in faithfully serving God in this city with the resources God has provided us.

Our Mission & Vision



For Salvation

Knowing Jesus as your king and saviour

For Life

In relationship, theology, wisdom and ethics



In worship

Through praise and obedience

In community

Through Jesus centred unity and Jesus shaped relationships



Prayerful

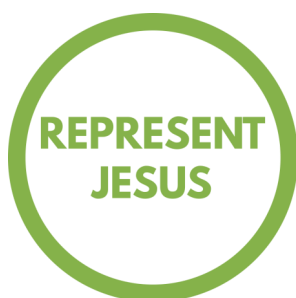
Growing in devotion, depth and breadth

Generous

Trusting God's sufficiency and provision

Courageous

Trusting God's ability to do more than we could ask or imagine



Proclamation

Telling the good news of Jesus

Presence

Reflecting the character of Jesus through Jesus shaped living

Practice

Providing advocacy and aid to support human flourishing

Rector's Reflections

Reflections on the past 12 months

A challenging time

We began 2021 with a hope of returning to familiar patterns of life and church. In February we resumed our 8am and 10am services, and we slowly started to rebuild some of the momentum that was lost during the lockdowns of 2020. Of course, it wasn't long before we were back in lockdown again. The start of 2022 already has many of us feeling weary, cautious and restrained in our hope for the future. It's been a long and challenging 2 years, and it feels like it will continue to be so for some time yet.

Leading a church through this time has had its fair share of difficulties and stressors. There has been a constant readjusting of expectations about what is possible, what we can realistically achieve, and the need to respond to the various individual needs and circumstances of people across our church.

I have personally greatly appreciated the support and encouragement from many across our church for what we have been able to do. I continue to be encouraged by the ways I hear people are supporting one another.

Staff

I am incredibly thankful to God for our staff team. They have each been a wonderful blessing in the ways we have worked together over the past two years. Robbie, Renee and Laurice each bring a unique set of gifts and skills to their roles, and it has given me great joy to partner alongside them, and to see them each grow more and more into the roles in spite of the challenges of covid.

Eiliya has continued to lead the Sudanese congregation through some very difficult times. He has shown great humility through numerous challenges. We are currently working through some questions of clarification regarding the relationship between the Sudanese congregation and the wider Parish.

Opportunities

As we look to the future, there are so many exciting ministry opportunities—

more than we have the present resources for. Three to note in particular:

Pastoral Care Co-ordinator

Parish Council had a discussion last year on future staffing plans. We discussed the potential of a Pastoral Care Co-ordinator in a part-time capacity. This role would focus on our internal pastoral care for our people, growing a pastoral care team across our church, and increasing the quality of growth and care for people, through both Community Groups, and those presently disconnected from a group.

In light of the uncertainties of Covid, and timing of returning on-site post-lockdown, we determined it wise to not proceed with pledging for the 2022 budget, and therefore, we were not in a position to determine if we had the financial resources to proceed. It is hoped we might work our way toward having the resources for this position in the coming year.

Kids Club

We have hoped to launch a kids club in term 2 this year. Our kids numbers have continued to grow over the past few years, and it's been exciting to see young families visit our church and commit to partnering with us. A weekly kids club ministry is another step in growing our connections with both existing and new families, and strengthening our work with a vital demographic in the city of Blacktown.

Unfortunately, our existing kids ministries have struggled to have enough volunteers to support their growth and development, and this challenge has extended into our plans for our kids club ministry. At this stage, it does not appear that we will have enough adult helpers to ensure this ministry is sustainable.

Young Adults Community

In recent times, God has been kind in bringing a growing cohort of young adults into our church. We recognise that there are many unique challenges faced in this stage of life, and particular needs to address for growing as mature disciples. We are keen to respond to what God has been doing in this demographic by starting up a Young Adults Community.

I would value your prayers as we seek to be wise stewards of our resources in all these opportunities.

Our Mission and Vision

The past year has been a reminder that although our mission and vision remain constant, the ways through which we may work towards our goals need to be flexible. There are many areas where we haven't been enabled to make as much progress as we might like, while new opportunities have risen and grown beyond expectation.

When I first began in this role, I preached from Philippians, and invited you to share with me in praying this prayer for myself and for our church:

⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. Philippians 1:9-11

Whatever the year ahead may hold, this prayer captures what is core to who we are as a Jesus shaped community. We are growing people who Know Jesus, Treasure Jesus, Depend on Jesus and Represent Jesus—all to the glory and praise of God.

There are many uncertainties we face. Our confidence is not in our plans. Our confidence is in Jesus. He will do his work—in us and through us. We will prayerfully plan and respond to what he is doing, living more and more the way he has created, designed and called us to live.

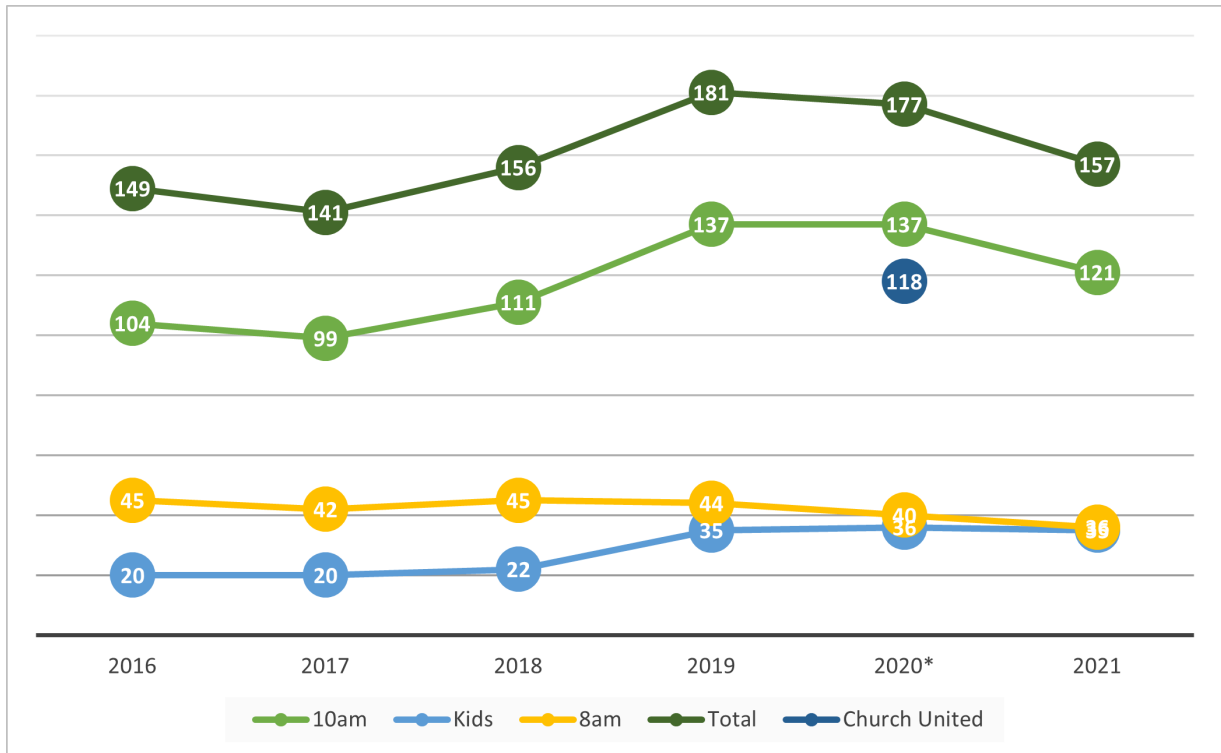
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Thomson'.

Luke Thomson
Senior Minister

Church Life

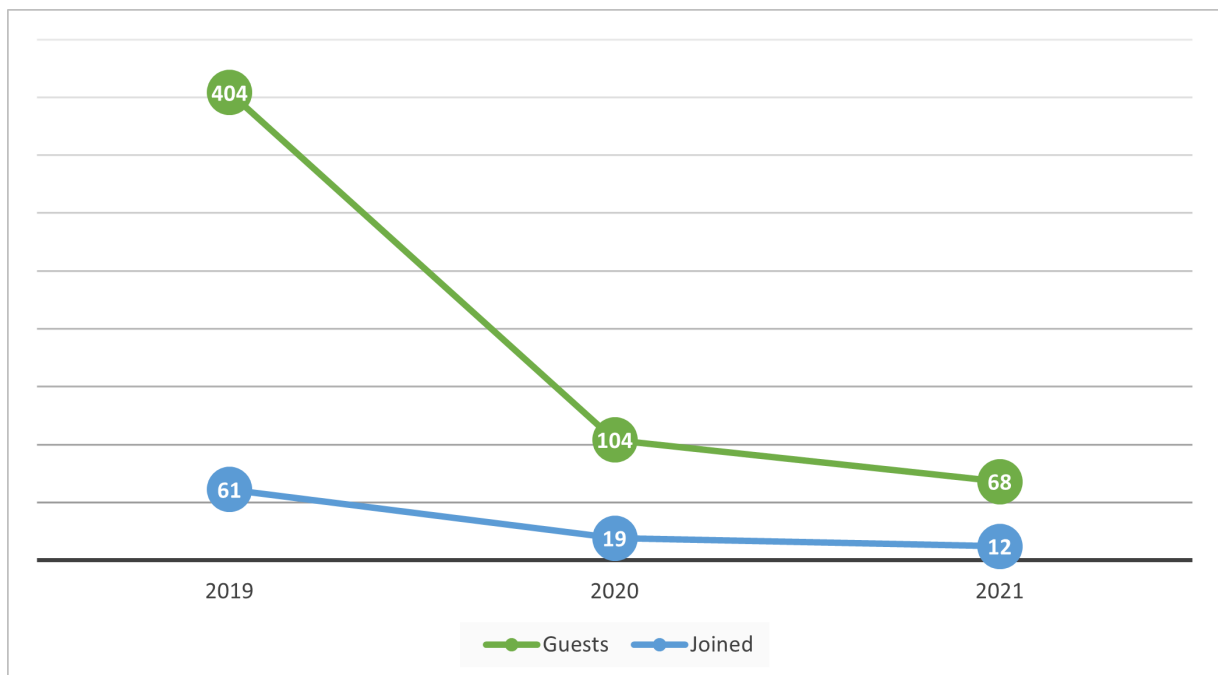
A snapshot

Average Sunday service attendance



*2020 attendance for 8am and 10am only for period 1/1/20-15/3/20. Church United includes total attendance from 1/11/20-31/12/20.

New members and guests



68

guests visited our church

12

people joined our church

Know Jesus

For salvation and for life



We want every person to Know Jesus as their King and Saviour.

We seek to grow to Know Jesus as a life-long and life-changing endeavour, understanding what God is doing in the world through Jesus, and how we should respond. What have we done in 2021?

Bible studies



In term one, we produced Bible Studies alongside our sermon series in Luke. This resource encourages us to grow deeper in exploring the Bible together beyond the sermon, in our Community Groups or on our own.

Hosea Seminars



During our Hosea series, we hosted a series of evening seminars on: an overview of Hosea, a theology of marriage, understanding Old Testament prophecy, justice and judgement, and a theology of divorce.

They were a great opportunity to go considerably deeper in some important topics. Seminars are available on our Youtube channel.

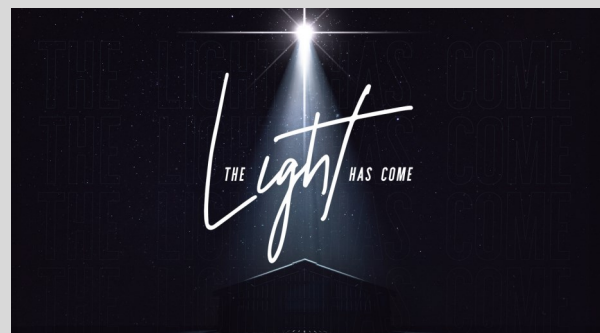
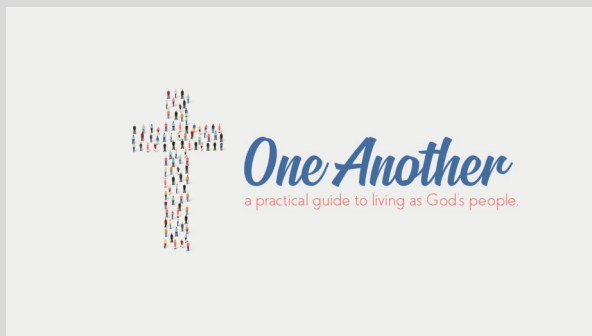
Simply Start Reading

Our Church Bible Reading plan read through 100 key passages of the Bible, as well as the books of Psalms, Proverbs and Matthew.

Sermon Series

KNOW
JESUS

Here is what we have preached through over the past 12 months to help us Know Jesus through his Word.



What's Next?



Preaching

In 2022, we are planning to preach through the books of: Luke 14-18, 1 Corinthians 8-16, Malachi, 3 John and Jude. We will be preaching topically in several short series: Psalms, Addiction, and “One Another” (considering how we live out some of the ‘one another’ passages of the New Testament). Later in the year, we will preach our annual Vision series and Advent series.

Church History Bites



Knowing Jesus better includes knowing the history of God's church through time. We are putting together a series of short videos to help us better understand the past, and how it helps us to Know Jesus.

Bibleology



We are looking to run another series of videos later in the year exploring the book of Malachi during our six week sermon series.

Ministry Grid

Ministry Grid is an online resource with training videos that cover everything - from discipleship to people skills, from kids ministry to running a Community Group, and from Missional thinking to Stewardship. Each area of training can be done at a volunteer level, to a team leader level, right through to a Senior Minister level. We'll be rolling out Ministry Grid progressively over the year as yet another way for us all to grow as disciples of Jesus.

Treasure Jesus

In worship and in community



We seek to grow people who Treasure Jesus in Worship, through praise and obedience, and in community, through Jesus centred unity and Jesus shaped relationships.

What have we done in 2021?

My Jesus Story



In 2021 we launched a three week program in our Community Groups to encourage people to reflect on and write their story of Jesus' work in their lives. Our hope is to film a significant number of these to share in our services to build a deeper sense of

being a Jesus shaped community. We also hope to use them as part of an increase in our online engagement, sharing real stories of how Jesus impacts our lives.

Men's and Women's ministry

We launched a new era of men's and women's ministry. Despite some significant Covid interruptions, we started off the year with some great encouragement and renewed enthusiasm. We hope to continue building on this start in the year ahead with four events over the course of the year. Each event will have a particular focus on one of the four aspects of our Mission: to help us Know Jesus, Treasure Jesus, Depend on Jesus or Represent Jesus.

Bible Reading in heart languages

In term one, our 10am service heard a member of our church read the Bible in their heart language each week. It was wonderful to hear a variety of new voices from the front and to more visibly show that we welcome people into our church from all walks of life. The experience helped us experience what it is like to attend a church in an unfamiliar language, and to provoke us to consider further how we reach the diversity of people in our city.

Treasure Jesus

In worship and in community



Leadership Training

We began regular training session with our Community Group leaders and Welcome Team members to improve our effectiveness in these areas.

Mission Awareness Week

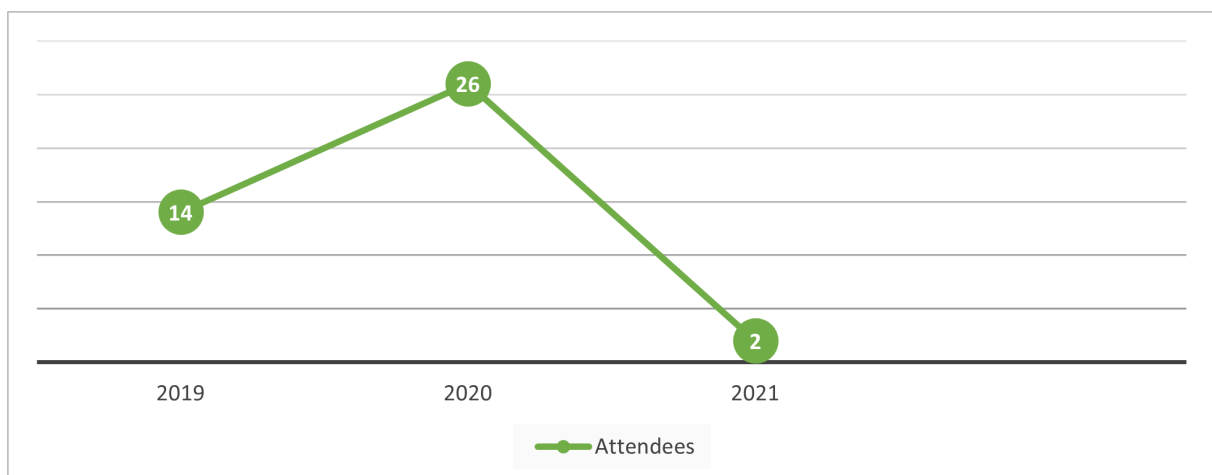
Our Mission Week is an opportunity to have our eyes lifted to see and hear what God is doing around the world and through our mission partners. In 2021, Simon Gillham (head of Missions at Moore College) came and preached to us and was a great encouragement. Unfortunately our Mission Dinner with one of our mission partners had to be postponed due to Covid.

Welcome Lunches



Welcome Lunches are an opportunity for those new to our church to connect with others, hear a little about the Mission and Vision of our church, and consider the next steps in partnering with us in our mission to the city of Blacktown.

Welcoming people into our church is a vital step in pursuing our mission, and helping people navigate pathways to connect, belong and partner with us. Due to COVID restrictions, we were only able to host one lunch in 2021.



What's Next?



Youth@10

We started the year with a specialised monthly program for youth on Sunday mornings, as a way to help them understand and integrate into the life of our church. The program seeks to help our young people understand clearly significant aspects of church life, theology and ministry, and help them get connected into the broader life of our church. As our youth ministry begins to build momentum, this will be a significant way to welcome and integrate them, and we have already seen some great fruit with many of our young people committing to serve across a number of valuable ministry areas.

Young Adults Community

In 2022, we're looking to launch a new young adults ministry to give specialised attention to a key growing demographic of our church.

Creative Team

We're bringing together a team of people who creative skills and passions to help us enhance our communication and engagement. We want to connect well with a variety of media to facilitate learning and growing as disciples of Jesus.

Depend on Jesus

By being prayerful, generous & courageous



We are seeking to grow in our devotion, breadth and depth of prayer, being generous with our time, talent and money, and through courageous decisions and actions that reflect our deep trust in God's power and grace.

What have we done in 2021?

Prayer Week



We continued to set aside a week devoted to reflecting and growing in prayer together. In 2022, we have Peter Jensen joining us to preach during Prayer Week.

Prayer Gatherings

Our prayer gatherings were interrupted by COVID, but we were able to gathering for one in-person event, and one online gathering through the year.

What's Next?



Growing prayerfulness in the digital space

In 2022, we plan to grow our digital presence in connecting and guiding people in prayer. We will introduce some online tools that will help us build godly patterns and a sense of unity in our prayer lives as a church community.

Increased prayer across our services

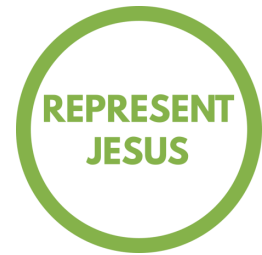
As we look to focus our sermon series each on one particular area of our mission, our 10am services will be structured in ways that help to highlight this focus across the whole gathering. In our service format that focusses on Depending on Jesus, we will be using a variety of methods for praying specifically for various aspects of church life and mission, with an increase in prayer as part of those services.

Pledging

We have temporarily paused our practice of pledging in for the past two years, recognising the great uncertainty that many of us felt (and continue to feel). We intend to resume this for 2022, as we consider further opportunities before us to stretch and grow our ministry and mission. We want to be courageous in our plans, and clearly dependent on Jesus for our financial needs to support a growing church.

Represent Jesus

By our proclamation, presence and practice.



We seek to grow people who Represent Jesus by proclaiming the good news of Jesus, being a Jesus shaped presence in every sphere of life, and through our practice of advocacy for God's good design and assisting in practical aid.

What have we done in 2021?

Mobile Community Pantry



Our Mobile Pantry ministry continues to provide practical support to our community. We are also returning to serve morning tea, and increase our broader pastoral support in 2022 as we look to develop and sustain relationships with shoppers and

represent Jesus' wholistic care for people.

English Classes



Our English classes run on Tuesday evenings and Wednesday mornings, and help meet a significant practical need of people in and around our city.

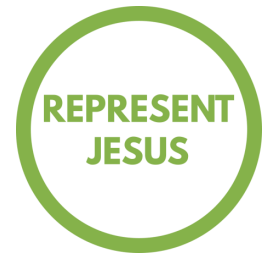
Playtime



We relaunched our playtime ministry with a new program. It has been great to build up a regular group of families attending both from those who have recently joined our church, and from those in the wider community.

Represent Jesus

By our proclamation, presence and practice.



Scripture in Schools

Renee co-ordinates a team across four of our local primary schools to teach kids about Jesus each week. It is a wonderful opportunity to serve kids, their families, and the school community, as we develop important relationships through this ministry.



We also partner with COBIS (Churches of Blacktown in Schools) who are involved in supporting Scripture teachers and other workers in several local high schools.

Blacktown Hospital

Luke & Robbie are connected with the pastoral care team in the hospital, and are on call to visit people who would like to speak to an Anglican minister. Typically these are people in critical situations, and our presence is greatly appreciated by patients and their families, and hospital staff view us as an important part of broader patient health and care.

Blacktown Council

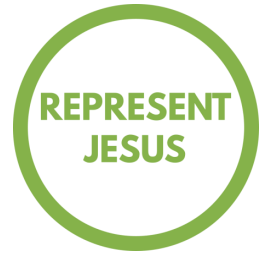
Luke & Robbie are regularly invited to take part in local council meetings by opening the meetings in prayer. This has been a great opportunity to serve and build relationships with our local government and officials.

Mission Partners

We support a number of mission partners, both in Australia and overseas. Many of these work in challenging places, and sharing public information about their work can threaten their work, or even their safety. We continue to support them through the difficulties of the pandemic. And are working through possible ways to continue connecting with them and sharing about their work, as we navigate around the increasingly public and online presence of our own church. Our Beyond Blacktown mission committee continue to

Represent Jesus

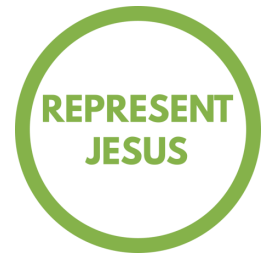
By our proclamation, presence and practice.



work faithfully in connecting with, praying, and supporting their work on behalf of our church. As you will read in our treasurers report, we also provided financial support to their work over and above our normal means.

In 2021, we finished supporting our CMS mission partner, Sophia, and are awaiting a new CMS contact to partner with.

What's Next?



Marriage, Parenting & Finance Courses

After interruptions in 2021, we will again run the Marriage Course in 2022. The intention is to run the course every few years, alternating with a parenting course, and a financial management course. Each of these courses are aimed at advocating for people living according to God's good design in the various spheres of life. They are intended to be both a blessing to our own people, and an opportunity to engage and connect with the people of our city.

Building Ministry Teams

As we re-launched our physical gatherings, we have moved towards people serving in a single area of ministry on a Sunday, where possible. This has already allowed us to start building a team-ministry mindset as we serve alongside others, and has increased our ability to train people to serve in various ways. In 2022, we will continue training and equipping team leaders in various ministry areas to enable us to better serve one another as a church, and to serve the broader community through our outreach ministries.

Carols in the Park

After being on hold the past two years, we look forward to a return to running our Carols event in December. It is a wonderful opportunity to lead our city in celebrating Christmas, and the good news of Jesus coming into our world.

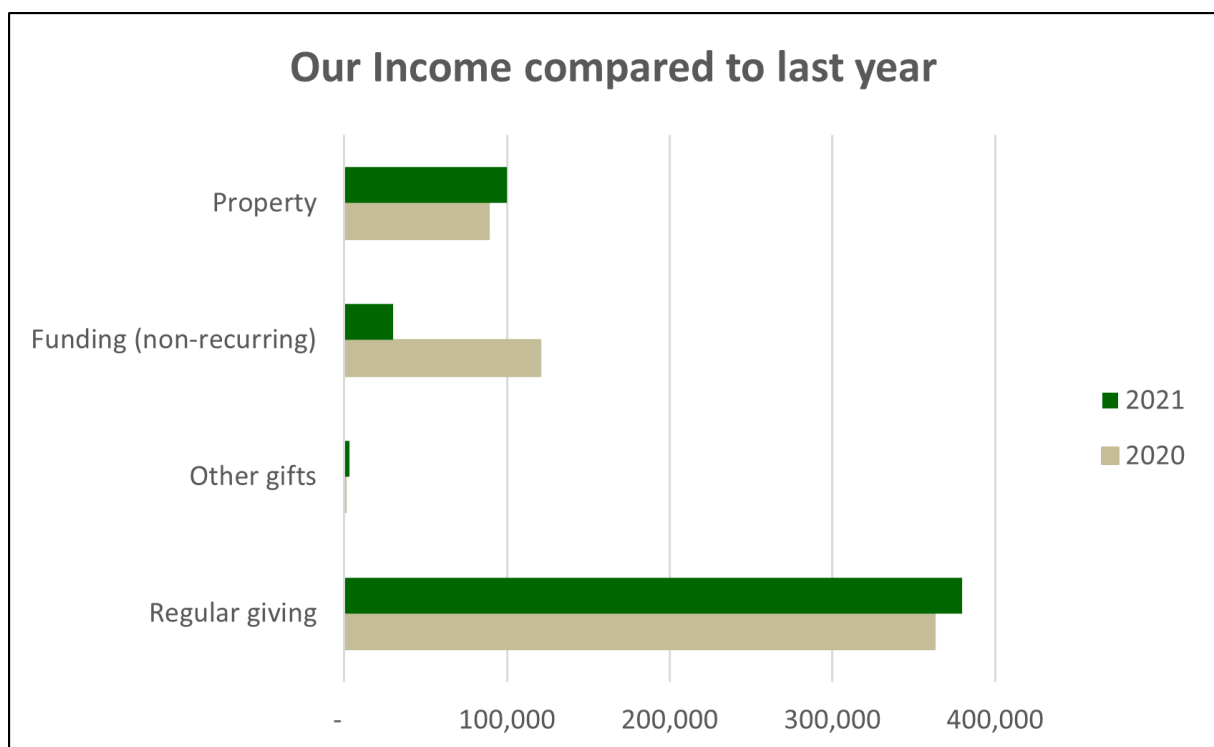
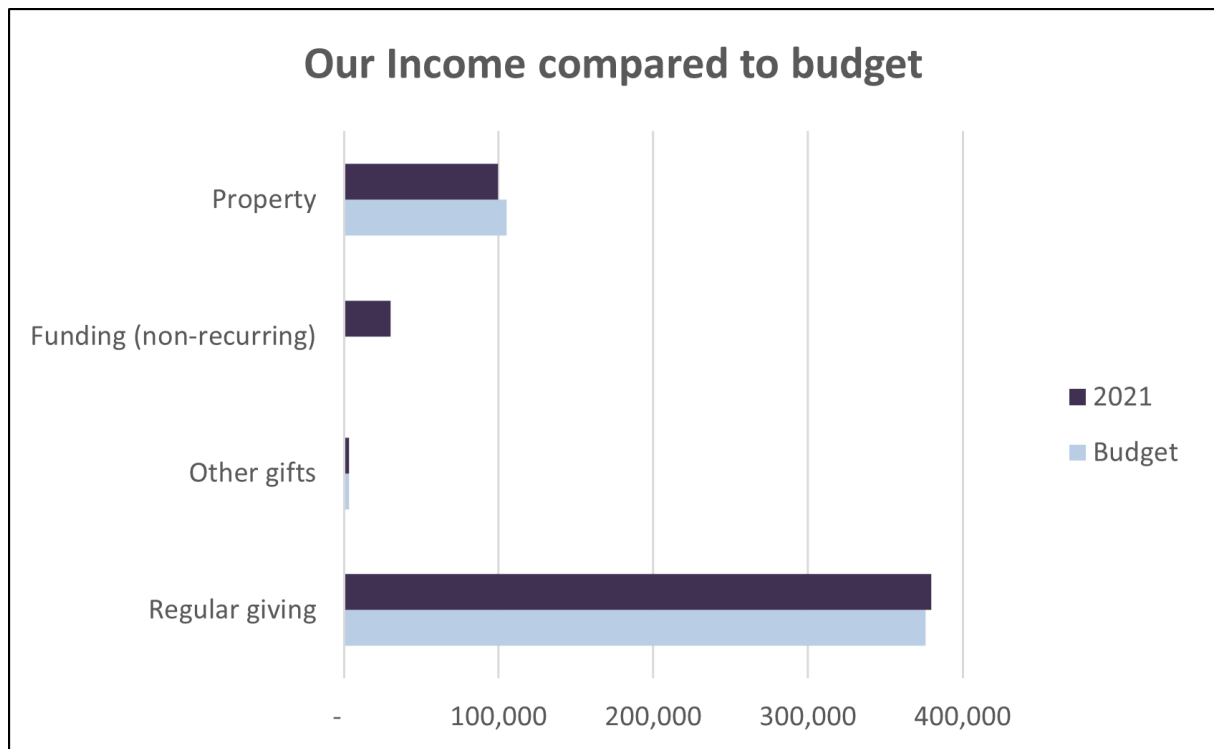
Visitation Team

We are building a small team with skills and passion in the area of visitation to grow our pastoral care capacity as a church, and meet the needs of some of the more isolated, needy or vulnerable members of our church.

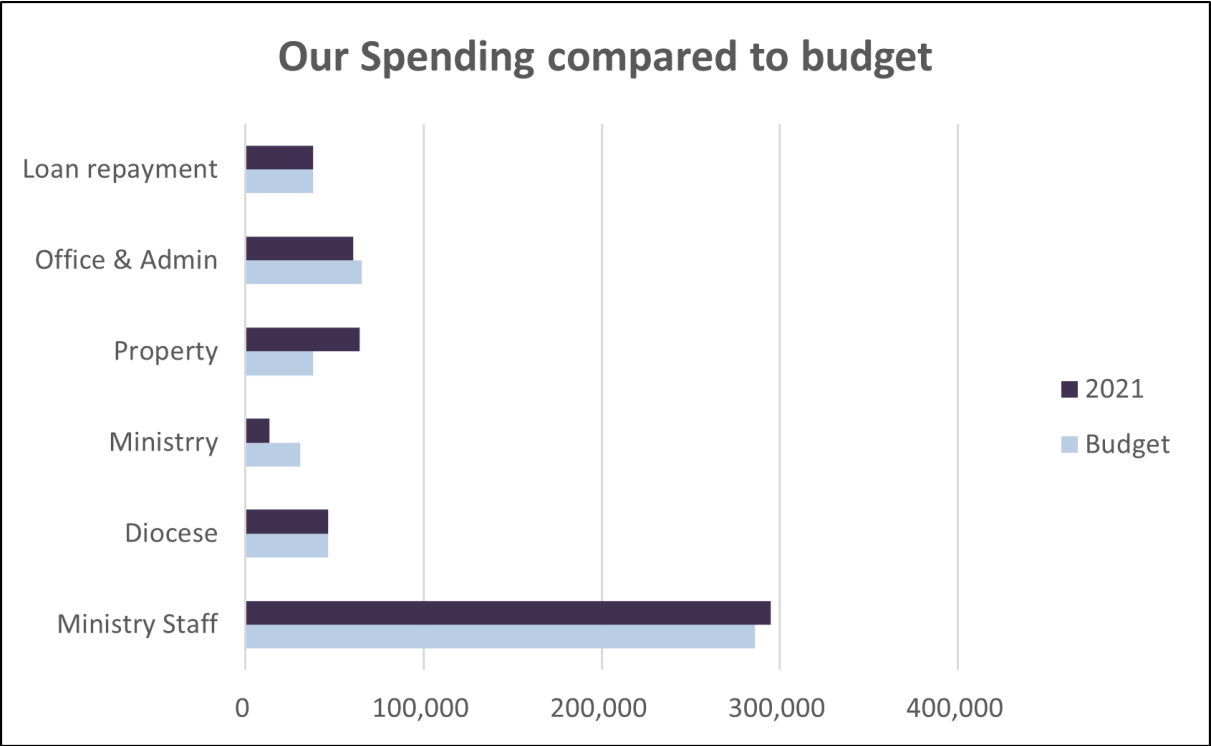
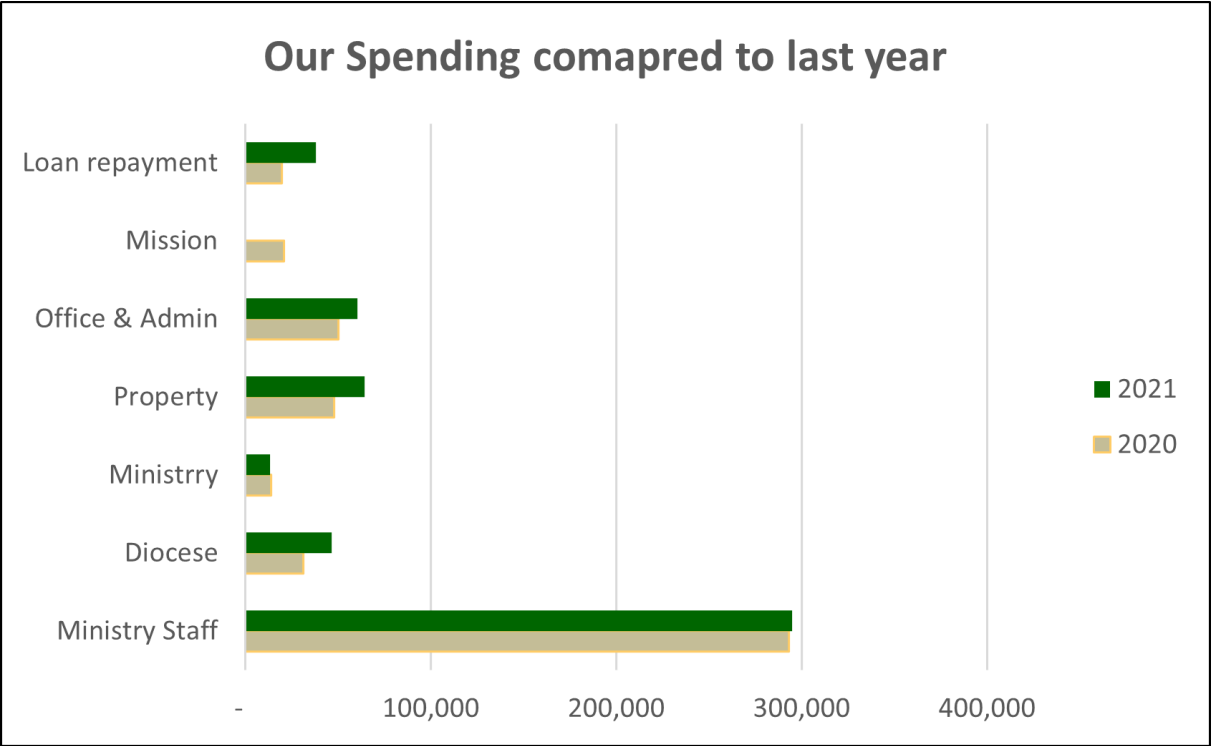
Financial Overview

A summary of our income and spending for 2021.

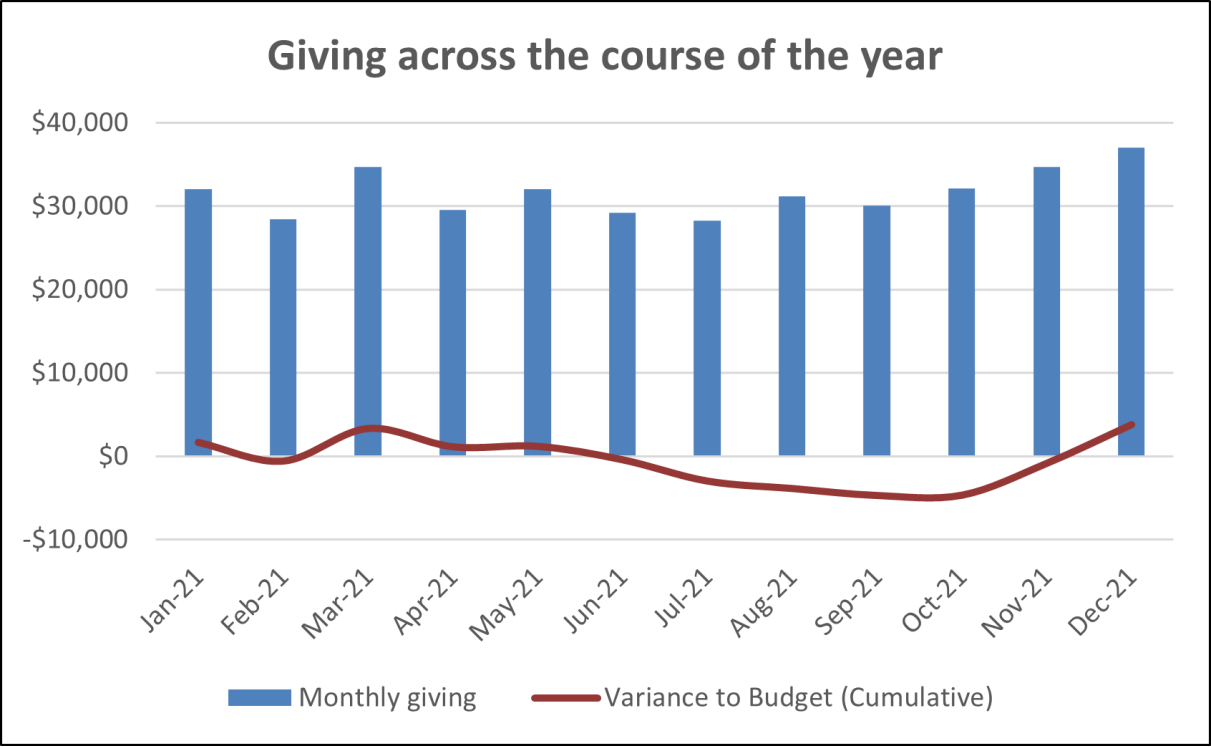
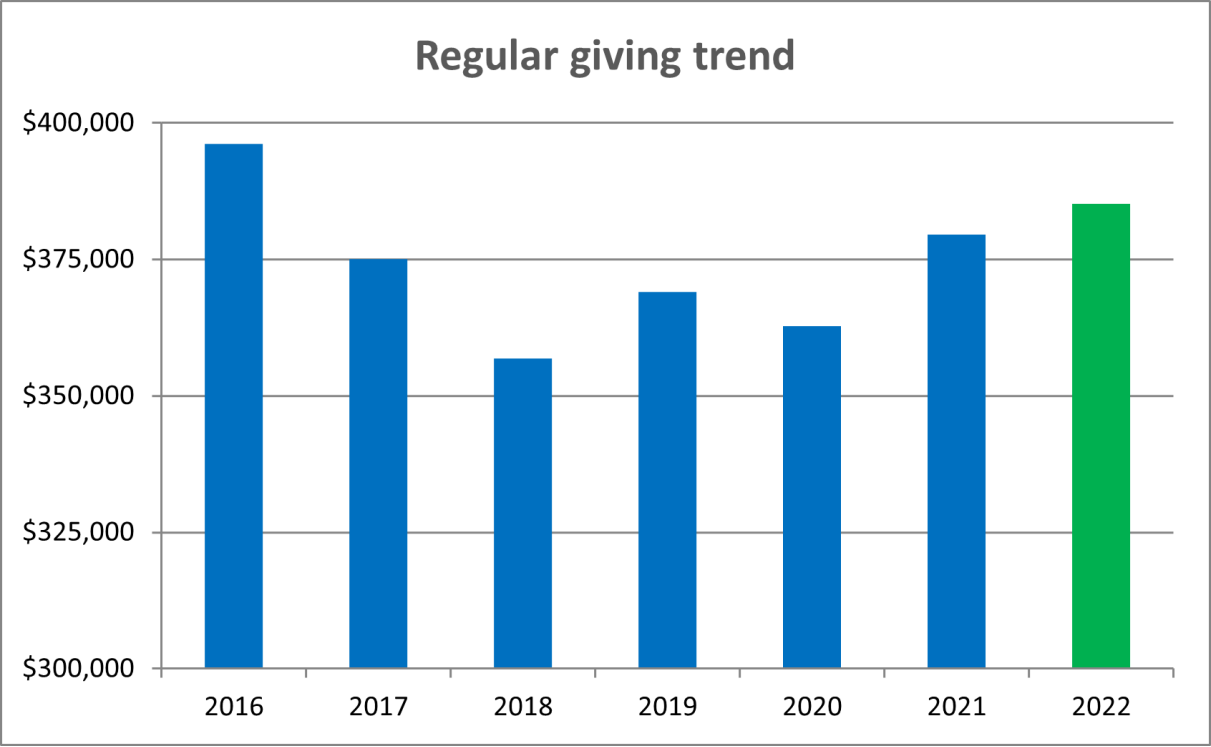
See the detailed financial reports for further information.



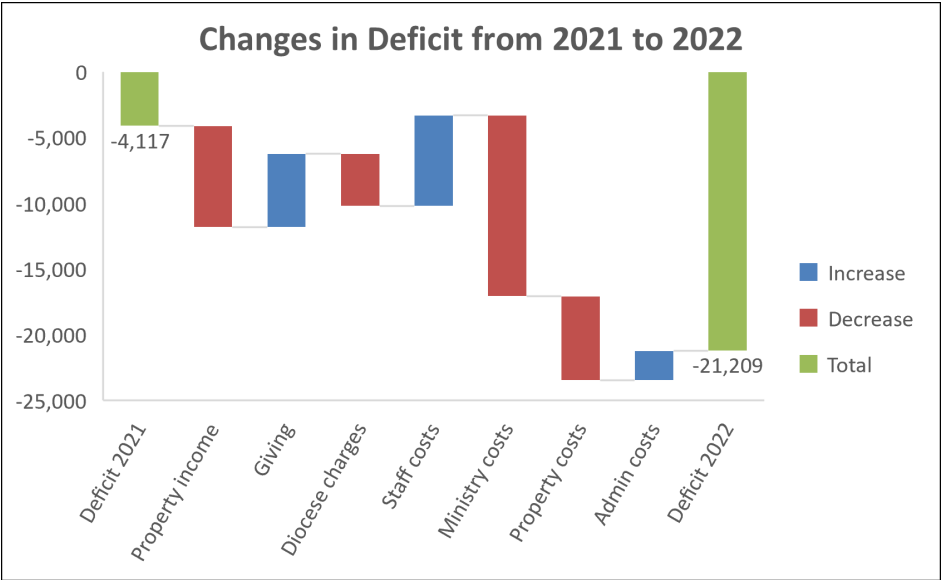
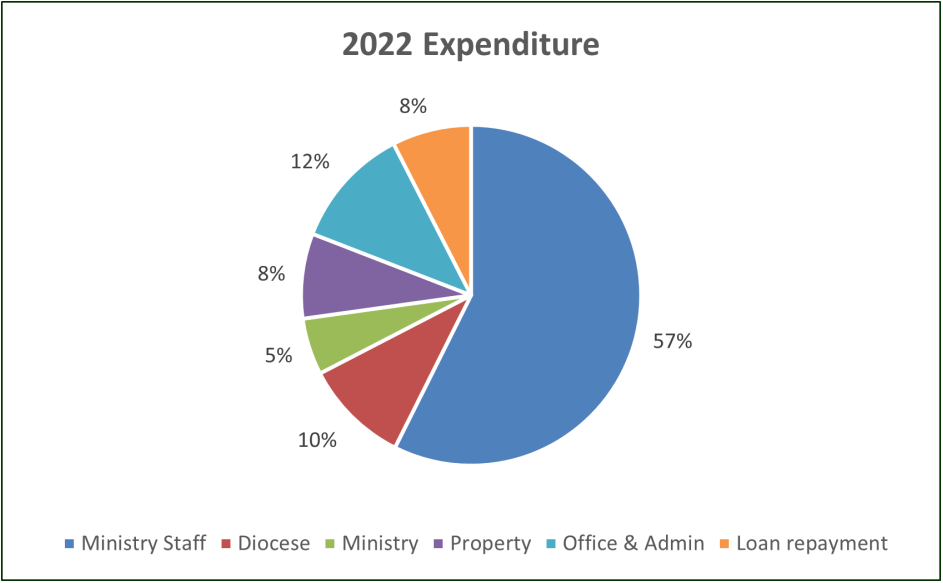
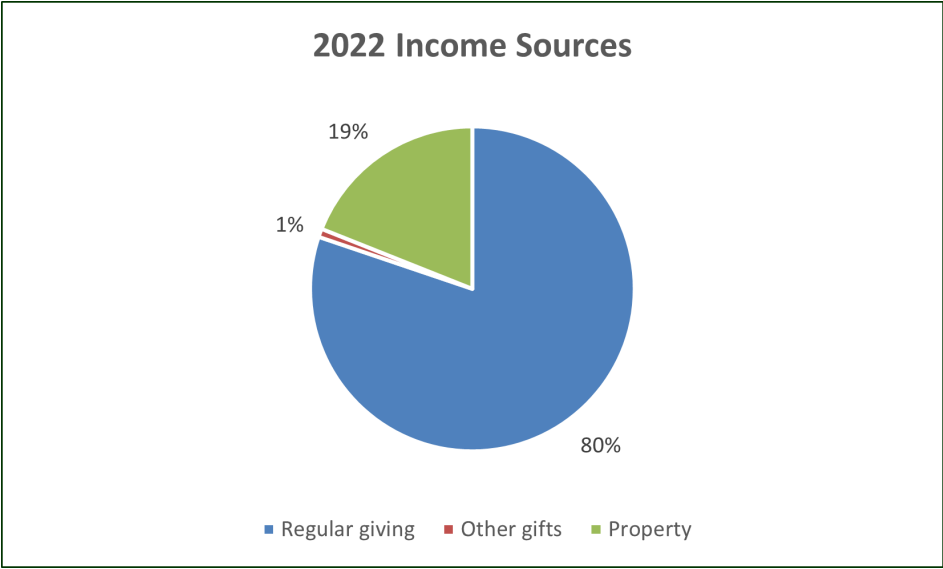
Financial Overview



Financial Overview



Financial Overview



Treasurer's Report

Greg Muddle

Key Numbers - 2021

Deficit for the year: **-\$4,117**

Compared to Budget: **+\$15,595**

Net Funds Available: **\$150,699**

Regular Giving: **\$379,503**

Compared to Budget: **+1.0%**

Increase on Prior Year: **+4.6%**

Key Numbers – 2022 Budget

Deficit for the year: **-\$21,209**

Regular Giving: **\$385,100**

Increase on 2021: **+1.5%**

Parish funds in summary

	2020	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Budget
Revenue	573,005	484,200	512,327	480,225
Expenses	(465,357)	(474,112)	(488,862)	(471,634)
Net Income (PFS page 2)	107,648	10,088	23,465	8,591
Loan capital repayments	(10,619)	(29,800)	(27,583)	(29,800)
Surplus (Deficit)	97,029	(19,712)	(4,117)	(21,209)

Key changes in revenue in 2021: decrease \$60,678 compared to 2020

- A decrease of approximately \$120,000 from one-off JobKeeper and other funding in 2021 not repeated in 2021.
- An increase of \$30,000 in one-off funding from successfully applying for a Community Building grant to fund our landscaping work.
- An increase of approximately \$19,000 in regular and other giving in the parish.
- An increase of approximately \$20,000 in property income, as rents from the Childcare Centre returned to normal (rent relief had been provided during the 2020 lockdown).
- A decrease of approximately \$7,000 in property income as rent from PACS ceased with the closure of the service at the end of June.

Key changes in expenses in 2021: increase \$23,403 compared to 2020

- An increase in property costs of approximately \$30,000 funded by the Community Building grant.
- A decrease in other property maintenance costs of approximately \$14,000, with less cyclical maintenance costs incurred in 2021. 2020 had been a larger than normal expenditure year as we undertook painting and a number of other projects .
- An increase in office costs of approximately \$10,000, largely related to increased staff hours in 2021.
- A decrease of approximately \$20,000 in mission donations from church funds, that money having been funded in 2020 from the surplus provided by JobKeeper support.
- An increase of approximately \$15,000 in various Diocesan recharges. The Diocese had provided relief from the Church Land Acquisition levy in 2020 which accounts for two thirds of this increase.

Key variances from budget in 2021: net result \$15,595 better than expected

- Parish giving approximately \$7,000 better than expected.
- That was cancelled out by decreased rents from the PACS closure.
- Staff costs (ministry and admin) were approximately \$4,000 higher than expected, the largest factor here was additional leave accruals as most staff did not use their full annual entitlement.
- Regular maintenance costs were lower than the average rate used in budget calculations by approximately \$2,000.
- Ministry costs were significantly down on estimates, approximately \$7,000, which reflected another disrupted year in our activities.
- Finally, for the 2nd year running our Carols event was cancelled, with a saving of \$10,000.

Mission Support

The Prescribed Financial Statements only reflect mission support out of

general parish funds, money donated in the parish specifically for mission work is not shown.

In 2021 mission support payments of \$18,616 were made, with payments to CMS, Pioneers, MAF, CMS and BCA in accordance with our planned support and donor-specified amounts to Anglicare, Compassion and Perry & Kim Anderson. This amount included some unallocated receipts from prior years, total funds received in 2021 to support mission were just under \$15,000.

2022 Budget

The budget shows a planned deficit again in 2022. Although the main cost of running the parish, staff, has a relatively stable cost base and most ministry and property costs also have a stable base, there is:

- A further decrease in property income of approximately \$6,000 with PACS rents reducing to zero (compared to 6 months rent in 2021).
- Increases in Diocesan levies of approximately \$4,000.
- Increase in wages in line with Diocesan guidelines.

The giving target was once again set without the benefit of pledging. At the time of setting the budget the target represented a 2.5% increase on our 2021 projection. With 2021 finalised this number looks under-ambitious, at current giving growth levels we should be able to reduce the planned deficit considerably.

The budget for 2022 shows a deficit of \$21,209 after including our mortgage repayment obligations. This is appropriate and affordable in the short term but is not sustainable in the longer term.

The funding of ministry in this parish is substantially from the faithful giving of the members of the parish, and growing – in faithfulness, in generosity and in number – will be the at the heart of making up this shortfall and funding growth and reach of our ministry in the future.

Greg Muddle

Warden's Report

Geoff Stevenson, Graeme Tuckwell, Greg Muddle

2021 presented the usual property management issues but there were no major outstanding issues at the moment.

Projects completed during this year include:-

1. Thanks to some diligent work by Renee Sheedy in applying for a NSW Community Development grant we were granted a sum of \$30,00.00 to landscape the our property along Richmond Road. First Wraight Landscaping was contracted to do the work and although there was numerous delays due to wet weather and covid lock-downs the bulk of the work has been completed.

Included in the work is a curved wall on the 3rd Avenue/Richmond Rd corner. Although not yet finished this wall will have signage displaying our name.

When the quotes came in for the landscaping it was evident that the grant would not fully cover the amount of work required. Therefore it was decided by parish Council to contribute \$10,000 to the project.

2. A non-slip coating was applied to the pavers at the car park entrance. There had been a concern that when the pavers are wet they are quite slippery and this could lead to a serious fall. The coating has now been down for about six months and we continue to monitor it's efficacy.

3. The pine log borders around the car park were replaced with treated pine edging boards. This was necessary as the old logs were rotting away and were in poor repair.

4. Another of the solar inverters was replaced under warranty.

As always the Wardens are thankfully for the many volunteers that assist us in managing our building and our finances. There are too many to mention individually but be assured we are very grateful for your support and we look forward to working with you again in 2022.

Our 2040 Vision

Over the next 20 years, Blacktown will see many people come and call this city 'home'. We seek to grow, spiritually and numerically, so that we might pursue our Vision to see our city flourish, in God's good design, through the Jesus shaped community we are within this city. We are dreaming big about the kind of impact we might have, and how we might see this Vision become a reality. Here are some of our big dreams for our church, ministry and mission in the next 20 years:

- 100 new confessions of faith in Jesus each year.
- 1000 kids in a holiday kids club program.
- A growing community of trained leaders equipped and empowered to serve Jesus in our church, our city and around the world.
- Resourcing the global church to pursue excellence in cross-cultural and cross-generational ministry.
- Having a clear Jesus shaped identity and character that is known, recognised and appreciated throughout our city, its people and institutions.
- A thriving ministry involvement in the new Blacktown university.
- A network of church congregations gathering each week across our city, and a recognised partnership with other Christian churches for the sake of the gospel.
- Our church representing the diversity of the city in age, culture & language.
- A significant and visible presence with staff and patients in the hospital, where our partnership in public health is recognised and valued.
- Connecting with every new parent/baby born in Blacktown Hospital.
- Sending groups in short-term mission trips to support and resource work in remote places.
- Sending people from our church into long-term mission fields beyond Blacktown with significant prayerful, financial and pastoral support.
- Every person in the city of Blacktown hearing the good news of Jesus and experiencing something of the grace shown to us all.

Will you join us in praying toward this end, for the glory of Jesus and for our joy?

