

2023

ANNUAL REPORT



ORLANDO GRACE
CHURCH

872 MAITLAND AVE
ALTAMONTE SPRINGS, FL 32714
407-660-1984



VISION STATEMENT

**“WE EXIST TO
GROW IN CHRIST,
BLESS OUR CITY,
AND SEND TO THE
WORLD.”**

Dear OGC Family,

As I did last year, I write this with a deep sense of gratitude to God for his grace on us and thankfulness for all the leaders and volunteers at OGC. This was the first year since the pandemic that I feel like we were largely proactive in our work instead of reactive. Our goals last year were intentionally internally focused. Our desire was to secure the framework or trellis upon which we will continue to build OGC. We did this by moving some staff around, adding Ragan Bartholomew as our Ministry Operations Director, making significant changes to our internship and residency programs, investing in our volunteer teams, conducting an elder retreat, staff development, and many other things you can see in the Strategies Report. We did this so that if growth is what God has for OGC, we would not just grow wide, but deep. We don't desire to just grow in numbers, we desire to grow in disciplemakers. We desire to see people truly grow in Christ and be sent into each of our parts of Orlando and together make an impact for the kingdom.

We finished the year by establishing our first long-term strategy in my tenure here as Teaching Pastor. We have a clear idea of where we are going and how we hope God will use OGC in Orlando over the next 20 years. Both organizationally and personally, I have a great sense of God's grace and expectation for what he wants to do in and through OGC. I'm excited about the investments we are making in our internship and residency that will develop the next generation of church leaders. I'm hopeful that as we walk into another polarizing election year, OGC can model gospel faithfulness, unity, and charity that our country so needs. I'm motivated by a sense of urgency as we engage the dechurched in our city. It is a great privilege to pastor here and one I hope I will be able to do for many years to come.

Our desire is to be radically transparent with what we set out to do each year and what we accomplish. Our hope is that this annual report is more than just information. We hope it represents good stewardship of the money and time you generously give to see our church flourish and impact Orlando. As always, if you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Jim Davis — Teaching Pastor



2023 STRATEGIES REPORT

2022 was a lot of change, to be sure. You can read about that in last year's Annual Report if you're so inclined. But 2023 was... more. By God's grace, it's all been positive! But there were definitely moments that felt a little bit like going down a hill on your bike as a kid and realizing it's a little steeper than you expected.

For instance, this year we added 3 new elders and 5 new deacons, brought on one new full time employee, added additional hours for two part-time staff, launched both of our full-time [Pastoral Residents](#), and had three employees take on new roles in the organization. In addition to those personnel changes, we revised the bylaws, restructured the Deacon board, created a [benevolence request process](#), launched the OGC Women's Ministry, reorganized the Missions Committee, redesigned the Formation Group curriculum (releasing in Q1, '2024), rewrote our Community Group manual, launched the [Ministry Internship Program](#), added over 30 Student and Children's Ministry volunteers, changed donation processing platforms, deployed a new organizational purchasing software, repainted 3 classrooms, restructured 5 office/classroom spaces, and hosted major events for three different ministry partner organizations. Not to mention, our Teaching Pastor really helped us end the year with a bang... by publishing the Great Dechurching with Mike Graham! As our staff has become very fond of saying, "we have fun here."

In 2022 we had 125 individual goals, of which we accomplished about 96. In 2023, we had [163 goals of which we completed about 150](#). But aside from all of the tangible work that was accomplished by the staff, elders, deacons, and many volunteers, the coolest part was seeing how our organizational efforts have grown so much more collaborative over the past year. As we transitioned this year from a [small to a medium sized church team](#), and from a [medium to a large sized church congregation](#), it has become essential for our processes to become increasingly collaborative. Rather than each person owning projects from start to finish, our teams are increasingly owning processes which each of our many organizational projects will go through at various points. While this can cause growing pains at times, and can make things feel occasionally more complicated than they used to be (which they are), the data over the last year shows that our capacity is increasing. But more importantly, so is our teamwork. As the staff, elder, deacon, and member volunteer roles become more clear, I can see our church functioning more and more like the body that Paul envisioned in 1st Corinthians 12. And by the grace of the Holy Spirit, I can also see our relationships exhibiting more of the love that Paul described a chapter later in 1st Corinthians 13.

In keeping with all of this, I'll leave more detailed explanations of the past year's ministry efforts to the reports of our various team members contained in the following pages. I'll simply conclude by saying it has been my pleasure to get to brag on our teams a little here, and my absolute honor to get to work with them this past year. I look forward to another year of fun and pray that Christ will be glorified in all of our efforts in 2024.

In Christ,
Robert Jackson,
Executive Pastor,
Orlando Grace Church

YEAR END FINANCIAL REPORT

TOTAL GIVING

\$1,132,851.04
(tithes, offerings, & grants)

**ADDITIONAL
INCOME**

\$46,867.62
(rental building, interest, etc)

**TOTAL
EXPENSES**

\$972,726.54

**REMAINING
LOAN
BALANCE**

\$1,193,743.03
original loan balance: \$1,828,360.96

**CASH IN
BANK
1/1/23**

\$250,648.31

**CASH IN
BANK
12/31/23**

\$384,164.53



NEW MEMBERS AND BAPTISMS

We started the year with 213 members and ended the year with 228. We added 46 new members and were sad to say goodbye to 31 members.

We were blessed to celebrate 3 baptisms at our Covenant Celebration Service in September.

WORSHIP REPORT

I've been at OGC since July of 2019, and every year, something *big* has happened – a big event or some big problem that I was forced to solve with my volunteers.

In 2019, a lifetime of poor vocal hygiene came to a head on Christmas Eve when I broke my voice and had to get major vocal surgery (twice). In 2020, the pandemic forced us to rethink worship completely, and my job suddenly became that of a full-time video editor. In 2020-2021, we had a surge of attendance growth that split our worship into two services. That Christmas, our sound system died and we were forced to gut and replace the whole thing, right after a mass exodus of A/V volunteers (not my fondest memory). In 2022, JP came on board as the director of A/V and technology, leading and developing our technology teams and initiatives (one of my fondest memories).

In 2023? Well, nothing really *big* happened. After reflecting on this for a while, I think that's probably a good thing. 2020-2022 was our problem-solving era. It was all about finding solutions to challenges that prohibited us from worshipping the way we wanted to.

- “How do we worship during lockdown?”
- “How can we avoid distractions associated with a bad sound system?”
- “How we can better develop our tech team without spreading ourselves too thin?”

By God's grace, we've largely solved these problems. 2023 was a season of *incremental improvement*. That is, we aimed to be at least 1% better every Sunday than we were last Sunday. Most of this happens in small, behind-the-scenes actions. Things like perfecting our sound levels, standardizing our onboarding/training practices, or honing our instrumental tones.

I asked JP what we should highlight in an annual report for 2023, and he said something that hit different: “We're getting better at not being a distraction.” What's the goal of a great technology and worship ministry? To be invisible. To be so transparent that all focus is fixed on God, His Son, and His Gospel. And by God's grace, I feel like we're getting better and better at that – and that's more than enough for me. But that's not to say we haven't been hard at work!

In 2023 we:

- Onboarded five new volunteers for on-stage or in-the-booth worship
- Upgraded our internet to a faster and more reliable infrastructure
- Introduced several new songs to the congregation, including a few original arrangements
- Made several technical improvements to our sound & lighting for worship
- Gone through the Heidelberg Catechism in corporate worship
- Replaced our old projectors with new, brighter ones

Part of me loves the thrill of solving problems, but another part of me loves that we're in such a stable, healthy place as a worship and A/V team. Going forward, we'll continue to make ourselves more transparent and deflect all glory in worship onto God.

On behalf of the entire worship and A/V team, we thank you, the rest of the congregation, for making corporate worship truly corporate, and we're excited to “ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name” (Ps. 29:1) in 2024 and beyond.

Matt Kenyon
Director of Music & Liturgy

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY REPORT

Throughout this year, I've been overwhelmed with gratitude for the numerous opportunities we've had to serve the children and families of OGC. Looking back, it's been a year filled with heartwarming moments and steady growth within our children's ministry.

First, we welcomed a large number of new babies this year! These sweet gifts are just now starting to enter into our nursery and our hearts are so full! Additionally, our PreK classroom has seen seats fill to capacity, while other classes continue to welcome new faces each Sunday. Witnessing the enthusiasm with which these little ones embrace their time at church is truly inspiring. I've cherished hearing parents' stories about their children eagerly looking forward to Sundays.

Another highlight was our engaging summer Scripture Memory Bingo program. The children were given the opportunity to participate in memorizing scripture each week during the summer. Many kids participated and were eager to recite their verses. I'm so grateful for the families that took that challenge on. We are praying for lasting impact and the hunger for God's Word to continue to increase in the homes of our families.

Equally noteworthy has been the unwavering support of volunteers and the emergence of new leaders within our ministry. The Lord has been so faithful in providing volunteers and raising up leaders within the children's ministry. With a trend of growth here at OGC it became apparent that I would need others to rise up and serve in a greater capacity within the children's ministry. I was excited to join hands with a group of folks to make a difference in how we support our volunteers and families on Sunday mornings. I would love to recognize the efforts and willingness of our eight ministry lead volunteers that have begun investing their gifts and time to make Nursery, PreK, GraceKids, Grace345, Welcome desk, and Safety team more fruitful. Danita Ellis and Wendy Bowerman have taken on our Welcome desk, Dan Van Nada supports our safety team, and Christina Mansfield, Carly Fleischmann, Sherry Cunningham, Paige Benton, and Allison Alderman joined me on the classroom front. Together, we're learning and striving to cater to the diverse needs of our volunteers and families.

As we look back on the doors that God has opened for us this year, our hearts overflow with praise. His faithfulness is undeniable, and He continues to reveal Himself to our children. Let's persist in our prayers, seeking more opportunities to be a part of His work in the lives of the children at OGC. I am profoundly thankful for all that God has accomplished in our children's ministry this past year. My prayer is for us to carry this gratitude and an ever-growing desire to glorify His name into the year 2024.

With heartfelt appreciation,
Jen Bruner
Children's Ministry Coordinator



STUDENT MINISTRY REPORT

Another year of Student Ministry at OGC! I am again so thankful for the Lord's grace in allowing me to be at this church and see our students growing in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. It's been a really fun year to be with these students.

When a lot of people talk about Gen-Z (and now we've got Gen Alpha already in 6th grade) they don't always have the best things to say, but when I see the next generation I am excited because I'm seeing a generation who wants more than the culture can offer them. My prayer for this next generation is that we see a generation known for their heart for the Lord and so at OGC we are trying to do what we can to raise disciples who will always grow in Christ, bless their city and send to the world.

I want to say I am incredibly thankful for everyone who has supported the Student Ministry at OGC in any capacity. Whether it was giving up a weekend to come to the Winter Retreat, supporting the ministry financially, giving up a week to come to Summer Camp, teaching an Equipping Hour class, or coming and pouring into our Students on Wednesday nights, I am incredibly grateful and thankful for each one of you. This year alone we added 4 new Equipping Hour Teachers and 7 new Wednesday night volunteers and I am thankful for each and every one of them!

On the subject of Equipping Hour, this year we completed a transition from the homemade curriculum that I was writing each week to The Gospel Project. This is a cool thing because it means that from Preschool through High School your children are all learning the same lesson at an age appropriate level. I've really enjoyed the switch because it gives me more time throughout the week to connect with Students and get ahead on other work.

This year also saw a bump in the hours that I work per week at the Church which meant I was able to be more focused on finishing my degree and the work that I do at OGC. I'm incredibly thankful for the extra hours. This year brought a lot of growth in the Student Ministry and I am so very thankful and hopeful for all of what God will bring about in 2024!

Ben Alderman
Student Ministry Director



ADULT EDUCATION

The end of 2023 marked the end of the second year of our 5-Year Equipping Hour Curriculum! To date we have completed 14 unique classes (either 10 or 5 weeks each) on all sorts of subjects. To see a complete list of upcoming courses, as well as to see classes from previous years, you can [click this link](#). Former classes are all the way at the bottom of the page. Our attendance for these classes has ranged from 40-70 on average, and we have had 14 members (plus two subject matter experts from outside the congregation) teach various classes in the last year. Thank you so much to all of those who have volunteered their time to lead & teach, assist with AV needs, and participate in discussions!

In the next year we are looking forward to continuing our curriculum with classes on subjects like the Gospel of John, The Trinity, Christian Ethics, and Discipleship. I'm particularly excited about the Discipleship class, as we will be using elements from the Emotionally Healthy Spirituality series, Justin Holcomb's Abuse & the Church curriculum, The Great Dechurching study, as well as insights from RTS professors and local licensed mental health counselors on how to effectively engage the Christian vocation of discipleship in the context of our modern cultural moment. The goal of this class is equipping members of Orlando Grace Church to pursue holistic and integrated discipleship in ways that are not only biblically faithful, but also culturally intelligent and emotionally healthy.

Towards that same end, moving into 2024 you can expect to see OGC's Equipping Hour ministry become increasingly integrated with our [Head/Heart/Hands model of spiritual formation](#). The intention behind this is that we, both as a church and as individual believers, would continually strive to be fuller and more vibrant reflections of the image of Jesus in Orlando. Since the image of God includes renewed minds (Rom. 12:2), we believe that Christian Education is an essential component of our becoming more Christlike. As we seek to continue growing in this area, we know there will be hits and misses. So would you consider taking the time to help us gauge our progress and make effective adjustments by filling out this [quick survey](#)?

Finally, to all who have attended classes, thank you for spending another year learning about Jesus and His Word with us! I look forward to going "further up and further in" to the knowledge of God with you all in 2024.

Robert Jackson,
Executive Pastor,
Orlando Grace Church



COMMUNITY & FORMATION GROUPS REPORT

Community Groups

We have had another great year with Community Groups! We are now offering 12 different groups meeting in locations around the Orlando area. These groups all look a little different; discussing different topics, meeting at different times and having a different blend of fellowship, study and prayer. But it has been such a joy to see how the Lord has been working through these groups to build connections among believers. For the first time this year, we have over 60% of church members participating in a Community Group. These groups are a great way for new attendees to connect with church members and become a part of a true community here at OGC. As we look towards 2024, we are always looking to continue to grow the number of Community Groups we offer so that everyone has the opportunity to participate in a Community Group near their home that works with their family rhythms.

Formation Groups

This year has been a rebuilding year for our Formation Group ministry. These Formation Groups exist as a next step for those who are interested in a more integrated approach to spiritual formation. The revamped curriculum has been tested in a few small groups. We are currently working to relaunch Formation Groups for both men and women in early 2024.

Amanda Walton

Family Ministry & Discipleship Director



WOMEN'S MINISTRY REPORT

At the end of 2022, a “think tank” was gathered by the Elder Board to discuss the needs and methods with which we could serve the women at OGC. We discussed our history at this church and others and what may work well to re-initiate a formal women's ministry at OGC this year. After a few meetings, and input from the think tank members and elder board, the Women's Ministry Committee was formed with the following members: Tammie Arreguin, Valerie Hall, Amy Gabriel, Amanda Walton, and Kelly Simpson.

This group of ladies then got to work! One of our first tasks was to define who we are (and who we are not!) We came up with the following Mission Statement and Core DNA which should define our work. We also worked behind the scenes on defining and designing the best ways to communicate with women, define our events, manage proposals, and determine how to prioritize time, energy, and resources to determine what events to pursue.

Mission Statement:

We exist to cultivate women as daughters of Christ and sisters in the body through connection, discipleship, study, and development of their giftings at OGC.

This can be exhibited in our 4 primary DNA definitions:

OUR DNA:

- **Word-based ministries: Bible studies, theology, teaching.**
- **Development of women in their giftings: encouragement, practice, feedback.**
- **Discipleship: vulnerability, life hospitality, authenticity, formation groups.**
- **Connection: fellowship, relationship, events, retreats**

With this helpful identity and definition, we then turned our attention to organizing events we believed would serve the women of OGC through fellowship, contemplation, and learning.

1. **Coffee, Tea, and Theology** - Back by popular demand, this monthly summer series chose a different teacher and a different topic each month May-September. This allowed people to attend when in town and allowed a space for new teachers. Val was skilled at organizing and teaching this event. Attendance ranged from 10-30 depending on the month (and the weather, it was hurricane season after all). Topics included: Fear of God, Royal Priesthood, Rebekah: Villain or Hero, Image of God, and Deborah.
2. **Summer Solitude** - Summer Solitude was created to provide a quiet space for women to have an hour to write a text from 1 John and to meditate and pray through the text. Naomi Wai originated this ministry and was the driving force for it to be enacted with assistance from Tammie. After the hour of solitude, there was time outside for the kids to play and moms to hang out. Through the six weeks, there were around 30 women who attended.
3. **Fall Book Study** - Similar to last year's 9-week Bible Study, this book study allowed the men and women to divide for the teaching and discussion time to allow for increased intimacy and for more opportunities for leadership and teaching experience as well as provide experience to new small group facilitators. Attendance was consistently about 30 women each week and a consistent core group of ladies who attended every week. We studied Rejoice and Tremble, utilizing the outline provided by a pastoral intern and adapting the teaching time to our own “voice” and context.

4. **Website** - While not strictly an event, this was another helpful task completed this year at the lead of Amy, web designer extraordinaire. This page has helpful information and will be filled with more links and news in the coming weeks for upcoming events. [Click here](#) for the OGC Women's Webpage.

Preview of Coming Attractions -

Each of the above events could be recreated or adapted for the future to serve and encourage ladies. We also plan two new options for 2024. A weekend retreat, tentatively scheduled in February of 2024 to allow for a more focused time of fellowship and connection (more details to come) and two Ladies Bible Studies in the spring, with morning and evening options to meet the various scheduling needs of women at OGC. The morning study time plans to include childcare.

Looking forward to 2024!

Kelly, on behalf of the women's ministry committee.

DEACON REPORT

New Deacons

In 2023 we added 4 new deacons: Jonathan Mee, Jonathan Preston, Matt Tinley, and Stephen Bruner, bringing the total number of deacons to 10.

Deacon and Areas of Responsibility

Deacons are assigned with different areas of responsibility so that elders can continue to focus on the prayer and ministry of God's word. (Acts 6:3-4).

Here is a list of our deacons and the areas they serve in:

Brian Mumbert - Mercy Ministry (Choices Women's Clinic)

Chris Wallace - Building Maintenance

Dan Sandon - Service Teams

Jonathan Mee - Connections Team

Jonathan Preston - A/V Ministry

Larry Person - Hospitality

Matt Tinley - Translation & ESL

Ray Lau - Responsible for organizing quarterly deacon meetings and interfacing with elders on church needs as necessary.

Ryan Mansfield - Church Operations (Workday organization, Baptism, and Communion)

Stephen Bruner - Church Operations (Benevolence, Childcare)

Deacon Quarterly Meetings:

With the addition of the new deacons, the deacons have begun meeting regularly on a quarterly basis. These meetings are used to identify different ways deacons can continue to serve both the church members and people in Orlando.

Benevolence Process:

In 2023, we established a benevolence process to help people in need. This has made it more efficient and effective to respond to requests and help when we can. If you have a need, please fill out our help request form: <https://www.orlandograce.org/help>



Church Workday:

- Weed and mulch beds
- Weed playground
- Remove branches and debris around property
- Treat ant mounds
- Install 5 new quest parking signs and 1 fire lane sign
- Pressure wash exterior under walkway
- Clean exterior and interior windows
- Clean out blocked gutter sections
- Patch and repair Pre-K door stop
- Fix outlet in conference room table



OGC MISSIONAL SURVEY

RESULTS

AREAS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

8.4%

Increase in the number of people who report most of their spiritual conversations happening inside the context of long-term relationships

- Growth in areas of prayer (3.6%) and evangelism (6.9%) as strengths.
- Growth in the number of people who weren't attending another church twice per month before OGC from 3.6% in 2022 to 7.9% in 2023. (meaning more de-churched & unchurched attenders.)

AREAS OF GROWTH

- Drop in the perception of Sunday Service inspiring people to love and serve the city.
- Significant decrease in ongoing spiritual dialogue with Christians (10.9%) and investment in the spiritual growth of others (12.1%).
- Involvement in mercy ministries decreased (7.2%).

Note: We had a low number of respondents this year, so in some cases, trends might be skewed from last year due to a lower number of respondents.

MISSIONS TO THE CITY

This year, OGC members were involved in several unique ministries that bless our city.

The Jobs Partnership of Florida

This year, OGC continued as a Church Partner for The Jobs Partnership of Florida, a growing group of churches, employers, businesses, support organizations, and volunteers who assist the unemployed and underemployed in Central Florida to get on a better path to a career, while also instilling biblical principles for better living. The organization conducts two, 12-week classes each year that include a series of lessons on job and career skills, as well as life skills based on biblical principles. Volunteers help facilitate the learning and come alongside the participants to encourage skill-building and faith.

In 2023, OGC acted as a “supporting church” to the program. As a supporting church, four members of OGC volunteered as table coaches, sitting with participants each week of the class and supporting their progress. Four OGC Community groups provided a meal each for the 40 to 45 people in attendance.

In the spring of 2024, we plan to once again act as a supporting church in the program. We are looking to spring of 2025 to potentially become a host church and hold a 12-week LifeWorks class at Orlando Grace Church.

Sharing Center

OGC participated once again in the Sharing Center’s Thanksgiving Food Distribution. Leading up to Thanksgiving, OGC partnered with the Sharing Center to aid in their goal of serving 400 families in need. OGC provided multiple bags of meals to provide for families in need.

Choices

A team of 5 families from OGC participated in this year’s Choices Women’s Clinic Walk for Life. Together, the team raised a total of over \$10,000.



CHURCH PLANTING

Orlando Grace Church is deeply invested in supporting the planting of churches from around the world. Below are updates from some of the church planting efforts OGC supports.

NUOVA VITA – SALERNO, ITALY

Missionaries

Nuova Vita Church is doing good! There are good vibes in the community. This year we feel like we have had a very good year. We have seen few people growing in their faith and commitment to God's work. Still a lot to mature and grow, but we are very blessed to see what God is doing here in Salerno. We had five people taking the decision to get baptized. On June 25th, we welcomed in the church family Valentino, Ilaria, Paola, Erminia and Justine.

We kept on going with both men and women bible studies that have been of great blessing to our growth in Christ. Women have been learning to study the Bible through inductive method, and now are applying it to the letters to the Hebrews, walking verse by verse through the whole book. Men are focusing more on learning about spiritual disciplines and most importantly on the importance of being men of the Word.

This year we also had the opportunity to have two mission teams, from four different churches (one of them was OGC, Thank you again!) that came and served with us here to both adults with English lessons and kids summer camp.

For 2024, we would still like to create our own Sunday School curriculum, and focus even more on what it means to make disciples who make other disciples. We would also love to improve our outreach system, to grow in reaching for the lost outside our community.

REDEEMER MANCHESTER – MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

Greg and Christina Willson

Over the past year, we baptized 6 people, 5 of which are new to the faith. This year we already have two more people who became Christians as well! God has been gracious to us on that front. We've ordained our first elder (other than myself) this past spring, and I was able to take a sabbatical over the summer. Those are two areas that illustrate how we've grown in maturity in the faith, as well as new faith, over the past year.

We moved to a new Sunday venue that is more accessible and with more room, and that's been a blessing from God as well. Our missional communities (what we call our small groups) are still going strong, and each has a good shared mission focus. There are a handful of people who aren't Christians that are connected to these groups.

We've been able to hold some credible outreach events, from a community arts show to a Christmas light switch on, and in some cases, we've now become the organization that others look to to lead. In an environment that is quite hostile to the gospel, this continues to be an answer to prayer and gift to steward well.

We've also had some challenges (as all churches do). There were a couple of families that left under some difficult situations. Though the fallout from that seems behind our church family now, we still look to God to unify us in His Spirit. Those families were also some of our bigger givers, so we've had to pull back in some areas, too. Please pray for me and the other elder in how to navigate this well, and for this to be an opportunity for Redeemer to be more unified in this gospel.

When Redeemer started 5 years ago, less than .1% of people were connected to a church in our neighborhood of about 60,000 people. Now that number is closer to .3%, and we've been able to play a big part in that. We are so very thankful to be partners with Orlando Grace, and look forward to see what God will do through our work together.

Thank you for joining God in His global mission with us!

OGC MISSIONARY – UNSPECIFIED COUNTRY, MIDDLE EAST

From day one of the recent devastating earthquake in our region of the world, members of our church have been on the ground helping those in need. Through the efforts of our church and other like-minded churches God is healing people in one of the hardest-hit neighborhoods and our church is now overseeing a growing church plant. I have been privileged to support our main church as well as surrounding church plants mostly through preaching, teaching and discipleship. My greatest encouragement comes from watching members of our congregation continue to grow in their faith and trust Christ even in times of persecution and various trials.

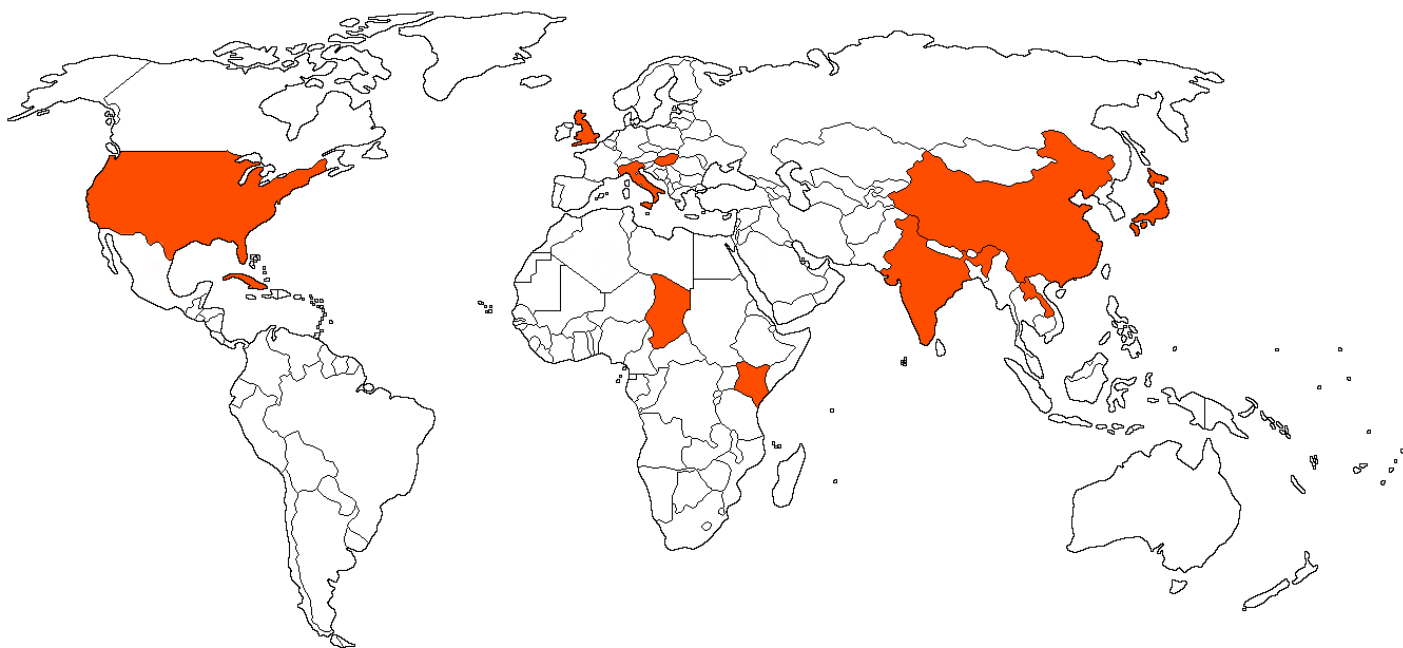
REDEEMER FELLOWSHIP OF KUWAIT – KUWAIT

Mitchell and Emily Cooper

Redeemer Fellowship of Kuwait just celebrated its 2nd Anniversary. Currently led by elders Martin Jaeger, Olson Ratnassamy, and Mitchell Cooper, RFK is comprised of 83 members from 13 different nations. Even through some significant leadership transitions in 2023, Redeemer has seen God's faithfulness as the saints gather weekly to hear the Word proclaimed.

WHERE OUR PEOPLE SERVE

due to the sensitive nature of certain ministries, countries indicated may be approximate



GLOBAL MISSIONS

Missionaries

Since its beginning, OGC has been a church passionate about sending its members and supporting the spread of the gospel around the globe. In 2023, we financially supported 16 missionary families and individuals. Our total mission giving was \$80,776.83.

In 2023, we also conducted several programs to increase missionary visibility among our congregation.

Missions Emphasis

For 12 Sundays this fall, missionaries were included in our Sunday morning worship service through videos. Missionaries gave updates about their ministry, included prayer requests, and read the scripture reading for that day. Throughout these months, members and attenders of OGC were able to see and hear from various missionaries that OGC supports.

Fall Study Kid's Program

This fall a group of 32 kids signed up to be a part of a guided time learning about a missionary from 6 of the 7 continents. It was emphasized each week that all people need Jesus and we need to be praying for our missionary brothers and sisters.

SHORT TERM MISSIONS

Salerno, Italy

This year, a small group from OGC partnered with Grace Bible Church in Oxford, Mississippi to support Nuova Vita Church through a short-term mission trip. Everyone in the group from OGC had some degree of seminary training, ministry experience, and a tie to Italy (4/6 speaking Italian). While some of the team spent the mornings and afternoons running an English club to build relationships with people around the city in hopes of sharing the gospel and connecting them to a local church, others spent intentional time with the three church leaders: Antonio, Virgilio, and Nunzia. They were able to help process church issues, listen to some of their struggles and dreams for the church, and encourage them and pray with them for their ministry. The team helped in practical ways like getting their team set up and trained on project management software to lighten some of the administrative burdens.

In 2024, OGC hopes to partner again with Nuova Vita Church to bring some of their staff to Orlando for theological education, training, and more that is not as available in their ministry context.

FILTER OF HOPE - CUBA

While we had planned to lead a short-term mission trip with Filter of Hope to Cuba in 2023, due to logical and administrative miscommunication the trip was canceled. However, in 2024, we hope to partner with Second Chance Global to offer a short-term mission trip to the Dominican Republic.

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

In 2023, the OGC Missions Committee underwent significant changes. Jonathan Prudhomme stepped down as Missions Committee Head and Ragan Bartholomew took the position. This year, the committee also voted and approved three new members: Julianne Lau, Addie Dickson, and Brooke Harden. The missions committee solidified their vision, responsibilities and delegation of responsibilities, and rhythms. The committee also wrote and voted on [Sending Values](#) to answer the question "Who/What do we support?"

Ragan Bartholomew
Ministry Operations Director

PASTORAL INTERN REPORTS

Hello, OGC! Another year has come and gone, and I am once again utterly grateful to be serving here as the pastoral intern. 2023 has been a year with a lot of ups and downs, and I am just so thankful to be a member of – and an intern at – a church like Orlando Grace Church.

As some of you may know, the internship structure has changed since I started here. Now, new interns start out for a year as “ministry interns,” and then can “specialize” in their second year. Since this was the first year I was technically the “pastoral intern,” the first half of that title was truly impressed upon me this year. I feel that this year I have been able to meet more of you, hear your stories, and better understand the individual members of the church that make up OGC.

I have been able to delve deeper into serving in the Sunday morning Equipping Hour. I have really loved being able to serve in this ministry of OGC, and I have learned so much by serving here. This year I was able to plan, lead, and execute our class on Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. I learned ample lessons on organization, volunteer coordination, and providing teaching feedback. I hope to learn from that experience and take it into the Gospel of John class that we are starting in January!

Another thing that I am grateful for here at OGC is the ministry opportunities that have been offered to me. Last year, I was able to attend the “Good Faith Debates” with Jim as he moderated, and served as his research assistant. This year, I was able to attend the TGC national conference with the staff and serve as Jim’s assistant there. It was so wonderful to get to meet so many believers from all over, hear from amazing speakers, and bond with the OGC staff.

To conclude, a bit of inside baseball. I have benefitted and been ministered to by the staff at OGC more than I can say. From sermon/teaching critiques, personal discipleship, and just day-to-day friendship, I have benefitted from the staff here as a congregant and an intern. This church is truly a special place, and I hope to get to continue to serve here and grow with this church family.

Clark Bartholomew — Pastoral Intern

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It is a wonderful season to be at Orlando Grace Church, and this has been especially true for us newcomers and ministry interns. It seems as if the Lord has providentially placed us in this newly renovated ministry internship program (and this church!) at just the right time. This year we have seen tremendous growth in the church in nearly every quantifiable category, and I have been able to sit in and watch as the leadership of this church steers us safely into deeper waters. Some of the most insightful of these experiences are attending staff meetings, sermon review meetings, elder meetings, and even being allowed to listen in on the by-laws review committee. I have gleaned greatly from them, and appreciate their professionalism, grace, and transparency.

This year I have also been able to be a contributor to the Equipping Hour curriculums. I love to teach, and this opportunity has afforded me the ability to grow significantly in this area. I was able to be part of The Major Prophets class and even take lead of the Church History II class this fall. This not only grew me as a teacher, but as a communicator and leader. Being allowed to take charge of this ministry for a season has been a tremendous blessing, affirming me further in the call God has placed upon my family’s lives.

I also attended the 2023 Gospel Coalition Conference with the staff team this year. This was my first Christian conference of this magnitude. The sessions were incredibly helpful, the resources made available to us incredibly insightful, and the team-building nature of the experience incredibly encouraging. The Gospel Coalition Conference does a fantastic job of equipping, refreshing, and motivating ministers to do gospel work well. I am appreciative of the opportunity to go with this team and have now experienced first-hand its value.

Another often overlooked skill, but one that is quite valuable, is understanding how the church works from an operations perspective. So much goes on behind the scenes from the diaconate team preparing communion to our volunteer kid teams committing to give their time for the edification the youth. Learning the ebbs and flows of how this process works has given me a greater appreciation for all that goes into making Orlando Grace Church the church that it has become.

Brendan Kirkland — Ministry Intern

