

# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT



ORLANDO GRACE  
CHURCH

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

## VISION STATEMENT

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



Hey, OGC Family,

It's been some kind of year:) As I reflect on 2024, the main feeling I have is gratitude. Gratitude for a leadership team that stepped in to lead during my medical issues. Gratitude for a staff team with such gifting, bandwidth, and love for the Lord. Gratitude for elders who give so much time and prayer to this church. Gratitude for a growing church. Gratitude for a church that financially sustains that growth. Gratitude for an all around healthy church. But, most of all I feel gratitude for God's grace on us in more ways than I could include here.

The word I feel most acutely coming out of 2024 is community. In past years, I likened us more to a large church plant than a 33 year old church because so many of us are new to OGC and our organizational pain points were those more akin to a very young church. This year, that has changed as attenders became members and members substantively connected to the body. Building this community will continue to be a priority in 2025, but we are building on a good foundation.

As I write this, we are in a season of setting our annual goals for 2025 and the thing that is clearest to me in this process is that we are going in the right direction. Increasingly, our goals are not developing new philosophies or strategies, but instead, getting better at what we are already doing. It's important for OGC to be transparent and accountable with what we set out to accomplish each year and what we actually accomplish. We hope all of you who give generously to OGC will see how your money is being used to impact the Kingdom and how hard the staff have worked to further that mission. To that end, we put together this annual report each year that we hope will both inform and encourage you.

Thank you so much for what you have done this year for OGC. As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Jim Davis  
Teaching Pastor



## 2024 STRATEGIES REPORT

If you were to look back on the 2023 Strategies Report in last year's Annual Report, you would see a dizzying array of brand-new programs, systems, policies, and accomplishments. 2023 was undoubtedly the year of starting new things. By contrast, I would describe 2024 as a year of more focused expansion.

Some of that expansion included new endeavors, such as launching the [Formation Group program](#), starting Men's Ministry, establishing the Orlando Flourish Network, creating a new website, developing an Employee Handbook, relaunching [OGC social media](#), selling the old office building to purchase new portable classrooms, initiating a summer book club program, launching a Mercy Ministry Committee, and experimenting with a new form of "reverse" mission trip. You can read more about most of these initiatives in the following pages.

However, if you compare these new efforts to the types of initiatives we pursued last year, I believe you will notice a difference. Whereas last year involved starting many projects from scratch or completely redesigning existing systems, this year focused more on deliberate growth along a consistent trajectory. The new developments this year are, for the most part, either refinements or expansions of objectives we were already pursuing. Portable classrooms may feel like a new development, but they will host the same excellent children's ministry we already have. A new website will be wonderful, but it will still represent the same church as the last one did. The Mercy Ministry Committee is fantastic, but it is composed of OGC members who were already engaged in mercy ministry before it was formalized. You get the idea. None of this is meant to downplay the effort behind these projects or the impact they will have. It's simply to provide perspective that, in terms of direction, we know where we are going and what we are aiming for. All the progress is moving in the same direction.

In addition to these new developments—and very much in keeping with the theme of focused improvement and expansion—we have worked hard to create resources that enhance our current ministries. These include our new [Equipping Hour Teacher's Resource Binder](#) and [Community Group Handbook](#). We also revamped our [Discover OGC \(DOGC\) program](#) to more effectively communicate our church's mission to prospective members and launched a Spring Service Emphasis in April, giving greater visibility to service opportunities both within and outside of OGC. Finally, we redesigned and clarified tools such as the annual Missional Survey and our Program Structure to make it simpler and easier for people to get involved and understand OGC better. And none of that even includes the dozens of new volunteers that have been added to just about every ministry space we have.

This pattern of focused expansion and improvement became even more apparent when we sat down with our Elders and Staff teams at the end of this year to map out our Annual Goals for 2025. After consolidating everything, we realized we had only 43 goals for the next year, compared to 82 last year and 163 the year before. It's not that we intentionally set out to reduce our goals by 50% each year; rather, our scope continues to become clearer and more focused year by year. For us, goals are always Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely objectives that are distinct from regular responsibilities. This means each year's goals build on regular responsibilities from previous years. So please don't mistake fewer goals for "doing less." By God's grace, our team is accomplishing more than ever—it's just not all brand-new. And for that, I am truly grateful. I like to think of it like this: in 2023, we made a lot of new wineskins. In 2024, we poured new wine into them. By the end of 2025, I hope and pray that everyone will agree it's aging well, and is much better than when we started.

**Robert Jackson**  
Executive Pastor

## YEAR END FINANCIAL REPORT

**TOTAL GENERAL  
FUND OFFERING**

**\$992,103.87**

**TOTAL DESIGNATED  
GIFTS & GRANTS**

**\$129,755**

Building Fund, MTF, Benevolence, Intern,  
Scholarships, Missions, Resource Library

**TOTAL OTHER  
REVENUE**

**\$40,034**

Event Income, Admin Income, Rental Income,  
Interest Income & Stock Gains

**TOTAL  
REVENUE**

**\$1,161,892**

Offering, Designated Gifts & Other Revenue

**BEGINNING LOAN  
BALANCE 1/1/24:**

**\$1,193,743**

**ENDING LOAN  
BALANCE 12/31/24:**

**\$1,383,654**

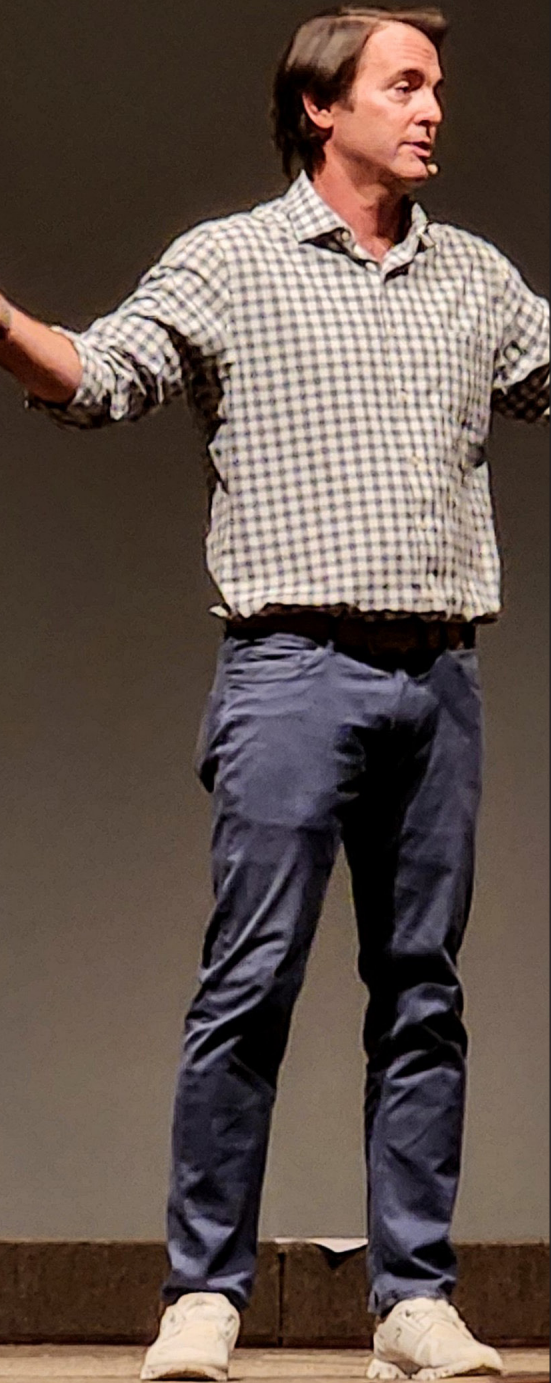
*(after portables loan)*

**CASH IN BANK  
1/1/24:**

**\$300,056**

**CASH IN BANK  
12/31/24:**

**\$828,732**



## NEW MEMBERS AND BAPTISMS

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We started the year with 238 members and ended the year with 255. We added 36 new members and were sad to say goodbye to 19 members.

We were blessed to celebrate 5 baptisms!

## WORSHIP REPORT

Much like 2023, worship in 2024 was a year of incremental improvements. We wanted to “get out of the way” of worship as much as possible.

One of the values of our team is “undistracting excellence.” This means creating a transparent environment that facilitates corporate singing, confession, prayer, and catechesis in a way that doesn’t draw attention back to ourselves (either in a positive or negative way).

I’m so proud of how our team is constantly improving at that, and with eight new volunteers added to our worship/AV teams, we continue to streamline how we train, assimilate, and maintain folks who are passionate about helping God’s people worship.

In the past few years, we’ve seen a large influx of new attenders and members who aren’t as familiar with the nuances of the faith or complex theological language. This is one of the reasons we chose the New City Catechism as our confession of choice in 2024.

The NCC is an approachable, yet still comprehensive look at the key doctrines in the Christian life, and as we wrap up the year, I’m only further affirmed that it was the best choice for 2024.

In addition to introducing some new worship songs to the congregation, I also had the pleasure of composing a completely original tune, Christ Our Kinsman, specifically for our Advent sermon series in the book of Ruth.

It’s been such a joy over the past several weeks to hear the voices of the congregation sing a praise to God that I myself had the privilege to write. I hope to continue to write more original songs in the coming years.

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 2025 and beyond.

**Matt Kenyon**  
Director of Music & Liturgy



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY REPORT

What an honor and privilege it has been to witness God's faithfulness throughout 2024! Reflecting on this past year, I'm reminded of countless conversations with parents and volunteers that make me pause and praise God for His work within the families who gather each Sunday. Time and again, I've seen how God provides exactly what we need, just when we need it. It's a joy to ask and see Him answer in His perfect timing and ways. Let's take a moment to celebrate how this ministry has grown and developed over the past year.

With our classrooms welcoming more children than ever, we've taken steps to ensure their safety and security. Early in the year, we introduced tablets for our check-in and check-out process. These devices have transformed how we serve families by providing quick access to essential information, like allergies, medical notes, and parent preferences. They also allow us to page parents if needed. Our amazing volunteers embraced this new system wholeheartedly. While there was a learning curve, we worked through it together, troubleshooting as a team. I'm not exactly a "technology person," but I've seen firsthand how valuable this tool is for maintaining safety and efficiency. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who patiently adapted to these changes and continues to model the new system with grace. Praise God for His protection and the ability to improve our procedures!

This year, we also launched a weekly email initiative: "Take a Peek at What Our Kids Learned Today." This resource equips parents with conversation starters to go beyond the common post-church response: "What did you learn today? .... Long pause.... I dunno." The emails provide key details from our lessons—such as the week's Key Passage, Big Picture Question, and Christ Connection—helping parents lead thoughtful, meaningful discussions about God's Word. Our hope and prayer are that these resources deepen your family's engagement with Scripture. As we move into 2025, we'll continue working with our volunteers to expand and enhance this effort while carefully stewarding our time and energy.

This fall, we faced an unexpected volunteer shortage following an already demanding summer. Recognizing the need, we reached out to the congregation for support—and you answered in ways that exceeded our expectations. Over 25 individuals stepped up, with some committing for six months and others considering ongoing opportunities to serve. Thanks to this outpouring of help, we've been able to refresh our team and improve classroom dynamics. Rooms that previously had just two volunteers now operate more smoothly with three. We also onboarded 11 youth helpers, whose contributions have been invaluable. By the end of the year, we've grown our team to 90 active volunteers and 11 youth helpers—a significant increase from the 65 volunteers and 5 youth helpers we had in the fall.

To everyone who saw the need and said, "I want to be part of this," thank you. Your willingness to serve has made an incredible difference. If you're considering joining us, know that the door is always open for those with a heart to serve and a commitment to creating a safe, nurturing environment for our kids. Serving our children is a humbling and joyful experience. It's an honor to watch God's hand at work, not only in the lives of the kids but also in the hearts of the volunteers and families who serve alongside us. Thank you for being part of this ministry and for helping us share the love of Christ with the next generation.

**Jen Bruner**  
Children's Ministry Director





## STUDENT MINISTRY REPORT

2024 was an amazing year for the student ministry at OGC! I'm so thankful that I get to do this job. It's been a great honor and privilege to be able to be a part of the discipleship of our Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers. This is such a sweet group of students and watching them grow in their faith is so amazing to me. My prayer for this generation is that they be 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 and coming to the Winter Retreat, supporting the ministry financially, coming to Summer Camp, teaching an Equipping Hour class, or leading a small group on Wednesday nights, I am incredibly grateful and thankful for each one of you. I genuinely love being with each of our volunteers, and they do such an amazing job pouring into our students. I believe the quality of our volunteers is our greatest strength as a ministry and I'm so thankful to be in that position.

This year one of the highlights has been teaching through the book of John on Wednesday nights. It's been a blessing to me as I have prepared for those lessons and been able to teach them week in and week out. The Winter Retreat and Summer Camp this year were amazing opportunities to get outside of our normal rhythms and routines and connect with one another and dive deep into God's word. At the Winter Retreat, Brendan Kirkland came and preached to our students about what it means to have peace with God and how that leads us to being at peace with our neighbors. At Summer Camp in June we took a look at what it means to come alive in Christ and how we find true life only in relationship with Jesus.

I am so looking forward to what 2025 brings. This will be my first whole year where I am finished with Seminary and only have OGC Student Ministry on my vocational plate, and I can't wait to see what the Lord does at OGC.

**Ben Alderman**  
**Student Ministry Director**



## ADULT EDUCATION

2024 was quite the year for the Equipping Hour Ministry at OGC. Over the course of this year, we have done six major series: The Gospel of John, Emotionally Healthy Discipleship, Trinity and the Gospel, How to Read the Bible, the Minor Prophets, and Christian Ethics and Worldview. By the end of the year, that will conservatively be 50 hours of Equipping Hour lessons done this year. Thank you all for showing up every week, and being willing to engage and learn!

One of the major goals of the Equipping Hour ministry is to provide a varied diet of biblical, theological, practical, and historical courses. Trying to teach “the whole counsel of God” is quite the task to undergo. But, teaching on a variety of topics like this helps to ensure that we are being formed into well-rounded disciples. Additionally, it provides a space for the congregation to be blessed by how God has gifted specific teachers to teach specific topics.

One of our goals for this year was to research and implement ways to make the Equipping Hour setting more of an active learning environment. Throughout the year, we tried different methods of this: discussion groups, Q&A panels, book summaries, and even a gameshow! We are trying out these different methods, because we see real value in the EH space being an active learning environment and not a passive one. We often use the example of the Food Network (stick with me). In EH, we don’t just want to be handing you a recipe and say “Here’s how it is, go do it.” We want EH to be like a cooking show, we want to show how to cook. We don’t want to lecture you about what Malachi is about, we want to tell you how to go read Malachi on your own! And an active learning environment can help us better move in that direction. Moving into the New Year, we still want to continue that importance on active learning.

I cannot be more thankful for the people that God has gifted OGC with to aid in the teaching of Equipping Hour over the past few years. We are truly blessed to have so many people who have a gift for teaching, but also a plethora of people who teach differently than one another! Thank goodness there aren’t just carbon copies teaching Equipping Hour week in and week out. Most of all, thank you for continuing to come, learn, and engage. As cheesy as it sounds, Equipping Hour wouldn’t be Equipping Hour without all of you. I mean we have inside jokes (chiasms, “things can be two things,” etc.); how many other churches can say their Sunday Schools have that?! And thank you for your grace and compassion as we as a teaching team get things wrong, continue to grow, and sometimes put our feet in our mouths.

After this year, I am excited for where the EH ministry is and where we are going. While classes and courses are subject to change, we are excited for courses that we have planned for next year (particularly the “Christian Classics” course in late Spring). Please pray for us as we prepare for lessons, listen to the Spirit, and seek to teach like Christ did.

**Clark Bartholomew**  
Pastoral Resident



# COMMUNITY & FORMATION GROUPS REPORT

## Community Groups

What an incredible year it's been for Community Groups! We're thrilled to now offer 13 unique groups meeting across the Orlando area, each with its own personality—covering diverse topics, meeting at various times, and offering different blends of fellowship, study, and prayer. It's been such a blessing to witness how the Lord is using these groups to foster deep connections among believers.

We continue to witness the incredible blessings that come from Community Group participation for our members. These groups offer so much more than just a meeting—they are a place where meaningful relationships are formed, where people feel seen and supported, and where genuine care and encouragement flow freely.

Community Groups provide a unique opportunity to make deeper connections with others, fostering friendships that often feel like family. Whether through shared laughter, heartfelt prayer, or studying God's Word together, these groups create a sense of belonging and community that strengthens our church family as a whole.

For anyone looking to grow spiritually while building lasting relationships, Community Groups are truly a wonderful place to feel connected and part of something greater.

## Formation Groups

This year has been one of renewal and growth for our Formation Group ministry, a key ministry for those who desire a deeper, more intentional approach to spiritual formation. These groups provide a space for believers to not only study and grow in their faith but also to form meaningful, life-giving relationships with others on a similar journey.

In 2024, we were thrilled to launch 21 new Formation Groups, bringing together over 58 members who committed to this enriching process of discipleship and spiritual growth. The impact has been profound, as participants have shared stories of personal transformation, stronger faith, and deeper connections with God and one another.

As we look ahead, we are eagerly preparing to relaunch Formation Groups for both men and women in early 2025. This next season holds so much promise, and we can't wait to see how God will continue to work through this ministry to inspire and transform lives. Formation Groups remain a vital part of our mission to equip and empower believers for all of life.

**Amanda Walton**

**Family Ministry & Discipleship Director**

# WOMEN'S MINISTRY REPORT

## 2024 Highlights

**Bible Studies** - Two Bible studies were started in the spring semester, one led by Amy Gabriel studying the book of Judges (mornings) and one led by Tammie Arreguin (evenings) studying the book of James. Each had a solid, regular attendance of women and provided an active learning environment where women could engage in study of God's word prior to discussing with table leaders at our weekly or bi-weekly meetings.

**Summer Solitude** - Summer Solitude was created to provide a quiet space for women to have an hour to write a text from and to meditate and pray through the text. Naomi Wai originated this ministry and was the driving force for it to be enacted in partnership with Courtney Kenyon with assistance from Amy Gabriel. After the hour of solitude, there was time outside for the kids to play and moms to hang out during this six-week event.

**Summer Book Study** - Amy Gabriel and Kelly Simpson led the women's book study as a part of the church-wide initiative to offer book studies over the summer. We met at Kathy Herrbach's house over the summer to discuss *Faithful Women and their Extraordinary God*, the story of five faithful female missionaries. This was a much appreciated and widely attended study. The individualized nature of each story allowed attendees to pick back up with the next woman's story even if they had to miss a week. This book choice along with meeting at a member's home made the book study especially welcoming and well-attended.

**Fall Book Study** - Kelly Simpson and Ragan Bartholomew led a committed group of women through a discussion of Jen Wilkin's *None Like Him* this fall which discussed the attributes of God and how his incommunicable attributes are especially important and the good news they provide to us that God is inherently different than us! We met weekly on Thursday evenings and though interrupted by a few hurricanes, we persevered!

**Women of Grace** - This event organized by Amy Gabriel, which met the first Tuesday of every month in the fall semester, allowed for a different woman, or panel of women, to share on a topic near and dear to them. Biblical friendship, mercy and service in the community, aging with grace, and a Christmas celebration served to headline each of the evenings this semester. This event focused on fellowship in a casual atmosphere and women left feeling encouraged and with new insights and friends.

### *Preview of Coming Attractions*

Planning for 2025 is underway and details will be released soon. Stay tuned! Please check the OGC Women's Webpage at: [www.orlandograce.org/womens-ministry](http://www.orlandograce.org/womens-ministry) to stay up to date! Looking forward to 2024!

**Kelly, on behalf of**

**Amy Gabriel, Amanda Walton, and Kelly Simpson**

**The Women's Ministry Committee at OGC**



## MEN'S MINISTRY REPORT

This year, encouraged by the success of the OGC Women's Ministry, a few of us set out to start a Men's Ministry. This effort began with a Men's Retreat in April, where we were joined by Dr. Nicholas Reid for a weekend of learning and fellowship at the Lake Yale Baptist Retreat Center. This event was an absolute blast and we very much hope to continue the tradition in 2025. After the retreat, we invited a few men (all of whom had specifically approached the Elders at one time or another about helping to start a men's ministry) to pray about starting a Men's Ministry Committee at OGC, using the same basic design as the Women's Ministry Committee. They graciously accepted our invitation and we began meeting to develop and launch new ministry initiatives for men at OGC.

The men who joined me to help start our committee this year included Chris Stanford, Tom Haney, Justin Hamil, David Stephens, Brett Bollinger. Here are some of the programs we launched out this year:

- Chris and Tom worked with Clark Bartholomew to start a weekly men's book study that met on Tuesday nights during the fall.
- David started a monthly men's breakfast meeting every third Sunday at Panera Bread. They continue to meet from 7:45-8:45 at the Altamonte Drive location.
- Justin started a monthly men's discussion group, aimed at discussing the character traits of godly men. This group meets every first Monday at 7:30am at the Church building.

Looking towards next year we plan to partner with the OGC Women's Ministry to offer a weekly men's bible study in the Fall on the same night as the women's bible study. Our hope is to create efficiency for families this way so that we can offer childcare for both men and women and consolidate the number of weeknight events families may wish to attend. If you have questions about men's ministry at OGC moving forward, please feel free to email [men@orlandograce.org](mailto:men@orlandograce.org). Finally, men, be on the looking for information about the upcoming 2025 Men's Retreat! And while you are at it, invite a friend to come along with you. We hope to see you there!

**Robert Jackson on behalf of the OGC Men's Ministry Committee**



## DEACON REPORT

### Connecting with the Widows of OGC

This year, we dedicated ourselves to nurturing a deeper connection with the widows within our congregation. Our commitment was to ensure consistent communication and support, making them feel valued and supported throughout the year.

### Benevolence Fund Highlights

In a testament to our church's spirit of giving and compassion, the Benevolence Fund has been a beacon of hope:

**Assistance Provided:** Monetary aid was extended to 6 members of OGC, alongside non-monetary support for 4 individuals from beyond our immediate church community.

**Fund Utilization:** 90% of our budget dedicated to benevolence was utilized in helping those in need.

### Deacon Responsibility Updates

Our deacons have been the pillars of various ministries and responsibilities, each contributing uniquely to the vitality of our church:

**Brian Mumbert** - Assisting with the Mercy Ministry and representing OGC at Choices Women's Clinics' annual Walk for Life.

**Chris Wallace** - Devoted to the upkeep of our church premises.

**Dan Sandon** - Organizing service teams for Sunday and leading initiatives like the Jobs Partnership program.

**Jonathan Mee** - Leading Connections Team, which ensures a warm welcome to new visitors.

**Jonathan Preston** - Leading our audio and visual technology needs and assisting with building maintenance.

**Larry Person** - Leading hospitality services, from Sunday coffees to church picnics.

**Matt Tinley** - Bridging language barriers with sermon translations and ESL classes, and caring for the widows of OGC.

**Ray Lau** - Coordinating deacon meetings and serving as a liaison with the church elders.

**Ryan Mansfield** - Organizing church workdays, and overseeing baptism and communion preparations.

We are always looking for volunteers to help with these areas. If you're interested in helping, please let us know at [deacons@orlandograce.org](mailto:deacons@orlandograce.org)

## **Church Workdays:**

During the most recent Church Workday in October 2023, we accomplished the following tasks:

- **Weed playground**
- **Clean branches and debris around property**
- **Mark sprinkler heads in overflow parking area with orange cones**
- **Clear off another section of the perimeter fence**
- **Cut back tree limbs in parking lot**
- **Mulch beds in front of building**
- **Cut down any hanging or dead limbs**
- **Move shed**
- **Clear off leaves and spot-clean back patio**
- **Spot-clean exterior windows**
- **Fix rear shed wall**
- **Install baby changing table in men's handicap stall**
- **Fix fridge seal**
- **Replace broken outlet covers in north side of fellowship hall**
- **Replace broken light in F2**
- **Install fire alarm covers**
- **Organize GraceKids cabinets**
- **Check/repair men's toilet running**
- **Miscellaneous AV projects**
- **Fix men's handicapped bathroom stall door**
- **Replace bulbs in hallway**

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## **A Special Acknowledgment**

After 13 years of dedicated commitment to OGC, Chris Wallace will be on a well-deserved one-year sabbatical. During his absence, Bo Bruner and Jonathan Preston will handle building maintenance tasks. Our heartfelt thanks to Chris for his years of service, embodying the spirit and values of our church.

Our deacons' diverse areas of responsibility and commitment have substantially contributed to the warmth, growth, and outreach of our church community this year. We extend our deepest appreciation to each deacon for their service and to our church members for their continuous support and participation. Here's to another year of meaningful ministry and impactful service!

# OGC MISSIONAL SURVEY

## RESULTS

### THINGS TO CELEBRATE

- Equipping Hour attendance rose from 47% to 58% with a notable increase in perceived spiritual growth benefits (5/5 ratings increased by 13%).
- Percentage of respondents not attending a community group dropped from 34% to 23%, and the perceived positive spiritual impact of community groups increased from 67% to 74%.
- Respondents reported significant improvements in several aspects of their Christian lives, including prayer (+14%), doctrine (+10%), and emotional health (+11%).

### AREAS TO SEEK GROWTH IN

- Across all age groups (particularly among Gen Z and Gen X), “Care for & Involvement of Single People” remains a top concern.
- Evangelism remains the most recognized area for improvement, increasing from 30% to 38% as a perceived weakness.
- “Mission to the City” was still cited as a weakness by 26%. However, this represents a major improvement from 42% in 2023, highlighting progress in local outreach.



## MISSION TO THE CITY

This year, OGC officially launched a Mercy Ministry Committee. After the internal and external service fairs conducted in the Spring, we wanted to have a committee (akin to the Missions Committee) that could evaluate local ministries to partner with, equip congregants to serve our city, and mobilize congregants to love our neighbors well.

Thinking about mercy ministry and our connection to the community has taken shape in two ways. First, a question from a pastor at another church. This pastor was asked, “If everyone suddenly at our church suddenly vanished but we left the lights on and the cars in the parking lot, how long would it take the community to notice we were gone?” And he realized that the community might never notice, because their church hadn’t been a part of it. Second, a story from Paul. In Galatians, Paul recounts when he met Peter, James, and John. He says that he wanted to present the Gospel to them to make sure he hadn’t been proclaiming it in vain (Gal. 2:3). And after getting the right thumbs up of fellowship from them, they tell him to remember one thing: the poor (2:9). The Gospel is not purely about social justice and change, but care for the widow, fatherless, and sojourner have been core to God’s covenant people (Deut. 10:18; 24:19).

As this year has gone on, the MMC has been learning to stretch our wings in the nest that we are in. We have looked at what OGC has historically done in terms of mercy ministry. We have reached out to institutions in the community to see how we can best serve where God has placed us. We have drafted a Foundational Document and Guiding Principles Document to help us better evaluate local ministries.

As we are still getting our administrative feet underneath us, we have not been able to conduct a large church-wide service opportunity somewhere. However, this year we did offer several donation drives in the church lobby. We were so encouraged by OGC’s generosity and willingness to give a variety of blessings to a variety of organizations. From food and supplies to the local school system to Christmas gifts for children, we were blown away by your generosity. Thank you! To end out the 2024 year (and our first year as a committee), we decided to give larger end of the year gifts to a few of the local ministries that we have partnered with over the history of OGC.

Looking forward to next year, expect to be hearing more from us. Not just about donation drives, but about how to serve locally well, opportunities for giving time and resources, and the needs of our neighbors here in Altamonte and Maitland. We ask that you pray for us to continually have the eyes, hears, and heart of Christ as we seek to be the kind of neighbor that He was and is. And we hope that you will continue to join us in being Christ’s hands and feet in the context that He has sovereignly placed us.

**Clark Bartholomew**  
**Mercy Ministry Committee Moderator**



BLESS  
OUR  
CITY

## 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

**Nunzia Salvini, Antonio Mauro, Virgilio Gallo**

Nuova Vita Church is doing good! We have seen a 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 seven people making the decision to get baptized. We welcomed in the church family Raffaele, Jennifer, Dayana, Kira, Idania, Marlene, and Margherita. We kept on going with both men's and women's bible studies that have been of great blessing to our growth in Christ. This summer, we had the opportunity to host a kid summer camp and for Antonio and Nunzia to be equipped from OGC in church administration, pastoral counseling and discipleship. Also, This year Antonio and Virgilio have been installed formally as elders. And the next step we are envisioning is a formal membership.

### REDEEMER MANCHESTER – MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

**Greg and Christina Willson**

God has been so faithful and good to our church over the past year. We have grown more in depth as we've seen God provide where we've needed. He has proven Himself to be the faithful God that we can count on even in difficult circumstances. We have also grown outward in mission as we follow God's heart to reach new people, getting the honour of preaching the gospel in new areas (as in Romans 15.20). It's hard work, but amazing work, and we get to do this in no small part because of Orlando Grace partnering with us!

We were able to launch another missional community (what we call our small groups) so now we have a total of four. We are on the verge of appointing our first group of deacons as well.

This past autumn we ran an intro to Christianity course and would love to share what God has done through that. We had 4 people who aren't Christians join in: two very hardcore atheists, one person who dabbles in pagan spirituality (her term), and one guy who was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Three of those people are now certain that a god of some kind exists, and those three are reading through the gospel of Mark with me. They have no concept of Christianity, the church, the Bible, or anything like that, so the conversations are super interesting. But as we've been reading they are getting introduced to Jesus, and it's really been affecting them. They are reading the Bible, praying, and have started to come to Redeemer on Sundays every now and then. Please pray with me for the eyes of their hearts to open!

It's exactly those kind of people that are the norm here. In order to truly reach them, it takes a lot of time and resources. We are thankful to be here joining God in this good work, and we are thankful that OGC gets to be a part of it with us!

### OGC MISSIONARY – UNSPECIFIED COUNTRY, MIDDLE EAST

Our church here is in the process of planting a church in the Middle East about a 1.5 hour drive from where I am living. We have a small fellowship which is seeing new converts and is being pastored by a local couple. We were able to rent a very nice, but small, space for the fellowship. Though the local government is tolerant of our presence, the area is very Islamic and there has been resistance in the form of threatening phone calls to our leaders. It has been a long time since there was a church in this area. I will be traveling there once a month to fill the pulpit in order to help our newly planted church.

## REDEEMER FELLOWSHIP OF KUWAIT – KUWAIT

### Mitchell and Emily Cooper

Redeemer Fellowship of Kuwait just celebrate its 3rd Anniversary. Currently led by elders Adriaan Pretorius and Mitchell Cooper, RFK is comprised of 89 members from 11 different nations. In 2024, we had the joy of baptizing 6 people (who also joined as members) and nominated one of our members (Vijay Raj) to become a lay elder.

Weekly Gatherings - In our weekly services, we are working through the Book of Acts and have three weekly fellowship groups that follow along with the sermon schedule. Redeemer Youth meets weekly and has been utilizing the Truth78 curriculum as we have focused on the Psalms. And we have two ladies studies that are currently working through the Book of Genesis.

Monthly Gatherings - Our Men's Group just completed a year's worth of monthly meetings, looking at J.I. Packer's book Knowing God. And our newest Bible Study, Roman's Monthly, has been such an encouragement to a number of people (although somewhat academic). This study focuses on the original Greek underlying Paul's letter to the Romans and then we turn our attention to modern Arabic translations to talk through various translation modes and models. This study, in particular, has been a solid connection point for the growing number of Arabic speaking young men in our congregation.

Special Events - On occasion we host a longer teaching time we've called RFK Training. This fall we did two of the sessions, one on the Book of Jonah and one on the Book of Acts (to coincide with the upcoming sermon series). This past November we held a two

day seminar on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, taught by Dr. Adam Brown from Gulf Theological Seminary. And most recently, our annual Christmas Eve service saw over 300 people join us in singing, the proclamation of the Gospel from Luke 2:11 and a banquet-style meal. Many of the folks who come to this service either have no church home or have no church background at all.

With all of these wonderful ministry opportunities, continue to pray on behalf of RFK that the Lord would raise up more elders and deacons to serve alongside Mitchell & Adriaan, and long-term partners to come alongside Mitchell & Emily. And continue to pray for the boldness of the RFK members and they share the Gospel with their neighbors and co-workers.

So grateful for Orlando Grace in partnering with us in this!



# GLOBAL MISSIONS

## Missionaries

This year, our church remained steadfast in its commitment to global missions, supporting 16 families and individuals serving around the world with a total of \$60,600 in ongoing financial contributions. The missions committee also was able to help several missionaries this year with one-time more urgent requests thanks to our reserve fund which is set up to help in some of these more “out of the ordinary” situations.

We aimed to make our involvement in missions more broadly accessible by planning a short-term mission trip to the Dominican Republic in collaboration with Second Chance Global. Unfortunately, we were unable to meet the required number of sign-ups to proceed with the trip. Despite this setback, we are hopeful to offer future short term mission trips in partnership with our current mission partners.

One of the highlights of the year was a unique “reverse mission trip” initiative. We hosted two staff members, Nunzia and Antonio, from Nuova Vita in Salerno, Italy for two weeks. During their time with us, they engaged with our staff, deacons, and elders, participating in workshops and discussions on pastoral counseling, church administration, discipleship, and organizational strategies. The aim of this time was to help equip the Nuova Vita staff as they returned to a rapidly growing church plant. Throughout the trip, they expressed deep gratitude and appreciation for this kind of learning experience since it is not readily available in Italy. Additionally, as there are not many like-minded churches in their area, Nunzia and Antonio thoroughly enjoyed spending time with Orlando Grace Church leadership and left refreshed and encouraged.

The mission committee worked diligently throughout the year to evaluate and respond to support requests. We introduced two online forms—one for individuals seeking ongoing support and another for one-time assistance. These forms helped streamline the application process and ensure that all requests were assessed according to the sending values outlined on our website.

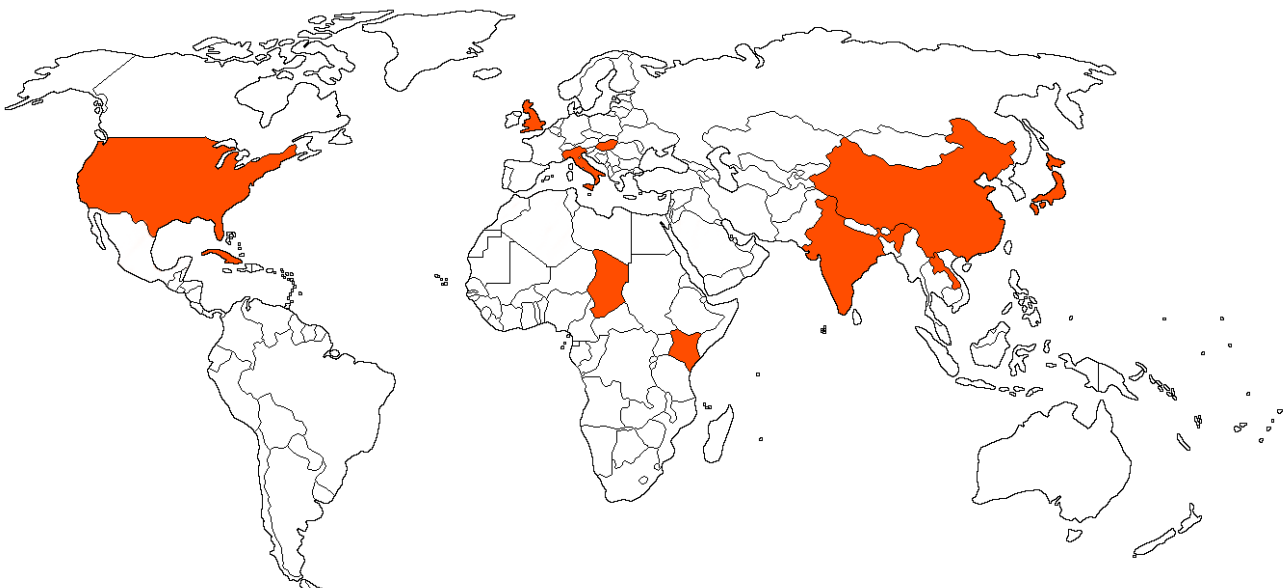
The mission committee remains prayerful and committed to supporting the mission of Orlando Grace Church to send our best. Thank you all for your continued generosity and dedication to global missions at OGC!

**Ragan Bartholomew**

**Ministry Operations Director and Moderator of the Missions Committee**

## WHERE OUR PEOPLE SERVE

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



## PASTORAL RESIDENT REPORT

This past August marked my third year here at OGC. It is really wild to think about the fact that Ragan and I have been here for that long, and that we now both work full-time at OGC. And now that my hat has changed from “Intern” to “Resident,” I wanted to give an update on that transition, development, and ministry areas.

As many of you know, OGC has a history of a very strong internship that seeks to prepare interns for a variety of ministries they might want to serve in someday. From August 2021 to February 2024, I was a Pastoral Intern here. And the opportunities that I was given, I am so thankful for. The opportunities to teach Equipping Hours semi-regularly, preach twice a year, be involved in sermon review, engage in staff development, and assist with different ministry areas in the church gave me such an appreciation and depth of knowledge at what goes into making a church like OGC happen week in and week out. And since becoming the Pastoral Resident, that appreciation and learning has not stopped; in fact, it has broadened and deepened.

Jim, Robert, the elders, and the staff have been so instrumental in this transition from Intern to Resident. The ways that they have come alongside me in the internship have not changed, and they have been very gracious in allowing me to get my feet under me in the new role. As things began to ramp up at the start of my residency, I was given more and more responsibilities that I did not have before. I was made lead of our Equipping Hour ministry, I was placed on our Mercy Ministry Committee, I have started attending elder meetings, and have begun the ordination process. Where before I was an intern and volunteer, now I am learning how to coordinate, encourage, and train volunteers. Where before I would see meetings, now I am learning how to lead meetings better. Where before I had to split my time between the internship, school, and work, now I am able to be in office so much more.

And outside of these areas at OGC, the Residency has afforded me some amazing learning opportunities. Once a year, the grant that allows for this Residency (Made to Flourish) puts on a conference in Kansas City where Residents from around the country are able to come and fellowship and learn valuable ministry lessons together. And throughout the year, Made to Flourish (and our local branch of the Orlando Flourish Network) have seminars that seek to strengthen pastors and ministry leaders personally and over difficult topics. So, this year alone, I have gotten to hear wonderful teaching on pastoring through politics, anxiety and mental health, pastoral health and burnout, servant leadership, faith and work hurt, and (yes) de-churching. Studying these things, discussing them with other Residents and pastors, and thinking through how they apply to the Church has truly helped me see the beauty of the Church in our context today. Being so connected to these other churches in Orlando (and the rest of the country at large) has given me a tangible experience of ecumenical love and pursuing the Lord with churches that aren't like ours. Far from the adage that “denominations divide,” I have seen more and more how denominations complement one other in our shared mission of the Great Commission.

And beyond the ways that I have learned from structured settings and done things in “official ministry” capacity here, I have learned so much and gotten to do so much just by working here full-time now. I have gotten to see the importance of office culture and employee relationships. I have gotten to see more of how much it takes to make OGC happen every week. I have gotten to see more of the care of the elders and the staff as they seek to steward our particular manifestation of Christ's Church. And I have just gotten to see more of you! I am so thankful for how I have been brought on, cared for, and poured into here.

So, thank you all for making OGC an amazing place to work and do ministry. I am so thankful for the ways that God has used the people here to minister to me, to strengthen me, and to show me Himself. Thank you for allowing me to grow, learn, practice, and better discern my calling here.

**Clark Bartholomew**  
Pastoral Resident

## PASTORAL INTERN REPORT

It has been such a wonderful season learning and serving with Orlando Grace Church these past two years! The pastoral internship specifically has helped me take the knowledge and skills learned in the academy and start to apply them in church life. This is something that seminary alone just cannot offer. The mentorship provided by the staff, the care and support of the congregation, and the opportunities provided to exercise these skills is something that makes the pastoral internship program here at OGC such a valuable experience to anyone who feels the call to vocational ministry.

This year I have had the opportunity to teach multiple times in equipping hour, and even be the lead teacher for the Ethics class this fall. It has been an incredibly encouraging thing to have a staff team trust you enough to allow a seminarian like myself to minister in this way. It is also incredibly encouraging to know that I have their full support and discerning guidance the whole way. This experience not only helped in enriching my knowledge through the study material, but also has helped me to figure out who I am as a teacher and what my teaching style is. It is one thing to have knowledge. It is another thing to be able to communicate this knowledge in such a way as to edify others. My experience teaching equipping hour, from the mentorship of the staff team to organizing the flow of the curriculum, has been an edifying process that I know will enable me to serve God's people better in the years to come.

I have also been blessed with the opportunity to preach twice over the course of this year. What a great opportunity for any aspiring pastor to receive, something for which I am incredibly thankful! It is not just the Sunday morning that goes into this process, it is everything from the sermon preview to review. The staff team has poured into me both on how to write a good sermon, how to deliver a good sermon. This is so helpful, and much more than what some other churches are willing to do. The sermon preview/review philosophy is something I will take with me in my years of ministry to come. I know my ability to preach God's word has been enhanced by the mentorship I have received through this pastoral internship.

Another aspect of this internship opportunity that has been incredibly beneficial is how the staff team has welcomed me into their staff meetings and other logistical functions of the church. Learning how the church operates daily, weekly, monthly, and annually has helped me to better understand those essential things beyond just preaching and teaching. In all of this, I received a warm welcome. That is not necessarily something required, but something that makes Orlando Grace feel like home to me and my family!

**Brendan Kirkland**  
**Pastoral Ministry Intern**

**CHURCH,  
YOU ARE SENT.**

