



2022

ANNUAL REPORT



STEPS TO A BETTER FUTURE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

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IT IS A JOURNEY

Contained within these pages is a snapshot of our journey as a church. This report will give you just a small picture of our journey as a church in 2022. It doesn't tell the whole story because the story of Epworth is the story of hundreds of people living out their faith every day in the places they live, work, and play.

Epworth is a growing community of faith filled with individuals seeking to follow Jesus through acts of loving, growing, and serving. As a church, we are working at being the hands, feet, and presence of God here on earth. We don't always get it right, and we sure aren't perfect; but we are actively pursuing becoming like Jesus.

We hope that the story contained in these pages will encourage you to live out your faith. We also hope that you will join us on the journey of faith.



God loves you.
Jesus came to
prove that.
And how you live
your faith matters
each and every day.

Sr. Pastor Rodney Frieden



2022 HIGHLIGHTS

2022 was supposed to be the return to routine; but, as we all discovered, emerging from a pandemic is a journey not an event. Through the journey we were able to find ways to love, grow, and serve. And, in so doing, we continued to thrive as a church. We are mindful that we have so much to be thankful for and, as such, we celebrate a few of the highlights from the past year:

- Total worship attendance increased for the fourth year in a row.
- We received 15 new members throughout the year.
- Easter Worship in the sanctuary for the first time since 2019 was joyous!
- The addition of a Kids Zone in the sanctuary created space for our youngest worshippers.
- Online worship continued as a vital part of the ministry and outreach of Epworth.
- Our Music Department continued to add much to our worship.
- Small groups connected us with one another and helped make new connections.
- We added a staff person to lead our student ministry.
- Our Weekday Children's Ministry continued to thrive and reach new families.
- Sanctuary updates were completed on time and below budget.
- We celebrated Pat Engel's retirement in May and then celebrated again in July as she rejoined our staff in a part-time role to lead our pastoral care ministry.
- We launched a new Care Team ministry to help us better care for and love one another.
- We were blessed by a wonderful Christmas program led by our Kids Ministry Team.



2022 BY THE NUMBERS

2022 was Epworth's first full year back in the building since the onset of the Covid Pandemic. We counted numbers as best we could during the pandemic. As we counted in 2022, the numbers provided a more clear picture of where Epworth stands.

Looking at numbers from a pre and post pandemic aspect has really helped us. These numbers reveal the reality we have each felt. Epworth learned how to thrive during the pandemic and is now thriving in the new reality of church life in a post pandemic world.



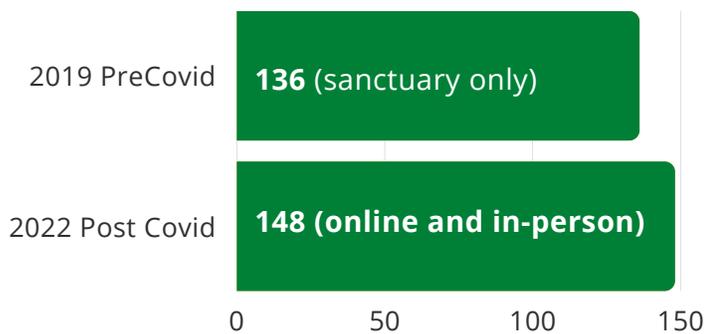
285 Active Members and Constituents

15 New Members in 2022

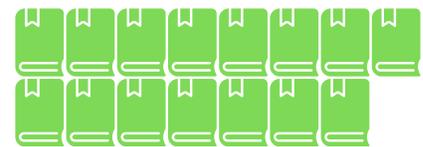


2 Baptisms in 2022

Worship Attendance



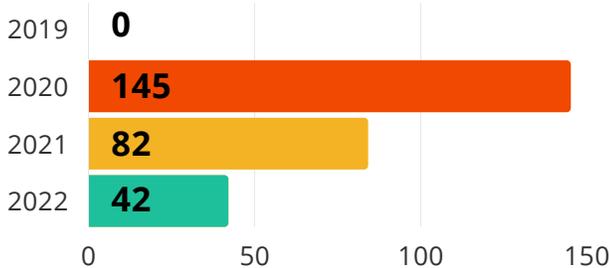
15 Small Groups Studying Together meeting weekly or monthly



5 Support Groups meeting monthly



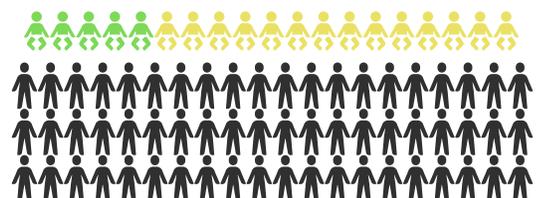
Online Worship Average



Sunday Morning Groups

79 Average attendance

60 Adults 5 Youth 14 Children



MISSION HIGHLIGHTS

The Epworth Mission Fund provides the funding for all the work that we do with our mission partners. Epworth's mission partners help us reach around the corner and around the globe. This past year, 16.3% of the total money given to Epworth was used to support our mission partners and the work of our congregation. Here are some of the highlights:



We were able to send a mission team to Tennessee this past year to work with the Jubilee Project. This was our first mission trip since July 2019. The team was able to connect with our mission partner and do some much needed cleaning in preparation for the launch of a new outreach ministry in the Fall of 2022.



Food insecurity remains a focus of our work at Epworth. Through our many partners both locally and globally, we are seeking to end hunger and provide access to basic necessities.



We provided resources for feeding programs through St Marks UMC in Zimbabwe and University UMC in Indianapolis. We provided backpacks with food and holiday meals for families in need at Eastwood MS and Allisonville Elementary. In addition, through the Society of St Andrew, surplus fresh food was gleaned from local farmers and markets and distributed to area food pantries.

Epworth Mission Fund

All financial contributions are used to directly support the mission work of Epworth locally, nationally and globally.

\$ 66,759 Giving

\$ 61,676 Expenses

Mission Fund Reserves

as of 12-31-2022

\$23,200

2023 MISSION FOCUS

We look forward to resuming our mission travel plans especially returning to visit, for the first time since 2019, our mission partner in Guatemala. We also look forward to building on our relationships and celebrating all the work that our congregation does around the City of Indianapolis.



In July of 2023, we plan to return to Guatemala to work with our mission partner. We are grateful for all the work they do providing medical and educational resources for a greatly underserved population in Guatemala.



We are also working to tell the story of the many people from our congregation that willingly live their faith by serving the community through various organizations throughout the city. Watch for details on how you can tell your story.



WEEKDAY CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

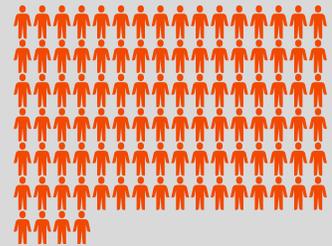
Epworth Weekday Children's Ministry (EWCM) is a NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) accredited program and is also a registered ministry with the State of Indiana.

Our mission is to provide an affordable program that nurtures, supports, and provides a high quality early childhood program that will nurture the whole child in a Christian environment. As such, we provide a range of experiences that enrich and enhance each child's cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. Opportunities for solitary play, as well as group activities, are provided.

Staff members serve as positive role models and provide care that is supportive, nurturing, and responsive to each child's individual needs. To learn more schedule a time to visit EWCM by contacting the church office.



130 STUDENTS



104 FAMILIES



19 STAFF



2021-22 School Year Financial Recap

\$363,036 Tuition

\$363,036 Expenses¹

¹ includes \$41,277 provided to the Church for the purpose of offsetting expenses for maintenance and upkeep for the building, classrooms, and playground.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Total giving in 2022 to Epworth's three primary funds - General Ministry, Trustee Capital, and Missions - was up slightly compared to 2021. We also continue to see an increase in automated giving online and 2023 pledges reflect an increase in pledged giving.

Our budget has four major line items: staff, building, programs, and missions. The Ministry Fund is used for our operational expenses or day-to-day expenses for the building, programs, and staff. The Trustee Capital Fund is used to pay the mortgage, fund major repairs and upkeep, and maintain the building. The Mission Fund is used to provide funding for our Mission and Outreach efforts.

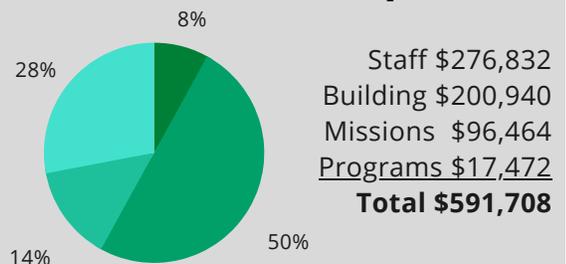
Expenses in all four areas was \$591,708 against total giving to the three funds of \$582,371. The loss was offset by our reserve holdings. We closed the year with a General Fund Reserve Balance of \$62,485. In addition, all other reserve funds are at or above minimum preferred balances as of year end December 31, 2022. As a result, the overall financial health of Epworth remains strong.

2023 BUDGET

Epworth builds a working budget based on program needs and projected expenses related to the building and staff. Our total budget for 2023 is \$584,371 which includes all anticipated expenses related to Missions, Trustees, Programs, and Staff.

The overall budget is a slight decrease from 2022 and reflects 2023 pledges and our historic giving numbers. The general ministry budget for 2023 is \$465,771 which covers our basic day to day expenses for staff and operations and is reflective of past budgets. We believe we have been conservative in our budget projections and as such we remain very optimistic about our future.

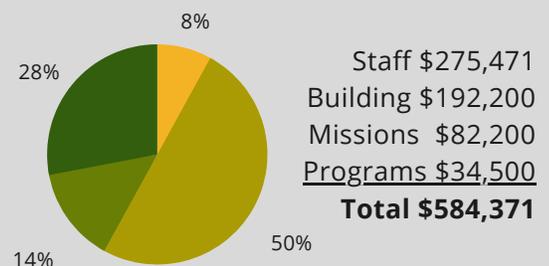
2022 Overall Expense



Total Giving to Epworth



2023 Working Budget



The working budget is reflective of all planned expenses less income and expenses related to the Weekday Children's Ministry.

A more fully detailed line item budget is available by request from the Church Office

TRUSTEE REVIEW

The Trustee Capital Fund provides funding for the payment of our mortgage as well as the ongoing maintenance and repair for the building. As we begin 2023, \$49,938 remains in our Trustee Capital Fund. As we have shifted to a preventative care model, we have greatly reduced our maintenance costs. We continue to update and replace worn items throughout the building as funds have allowed. This past year, total giving to the Trustee Fund totaled \$67,161 while expenses were \$79,196. We also continue to reduce our debt. Our current mortgage indebtedness is now only \$253,817 as of December 31, 2022.

We have also created and funded a Project Reserve Fund with an initial balance of \$60,000. This fund will allow us to strategically set aside funds for future major capital projects. This type of planning will help us complete major projects in the future in a shorter timeline and hopefully with fewer capital campaigns.

Trustee Capital Fund

Contributions to this fund are used to pay the mortgage, fund major repairs and upkeep, and help maintain the building

\$ 67,161 Giving

\$ 79,196 Expenses

Trustee Capital Reserves

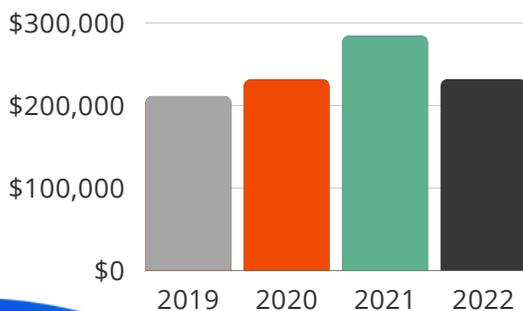
as of 12-31-2022

\$49,938



LEGACY FUND

an Endowment to benefit Epworth UMC



The Epworth Legacy Fund was established in 1995 when an anonymous gift to Epworth directed the establishment of the Endowment. That first gift became a forever gift with a perpetual legacy of giving to Epworth. Combined with other gifts over the years, the fund has continued to provide gifts to Epworth. As of December 31, 2022 the Legacy Fund is valued at \$223,982.

Today, the Endowment provides the means for people to make Estate Gifts that ultimately provide a forever gift, a perpetual legacy, and an everlasting blessing for the future of Epworth as a church.

In 2022, The Legacy Fund provided an \$8,000 gift. Half of the gift (\$4,000) was used to provide financial support for our mission partners locally and globally during the pandemic. The other half (\$4,000) was used to assist with maintenance and repairs to Epworth's HVAC system.

2023 AND BEYOND

Epworth's future is bright and as we work through these concerns, we will remain focused on our priorities as a church of making disciples that Love, Grow, and Serve.

Leadership has identified three key areas of concern related to the future of Epworth. These items have been a concern for quite some time and leadership has begun the diligent work of finding workable solutions. During the upcoming year, Staff and Leadership will be sharing pertinent information regarding plans and proposed solutions.



FELLOWSHIP HALL

The largest gathering space outside of the sanctuary is in need of a number of updates to make it more accessible and useable. Leadership is developing a plan to add bathrooms to the area, provide needed updates to the kitchen, and to make the exterior entrance more accessible and user friendly. A proposal will be presented to the church when a detailed plan is completed.

United Methodist Church (UMC) Division

The greater UMC continues to divide over cultural issues. Some churches have left the denomination and are no longer part of the UMC connectional system. Epworth remains committed to the current UMC. Leadership continues to monitor the situation. As the greater church prepares for a global UMC in May 2024, we hope more clarity for the future of the denomination will emerge. We will provide updates as new or pertinent information is available



CHURCH GROUNDS AND FACILITIES

Epworth was built sixty plus years ago. As a result our facility requires more and more maintenance each year. Some items will require more extensive renovation, updates, or even replacement. Some items of major concern are the parking lot, the heating and cooling system, the public bathrooms, and the playground. Leadership continues to seek to make the best decisions to assure the future of the church.

EPWORTH LEADERSHIP



Epworth is governed by a single board called The Leadership Table. This group provides oversight for the administration and overall programs of the church. Oversight includes, but is not limited to the areas of Trustees, Staff Parish Relations, and Finance.

The Leadership Table is tasked with acting solely in the interest of the members of the church. The Senior Pastor is responsible for day-to-day planning and administration of Epworth.

Minutes of all meetings are provided to church members via email and are also made available upon request except where limited by confidentiality.

Leadership Table Members

Chris Nicholson – Chair of Leader Table and Lay Leader
Lisa Pleasant – Chair of Trustees
Brian Turpin – Chair of Finance
Larry Whitham – Chair of Staff Parish
Sue Smallwood
Dawn Widgery
Jim Stone
Diane Gann
Craig Guhl
Randy Siebert – Lay Member to Annual Conference
Cathy Hinkle – Lay Member to Annual Conference
Rodney Frieden - Senior Pastor

Non Voting Members

Patty Thomas – Recording Secretary



CHURCH STAFF

Rodney Frieden – Senior Pastor
Chris Thornsberry – Director of Discipleship
Anndi Maguire - Director of Weekday Children's Ministry
- Director of Student Ministry
Nancy Bachman - Director of KIDS Ministry
Pat Engel – Director of Pastoral Care
John Phillips - Director of Music and Worship
Patty Thomas - Office Administrator
Troy Barker - Director of Administration and Finance

Testimonies



In my small group, friends have come and gone but the one thing we have in common is seeking answers to hard questions about God, faith and meaning. I don't know that we have found all the answers to our questions but we have found a group of caring friends, who are now a community that helps each other as we age, cope with loss of friends and family members and deal with health and other issues.

- Joe Hatcher (member since 1987)

I was so happily greeted at Epworth UMC on my first visit that my heart said this is where I belong. I am growing through the teaching and I am making wonderful new friends here. I voiced my interest in playing hand bells and now I am worshipping God and making music with great people.

- Marcie Duff (member since 2022)



We joined Epworth because we found a welcoming community and a wonderful small group. There were many opportunities to serve in ways that we both connected with. We also found new friendships and great conversations. It was very easy to feel at home at Epworth.

- Chris and Katie Nicholson (members since 2019)

My small group is so important. That is where I first felt comfortable admitting that I knew so little about the Bible and about what it means to be a Christian and a Methodist. I love the people and their loving hearts. They make being a part of Epworth a good experience.

- Karen Brantingham (member since 1980)

