



Annual General Meeting

May 12, 2024

Lead Pastor Report

At a staff level, we referred to this church year as the year of “Fs,” which included fires, floods, and funerals. The Cornerstone family was directly affected by all three of those.

When the fires first started, Cornerstone opened the doors at Gatehouse as a community comfort station until we lost power that evening. Through the next two weeks, we provided gift cards to the four Cornerstone families who lost their homes and groceries as a result of the ongoing power outages. We also partnered with Emmanuel Baptist church to provide thousands of dollars of gift cards to community members affected by the fires.

During those two weeks, we hosted prayer meetings at both campuses to pray for our communities and those who lost their homes.

It seemed our communities were just in the recovery stages of the fire when the floods swept through. Again, numerous Cornerstone families were directly impacted. Cornerstone again was able to provide grocery gift cards to help families. In a practical way, numerous volunteers, adults and teens, from Cornerstone stepped up to provide labour in cleaning out flooded homes.

This was also a year of unprecedented funerals in our Church families. From December to July there were seven funerals. Thank you to our staff and the volunteers who stepped up to provide comfort to the families during that time.

In the past twelve months, we have welcomed a dozen new families into our Cornerstone family, including many with no recent church connection. This represents close to 40 adults and children. It has been exciting to see these new folks connecting in life groups, our children and teen ministries.

We averaged 182 folks in our combined Sunday morning services, which is an eleven percent increase over last year’s figure.

During the past year, we have celebrated six baptisms. All of those baptized were teens and children who are taking a stand early for Christ and His Church. In addition to the baptisms, I was privileged to take part in a baby dedication.

We have celebrated numerous births and new births. We have also grieved with families as we held seven memorial services this past year.

Angela and I have prayed specifically for each family at Cornerstone multiple times over the past twelve months. If you have received an email saying that we prayed for you, rest assured

that we prayed for you and each member of your family by name. The emails may have been a cut-and-paste, but the prayers weren't.

On Christmas Eve, we celebrated the birth of Christ with almost four hundred of our friends and neighbours in our four different services. Good Friday and Easter Sunday saw a combined attendance of close to five hundred. Cornerstone is called home by many folks in our community, even if they only come home for Christmas and Easter. But that is often how it begins, and what better time to experience church than to celebrate the birth and resurrection of our Lord?

A big thank-you to the many people who gave up their Christmas Eve and Good Friday to lead and participate in these services.

Cornerstone Live continues to provide live streaming for our Gatehouse services and several special events. Our service is watched on a regular basis by our own shut-ins as well as people who are experiencing Cornerstone for the first time. We have made several significant upgrades to the system this year that have improved the overall quality of the live stream.

The Cornerstone family continues to impact the community through our compassion ministries. In September, a number of the Cornerstone family stepped out of their comfort zone to hand out coupons for free pizza and pop at the homeless encampment in Sackville.

We continue to assist with Thanksgiving at Ronald McDonald House, our monthly collection of Chunky Soup and evaporated milk for Beacon House (FEED Nova Scotia). And with the current economic situation, we are providing an ever-increasing number of grocery gift cards for families facing food insecurities. Each of these is an integral part of who we are and how we serve.

This year, for our Christmas Offering, we were able to raise fourteen thousand dollars to drill a well in Tembu, a village neighbouring Kenenday. Since then, the Jesus Film Team has been able to show the Jesus Film at Tembu with very encouraging results.

We have rented our facilities (buildings and parking lot) to various community and commercial groups this year. Often, this allows the staff to connect with community members who have no other connection to Cornerstone.

After the fire destroyed the Forestkids day care we were able to open our doors to them through the summer and into the fall as they rebuilt.

We hosted the Kingswood Rate Payers general meeting and provided a meeting place for their directors on a regular basis, along with providing regular meeting space for the Hammonds Plains Historical Society and Hammonds Plains Softball.

At the district level, I continue to serve on the District Board of Administration Executive in the position of District Secretary as well as serving as District Director of Global Partners.

In January, I was able to travel to Bangladesh in my role as DDGP, and as a part of seeing the work there, Cornerstone was able to provide the funds to purchase a new motorcycle for their Child Development team.

This year, we hosted two men's breakfasts, which were appreciated by all the men who attended. Kudos to Bruce Barteaux and his great kitchen and clean-up teams.

Thank you to our staff and volunteers, who do an awesome job of making sure everything comes together the way it's supposed to. We couldn't have done it without all who assisted in the week-to-week operation of Cornerstone. Thank you to those who have helped to make Cornerstone what it is.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without all the help, support, prayers, and encouragement that I received from Angela.

Stay Safe and Stay Blessed
Pastor Denn Guptill

Cornerstone Youth

Dear Cornerstone Family,
It is with great joy and thankfulness that I present this year's highlights from our Youth Ministry. We've seen remarkable growth, heartfelt commitments, and the introduction of exciting new elements that have enriched our community.

Spiritual Growth and Milestones: This year, we celebrated the baptism of two of our students, Cody and Ava, who took bold steps in declaring their faith. These baptisms are a testament to our youth group's spiritual depth and commitment. Additionally, our students have shown a renewed commitment to studying the Bible and engaging in prayer, enriching their spiritual journeys.

Youth Band Initiative: A new development this year has been the formation of our youth band. This talented group has started leading worship during our Wednesday night meetings and is preparing to lead a Sunday morning service soon. Their involvement has brought a new energy to our gatherings and has allowed our youth to express their faith through music.

Attendance and Participation: Our average attendance has been around 21 dedicated youths consistently participating and a total participation of 42 students. We've also experienced significant gatherings at events like the One Conference, where we had 18, and Encounter Rally, where we had 8 at Kingswood. These have been pivotal in fostering fellowship and spiritual growth. This year for One Con, we are planning for 22 to attend!

Fundraising and Support: Our fundraising efforts, including a highly successful yard sale and innovative initiatives like movie nights and a youth canteen, have greatly supported our activities, making it possible for more students to attend transformative events without financial burden.

Looking Ahead: We are enthusiastic about the future, focusing on biblical authority and literacy to ensure our youth can articulate their faith confidently. We're also excited about the integration of 6th graders into our group, helping them transition smoothly into our youth community.

We thank every leader, volunteer, and family member who has supported our ministry this past year. Your dedication and love have made these achievements possible, and we look forward to another year of growth and joy.

Cornerstone Music

Dear Cornerstone Church Family,

With great gratitude and joy, I'm sharing with you the achievements and progress of our worship ministry over the past year. This year has been marked by profound moments of worship, significant growth, and deepening community engagement.

Musicians and Roles: This year, our worship team expanded to 43 dedicated individuals, including vocalists, guitarists, bassists, drummers, pianists, and crucial technical support roles. This diverse group has been instrumental in enriching our worship services each Sunday.

Musical Selection and Impact: Our repertoire this year included both cherished hymns and contemporary worship songs. Some of our favourites this year were:

"Goodness Of God" - "Graves Into Gardens" - "House Of The Lord"

These selections have deeply touched our community, bringing comfort and inspiration to many.

Engagement and Atmosphere: The response to our worship sessions has been overwhelmingly positive. Memorable moments include witnessing the congregation engage deeply with the music, whether through expressive worship or reflective contemplation. These instances underscore the spiritual impact of our musical ministry.

Training and Development: We held several training sessions this year, notably for our sound technicians, enhancing the overall quality of our worship services. These efforts have paid dividends in improving our musical execution and technical delivery.

Growth of the Team: The worship team welcomed new members across various musical and technical areas, injecting fresh talent and enthusiasm into our ministry. These new members have brought a range of skills, from high musical expertise to a willingness to learn and grow.

Challenges and Solutions: We navigated challenges such as scheduling conflicts and occasional personnel shortages. Our approach has been to adapt and make the most of available resources, continually seeking to engage more volunteers where gaps are evident.

Future Plans: Looking ahead, we plan to diversify our team dynamics by mixing different musicians and techs in our teams, fostering new relationships and learning opportunities. Additionally, we aim to further engage the congregation by exploring new songs and community participation.

Conclusion: Thank you to each member of our worship ministry for your dedication, passion, and service. Your contributions have enhanced our worship experiences and fostered a deeper sense of community within our church. We look forward to another year of beautiful music and spiritual growth.

Cornerstone Tech

Dear Cornerstone Family,

This year has been a period of significant technological advancements and updates for our church, enhancing our capabilities to serve our community better and expand our outreach. Below are the key highlights from our tech department:

Equipment Upgrades:

- **New Projector:** We installed a new projector that has dramatically improved the visual quality of our presentations and services, enhancing the overall worship experience.
- **New Video Switch:** The addition of a new video switch has allowed us to streamline our video operations, providing smoother transitions and more dynamic multimedia presentations during our services.

Maintenance and Updates:

- **Computer Maintenance:** Our computers are maintained on an ongoing basis to ensure that all technological operations run smoothly and efficiently.
- **Website Updates:** We continue to update our current website in a timely manner, improving its functionality and user experience to better meet the needs of our congregation and visitors.

Website Overhaul:

- We are excited to announce that a complete overhaul of our website is underway. This new website will feature a more modern design, enhanced navigation, and updated content that reflects our church's mission and community activities. We invite you to get a sneak peek of what we've been working on at hfx.church.

These technological enhancements are part of our commitment to improving the accessibility and quality of our church services and communications. We look forward to the ways these tools will help us continue to grow and serve our community effectively.

Thank you for your ongoing support and enthusiasm for these developments. We are excited about the future and the additional improvements we have in store.

Blessings,

Rev. Stefan Gilbert
Assistant Pastor
Cornerstone Wesleyan Church

Pastor of Family Care

Children's Ministry

Another great year in Kids' Ministry is behind us and a new and exciting year stretches out in front of us. Our CS Kids' mission is to partner with families to help children become passionate followers of Jesus both now and in the future. This report is a brief summary of how we have endeavored to see this happen with God's help.

May/June 2023 saw us making adjustments and putting guidelines in place in order to open our doors to Forest Kids after they lost their main building to the forest fires. This required some changes in our set up and tear down procedures as well as limiting access to the children's center during weekdays. Our CS Kids' volunteers were amazing and really stepped up to make this possible.

For the summer we combined our CS Kids' small groups and used "The Beginners Bible" video series with follow up activities each week. This meant we needed fewer volunteers each week and thus lightened the load for them over the summer months.

However, our volunteer base has remained strong, and we were able to add 14 new volunteers to the Team this past year. The volunteers have continued to show up faithfully; to arrive prepared with lessons and activities that effectively teach the children about Jesus and the God who loves them so passionately. I appreciate their input; their feedback; their commitment to the mission of CS Kids' and their desire to make this the most meaningful time possible for every child. Several of our newer volunteers have graciously and very capably stepped up to teach a group when needed, and to lead in my absence which has been a huge blessing to me. It was a highlight to be able to recognize our Cornerstone volunteers on our Volunteer Appreciation Sunday in June.

In September we started using a new curriculum in all our CS Kids' groups. Our toddler through Grade 4 classes are using Wonder Ink curriculum while the Grades 5 and 6 class, Club 56, is using the Loop Show which is a video based curriculum that has really been helping them dig deep into the issues that are relevant to their age group. I so appreciate that the leaders are willing to take the curriculum and develop it to meet the unique needs of their students. We have continued to place a high priority on the children memorizing scripture and have helped to motivate them with our Memory Verse prize store at the end of each month. This year, thanks to an anonymous doner, we have included Club 56 in our memory verse incentive with a gift card prize draw at the end of each month. Learning the memory verses gets their name in the draw each month.

In September we had our Volunteer Kick Off event which was very well attended and gave us the opportunity to connect, cast vision and retrain for the year ahead. Other training sessions and collaborative meetings were held as needed throughout the year.

Special event days included an "End of School/Arrival of Summer celebration; our annual Steppin' Up Sunday, where children who are moving to the next class level are recognized and officially get to move up; a Christmas party; a Good Friday movie day; an Easter Sunday easter egg hunt with the scripture message hidden in each egg; and soon we will be holding our end of school celebration again!

Another highlight was our Family Fun Night which saw 81 "kids" of all ages along with family and friends, come together for a night of food, laughter and connection. Again, this year, I have been privileged to lead several of our children through the Starting Point and Baptism for Kids curriculum and then baptize 4 of our children. This remains one of the most meaningful and impactful privileges of my ministry.

In December, we were given 200 New Testaments by the Gideons which we were able to distribute at our Christmas party day to all of the children who attend Cornerstone at both campuses.

Numerically, CS Kids has been growing and attendance has been more consistent with fewer “low” weeks. At Gatehouse we have averaged 30 this past year, which was up from 27 last year. Combined with Windgate, our overall average attendance this year was 36, with a high Sunday of 51 between the two campuses. It is great to see more families making it a priority to have their children in church each week.

I have been able to participate in a Kids Ministry Cohort this past year as well as join in on a Next Gen Connect Cohort. The insight, ideas, and encouragement received from these events is so valuable and refreshing.

The future of Kids Ministry is full of potential for introducing more kids to Jesus and helping them learn how to develop a lifelong relationship with the One who can be and wants to be their best friend!

Women’s Ministry

It has been an exciting year of ministry for the women of Cornerstone!

We started the fall off with a Ladies’ Dessert and Games Night which was held at Windgate. It was a great evening of fun and connection as everyone began to enter their fall schedules.

We had 17 ladies attend the Harvest Conference in NB. This was by far the largest group we have had attend. Many of the ladies have shared that it had a huge impact on their lives, both spiritually and personally, as they connected on a deeper level with the ladies from Cornerstone.

In December, we held our annual Cornerstone-wide Christmas event with 46 in attendance, and the ladies who helped plan the event did an amazing job. This was followed by the Windgate ladies hosting a Christmas event for their campus as well which was very well done and well attended.

Coming up on June 15th we are planning a Birthday celebration for women of all ages, 0-110! It’s going to be a blast!

One of the most significant things that happens in Women’s Ministry is when women come together to support each other in life and in their Christian walk. This past year I have been privileged to be up close with 29 ladies who have attended one of the small groups that I lead. This is an amazing experience as we share, challenge, grow and encourage each other in the faith. A couple of standout events from my groups were the summer dinner night that Busola Adeniji hosted at her home in July and being asked to pray a prayer of blessing over a home a family had just moved into.

This year, Pastor Deborah and Julie McDowell have both started study groups for women, as well. I have been hearing great things from these groups which provide an alternate time, day,

or location for ladies to participate. Combined, we have had 45 ladies participating in study groups! Our weekly average has been 22 at Gatehouse and 7 at Windgate. This is awesome and one of the things I am most excited about in ministry.

In addition to these specific responsibilities, I have made several hospital visits, and I have met one-on-one with at least 12 Cornerstone ladies to provide support over the year.

I have attended 7 funerals this past year and participated or led in 4 other funerals, which were either Cornerstone-connected or family funerals.

I have participated in 4 special prayer events held by Cornerstone this past year.

I fulfilled my responsibilities as a member of the District Board of Ministerial Development by participating in 2 days of interviews for 31 ministerial candidates.

Once again, I am thankful for the privilege of serving at Cornerstone and seeing what God has instore for us in the coming year!

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Marilyn Mansvelt

Cornerstone in Action

What an incredible year this has been for missions at Cornerstone. Every year, I am impressed by the generosity and sacrificial giving.

We continue to work with Global Partners Missionaries in various parts of the World. Through these amazing people and families, we are seeing lives changed and new followers of God emerging. Each of these families has followed God to hard places in order to spread the light of Jesus. Continue to pray for these families.

We have continued to partner with World Hope International. Through our donations, we have been able to see a community thrive, children educated, and safety restored. It is always incredible to see the work that is accomplished through sacrificial giving.

In September, we participated in Love Atlantic. We gave generously to Beacon House by restocking their chunky soup and evaporated milk. We provided Souls Harbour with socks and undies to hand out to those in need. And we took meal vouchers to those who were living at the Cobequid Ball Field.

We ended the year strong by sending funds to Bangladesh to buy a motorcycle to help the Child Development Officer with the Wesleyan Church of Bangladesh to travel around to villages to meet the needs of families with young children.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Deborah Gilbert

Cornerstone Windgate

As I reflect on the last year, I am thankful for how God has worked over the last twelve months at Cornerstone and particularly at Windgate. It is an honour and privilege to be able to work as the Site pastor at our Windgate location. People continue to serve and show up in sacrificial ways, which makes leading such a joy for me.

Over the last year it has been fun to see how the people of Windgate continue to grow together as a body. People are increasingly connecting with each other, and it is fun to see. I joke that the loneliest part of my week is standing at the door after our worship service is over because it is usually a long time before most people leave as they are connecting with each other in the worship centre.

I am also pleased that people don't connect at the expense of welcoming new people to the church either. I am thankful for a growing sense of ownership among the people to create an appropriately welcoming and hospitable atmosphere in the church that communicates that we are glad to see people but not be pushy.

Additional highlights:

- It was a strong Christmas season with a family decorating night that was well attended and had several unchurched people attending with friends and family. We also had a strong Christmas Eve service, which was a first for us.
- Developed a couple of new small groups. We now have three Windgate-based groups, with approximately 40% of Sunday attendees attending a group and others looking to get connected.
- Continue to see new faces that attend the church.
- Connection events throughout the year with campfires around the fire pit and potlucks.
- Hosted an Open House between Christmas and New Year's.
- Served the Atlantic district as a Pastor Cluster group leader and attended "Oasis" in Moncton, which is the annual business meeting for the Baptist denomination.

Personal Areas of Responsibility:

- General leadership at the Windgate site
- Weekly staff meetings
- Pastoral care and counselling

- Non-voting member of leadership team
- Preaching team
- Supporting the different Windgate leaders

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Rob McDowell