



EBENEZER
BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

Board of Elders Meeting November 13, 2017

Opening & Prayer

Pastor Tim Gibson opened the meeting in prayer.

Roll Call

The following elders were **present**: Tim Gibson, Wayne Batten, Dick Bickings, Phil Norris, Swannie Griffin, Shawn Sommons, Byron Roth, Dennis Flanagan, Chris Jones, Mike Notary, Kevin Hardy, Scott Holwick, and Jeremy Harkins.

The following elders were **absent**: Pat Barry

Devotional Time:

- The elders discussed chapter six in Steve Miller's book, C.H. Spurgeon on Spiritual Leadership - "A Zeal for Proclaiming God's Word"
 - The heart of effective preaching
 - Christ is the diamond setting of every sermon
 - Let people know where they stand in relation to biblical truths
 - We do not bring life to the scripture, we draw life from the scripture
 - The essentials of effective preaching
 - Begin with prayer
 - Have a humble attitude
 - Invest in preparation
 - Saturate yourself in the word
 - Offer substance in your message
 - Keep your message simple
 - Make the message interesting
 - Make the message practical
 - The resources for effective preaching
 - The Holy Spirit
 - The Bible

Prayer Time:

- The elders split into twos to pray over their Shepherd's lists.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the Elders Meeting held October 9, 2017, and the Combined Elders/Deacons Meeting held October 30, 2017; it was seconded & passed unanimously.

Financial Report - October 2017 (Attachment 1) -

A motion was made to approve the October 2017 financial report, it was seconded and passed unanimously. Byron Roth gave the following written highlights:

- YTD Income per budget 106%
- YTD Expense per budget 99%
- Byron mentioned that there will be a Meeting with the Elisabeth Heyer estate trustees concerning her will for EBFC, on Tuesday, November 14, 2017.
 - Joe Meier will create a special fund for this inheritance

Discussion Items:

- 1) Nominations for Elders & Deacons – Vote & approve all nominations for elders & deacons to be presented to the church on Sunday, November 19, 2017. (**Re**-renew, **New**-new candidate, **M**-motion, **S**-second, **P**-passed)
 - Mark Dammeyer declined nomination
 - **Deacons:** (Re) Kevin Kritzberger (MSP), (Re) Mark Hardy (MSP), (New) Blake Kuntz (MSP)
 - **Elders:** (Re) Chris Jones (MSP), (Re) Scott Holwick (MSP), (New) Tom Galloway (MSP)
- 2) Lynfield Ministry - permanent presence
 - Elders discussed several possibilities
 - Developing a subcommittee to investigate what action should be taken
 - Potential committee members (to be verified): Dick Bickings (chairman), Jeremy Harkins, Swannie Griffin, Chris Jones, Carol Barry, Shelley Carlstrom, Tom Carlstrom, Blake Kuntz
 - Will meet frequently (TBD)
 - Talk about what to do in the meantime while we're developing the entire plan and vision.
 - Touch base with BFC & Luke Raughley for advice
 - Provide monthly updates
 - Goal: provide a permanent presence at Lynfield.
- 3) Parsonage Vision
 - If we keep it, who would maintain it?
 - Elders will continue to pray as decided in 10/30/17 combined meeting
- 4) Members & Kinship Groups - Require participation in a Kinship Group?
 - Strongly encourage, but not require
 - Encourage through our membership class
- 5) Security
 - Scott Holwick initiated discussion regarding our security policies in light of the recent shooting at a church in Texas. Andy Meeks is heading this, and will provide necessary information.
 - **Motion** to have the deacons provide us with their security policy in January's combined meeting, so that we can provide input with regard to ministry. **Seconded, Passed unanimously.**

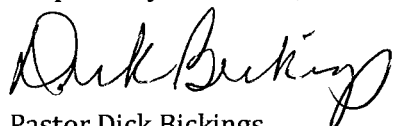
Shawn Sommons adjourned the meeting with prayer.

Pastoral Reports

The pastors submitted their monthly reports:

- Tim Gibson, Senior Pastor (*Attachment 2*)
- Dick Bickings, Pastor of Discipleship (*Attachment 3*)
- Jeremy Harkins, Worship Pastor (*Attachment 4*)
- Mike Notary, Youth Pastor (*Attachment 5*)

Respectfully submitted,



Pastor Dick Bickings
Secretary to the Board of Elders

EBENEZER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH - OCTOBER YTD 2017 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

BALANCE SHEET REPORT / COMPARISON

GENERAL FUND - BUDGET vs. ACTUAL

ASSETS	31-Oct-17	31-Dec-16	\$ Change	Income	Oct YTD	Budget	Variance	%BGT YTD
Assets - Checking/Savings								
18000 · Checking (BB&T/KNBT)	463,824.18	541,631.79	-77,807.61	1100 · Offerings / Gifts	857,770.44	807,601.50	50,168.94	106%
18002 · CDs (BB&T/KNBT)	67,770.97	67,714.56	56.41	1400 · Interest	294.87	622.64	-327.77	47%
19000 · Savings (M&T Bank)	93,014.45	92,952.54	61.91	1700 · Memorials	1,370.00	0.00	1,370.00	
19001 · Checking (M&T Bank)	5,375.67	5,375.67	0.00	1900 · BCS / Bldg Use	14,075.10	12,512.60	1,562.50	112%
Total Checking/Savings	629,985.27	707,674.56	-77,689.29	Total Income	873,510.41	820,736.75	52,773.66	106%
TOTAL ASSETS	629,985.27	707,674.56	-77,689.29	Expenses				
LIABILITIES				2000 · General Finance	40,384.98	44,107.10	-3,722.12	92%
Current Liabilities				3000 · Discipleship	21,927.47	22,745.90	-818.43	96%
901 · Building Fund	68,550.70	104,543.44	-35,992.74	5000 · Evangelism	6,223.08	7,141.60	-918.52	87%
902 · Capital Improvement Fund	-72,060.47	0.00	-72,060.47	6000 · Missions	126,480.29	125,537.50	942.79	101%
903 · Transportation Fund	268.00	268.00	0.00	7000 · Deacon Ministries	92,808.66	91,960.00	848.66	101%
904 · Scholarship Fund	3,662.44	2,607.50	1,054.94	8000 · Worship	8,127.34	7,610.00	517.34	107%
905 · Faith Promise	9,128.75	33,123.24	-23,994.49	9000 · Office Admin	12,003.46	13,271.00	-1,267.54	90%
907 · Benevolence Fund	15,578.12	8,746.23	6,831.89	10000 · Congregational Care	1,668.76	2,466.60	-797.84	68%
908 · Music Fund	374.20	274.20	100.00	11000 · Compensation	495,729.13	499,025.50	-3,296.37	99%
911 · Year End Accruals	8,480.16	8,480.16	0.00	Total Expense	805,353.17	813,865.20	-8,512.03	99%
912 · Run For The Children	2,303.60	4,137.51	-1,833.91	Net Ordinary Income	68,157.24	6,871.55	61,285.69	
914 · HRA	822.54	0.00	822.54	Net Fund Transfer between Accts.	0.00	0.00	0.00	
915 · Youth Summer Missions	-20.01	4,767.88	-4,787.89	Net Income	68,157.24	6,871.55	61,285.69	
100 · Payroll Liabilities	6,988.44	7,136.75	-148.31					
Total Current Liabilities	44,076.47	174,084.91	-130,008.44					

DESIGNATED FUNDS

Long Term Liabilities	Income	Expenses	Net Income
810 · Building Mortgage	5,006.00	40,998.74	-35,992.74
Total Long Term Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Liabilities	44,076.47	174,084.91	-130,008.44
EQUITY			
900 · Retained Earnings	941,468.45	921,501.55	19,966.90
Net Income	52,319.15	19,966.90	32,352.25
1000 · Opening Bal Equity	-407,878.80	-407,878.80	0.00
Total Equity	585,908.80	533,589.65	52,319.15
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	629,985.27	707,674.56	-77,689.29
OTHER LIABILITY ACCOUNTS			
902 · Capital Improvement Fund	0.00	87,918.99	-87,918.99
911 · Year End Accruals	0.00	0.00	0.00
912 · Run For The Children	1,666.09	3,500.00	-1,833.91
914 · HRA	5,509.00	4,677.46	831.54
915 · Youth Summer Missions	27,128.11	31,916.00	-4,787.89
Total Other Current Liabilities	78,789.10	221,165.75	-142,376.65

Joe Meier
Treasurer

11/8/17
Date

Attachment #1

EBENEZER BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH - OCTOBER 2017 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

BALANCE SHEET REPORT / COMPARISON

GENERAL FUND - BUDGET vs. ACTUAL

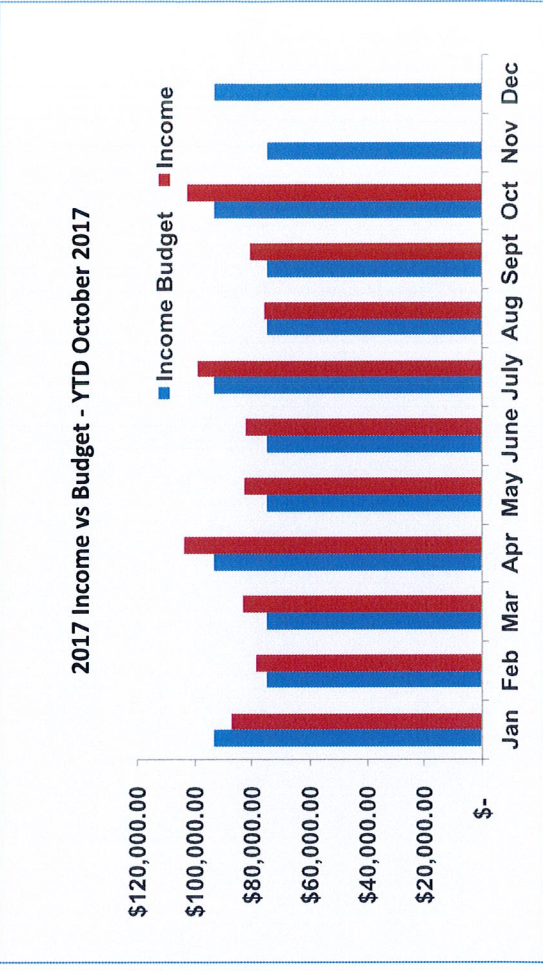
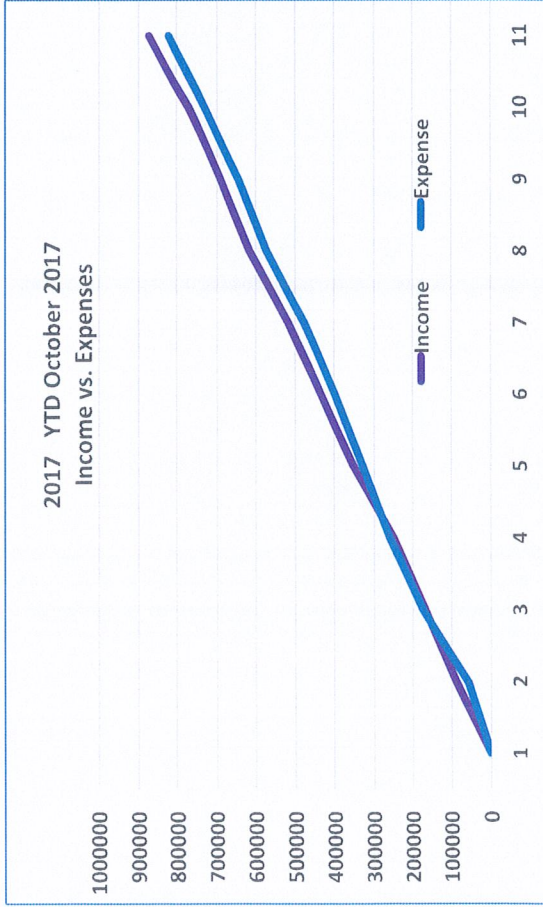
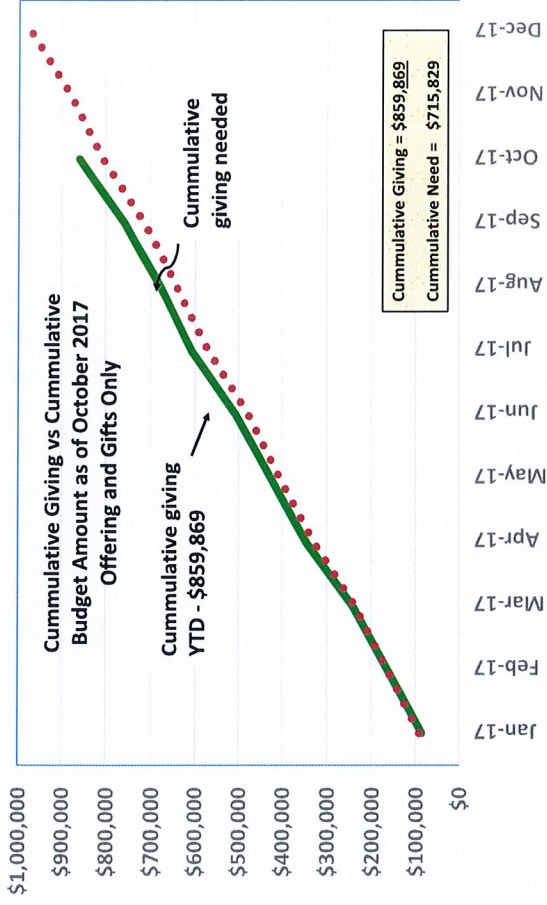
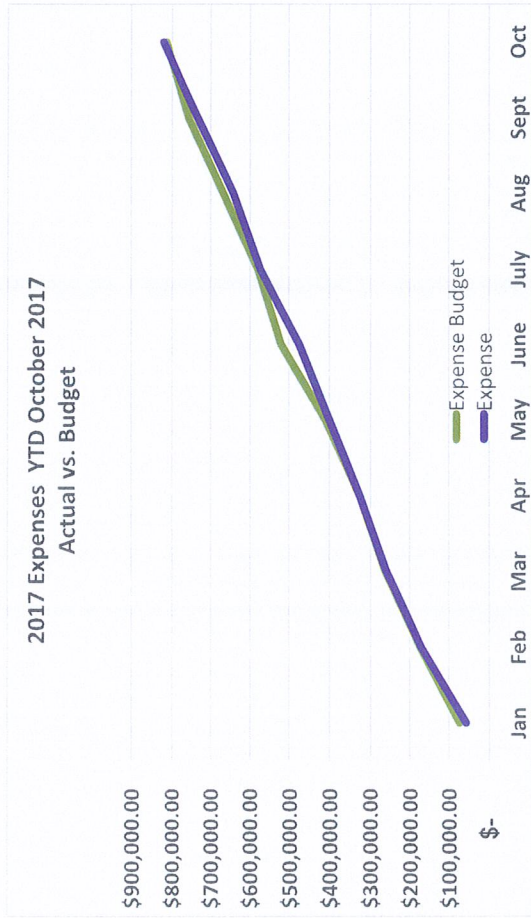
ASSETS	31-Oct-17	30-Sep-17	\$ Change	Income	October	Budget	Variance	% BGT MTD
Assets - Checking/Savings								
18000 · Checking (BB&T/KNBT)	463,824.18	454,251.19	9,572.99	1100 · Offerings / Gifts	98,929.00	91,772.90	7,156.10	108%
18002 · CDs (BB&T/KNBT)	67,770.97	67,770.97	0.00	1400 · Interest	17.69	70.75	-53.06	25%
19000 · Savings (M&T Bank)	93,014.45	93,014.45	0.00	1700 · Memorials	530.00	0.00	530.00	
19001 · Checking (M&T Bank)	5,375.67	5,375.67	0.00	1900 · BCS / Bldg Use	2,917.80	1,421.89	1,495.91	205%
Total Checking/Savings	629,985.27	620,412.28	9,572.99	Total Income	102,394.49	93,265.54	9,128.95	110%
TOTAL ASSETS	629,985.27	620,412.28	9,572.99	Expenses				
LIABILITIES								
Current Liabilities								
901 · Building Fund	68,550.70	68,169.70	381.00	2000 · General Finance	9,980.09	487.51	9,492.58	2047%
902 · Capital Improvement Fund	-72,060.47	-69,760.47	-2,300.00	3000 · Discipleship	3,018.46	794.59	2,223.87	380%
903 · Transportation Fund	268.00	268.00	0.00	5000 · Evangelism	380.13	1,086.66	-706.53	35%
904 · Scholarship Fund	3,662.44	3,555.00	107.44	6000 · Missions	495.98	262.50	233.48	189%
905 · Faith Promise	9,128.75	12,567.75	-3,439.00	7000 · Deacon Ministries	6,346.93	5,370.00	976.93	118%
907 · Benevolence Fund	15,578.12	15,781.41	-203.29	8000 · Worship	948.84	200.00	748.84	474%
908 · Music Fund	374.20	374.20	0.00	9000 · Office/Admin	1,028.83	1,086.00	-57.17	95%
911 · Year End Accruals	8,480.16	8,480.16	0.00	10000 · Congregational Care	119.99	246.66	-126.67	49%
912 · Run For The Children	2,303.60	649.83	1,653.77	11000 · Compensation	65,807.39	49,302.55	16,504.84	133%
914 · HRA	822.54	1,922.54	-1,100.00	Total Expense	88,126.64	58,836.47	29,290.17	150%
915 · Youth Summer Missions	-20.01	-20.01	0.00	Net Ordinary Income	14,267.85	34,429.07	-20,161.22	
100 · Payroll Liabilities	6,988.44	6,783.22	205.22	Net Fund Transfer between Accts.	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Current Liabilities	44,076.47	48,771.33	-4,694.86	Net Income	14,267.85	34,429.07	-20,161.22	

DESIGNATED FUNDS

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
Long Term Liabilities			
810 · Building Mortgage	381.00	0.00	381.00
Total Long Term Liabilities	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Liabilities	44,076.47	48,771.33	-4,694.86
EQUITY			
900 · Retained Earnings	941,468.45	941,468.45	0.00
Net Income	52,319.15	38,051.30	14,267.85
1000 · Opening Bal Equity	-407,878.80	-407,878.80	0.00
Total Equity	585,908.80	571,640.95	14,267.85
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	629,985.27	620,412.28	9,572.99
<i>Joe Meier</i>	11/8/17		
Treasurer	Date		
Total Other Current Liabilities	5,718.59	10,618.67	-4,900.08

OTHER LIABILITY ACCOUNTS

	Income	Expenses	Net Income
901 · Building Fund	381.00	0.00	381.00
903 · Transportation Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
904 · Scholarship Fund	107.44	0.00	107.44
905 · Faith Promise	1,561.00	5,000.00	-3,439.00
907 · Benevolence Fund	2,015.38	2,218.67	-203.29
908 · Music Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
902 · Capital Improvement Fund	0.00	2,300.00	-2,300.00
911 · Year End Accruals	0.00	0.00	0.00
912 · Run For The Children	1,653.77	0.00	1,653.77
914 · HRA	0.00	1,100.00	-1,100.00
915 · Youth Summer Missions	0.00	0.00	0.00



Attachment # 2

**Pastor Tim's Ministry Report
November 13, 2017**

Studying & Preaching:

- I am finishing up the story of Joseph through the book of Genesis. I will complete the exposition by the end of the year or early in January. It has been a very fruitful study learning about the providential hand of God.
- I received many words of appreciation for the series on the Reformation in the month of October. Overall, it was a very good study. I think it was a highlight of the year.
- I am currently expositing through Ezra on Wednesday night. We have had an increase of attendance with approximately 25-30 showing up each week for singing, bible study and prayer time. It truly is one of my favorite nights of the week. The intimacy and time with the sheep is invaluable.
- I am considering and praying about beginning a series in the Gospel of John in January. Ebenezer has not been in a Gospel in at least 5 years since I have been here. I am convinced that spending time learning about Jesus, from Jesus is what we need. I would lay out the book to be expositied over a period of a year, trying not to stay too long in one location.

Nominating Committee: This year we had 6 re-elections & 2 new election interviews. The nominating committee met over a period of 3-4 nights in order to conduct interviews of Deacons and Elders. We spent about 30-45 minutes with each candidate asking theological, practical and leadership questions. It was a great time hearing the hearts of our leaders. We have been blessed with a great group of men leaders.

Shepherding/Ministry:

- Breakfast/Lunch/dinner with 4 church members/families
- Organized the Luther movie in October for the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation – Great attendance of about 75 people
- 2 funerals – Walter Smock & Norman Failla
- 1 hospital visitation
- Counseling – 4 separate sessions with different people
- 1 Wedding: Joseph & Christy
- 2 Home visits – one to discuss infant baptism
- Weekly meetings with Laszlo, pastoral intern
- Kinship group meetings – every other week, going through 1 Samuel
- Attended the newcomer luncheon to meet visitors
- Prison ministry – every other week on Friday to visit, pray and do Bible study
- PRC evaluation
- Attended the pastoral appreciation dinner put on by the Women's ministry. It was an incredible time of great fellowship, incredible food and a wonderful charge by Laura's dad.
- Golf outing with a few BFC pastors

Heavy on my heart is the lack of vision for the ministry in Lynfield, which is the low-income housing development on the south side of Bethlehem. The elders have agreed to pray and seek the Lord's will for what He would have us to do in 2018. I am hoping that the Lord is going to give us a more clear vision of what He wants us to do to reach those people there with the Gospel of Christ.

I am overwhelmed by the opportunity to preach God's Word every week to our people at Ebenezer. Surprisingly, I have not had too much opposition with my teaching. I truly expected to have more push back from my series on the Reformation (5 Solas) in the month of October. However, our people were very positive and the feedback was very encouraging. This speaks volumes as to the maturity level of our congregation. I'm so grateful for the Lord's work in the hearts of our people.

Our family continues to adjust to the changes in our home with the 3 older children leaving the nest. However, we are finding our groove and the Lord is blessing. We look forward to a great year in 2018 serving the Lord at Ebenezer BFC.

Serving Christ,
Pastor Tim Gibson

Pastor of Discipleship Report, Oct/Nov 2017

In my continued trek through the NT, I recently read in the book of Romans, chapter 8, how that Paul reminds us of the incomprehensible outcome of our justification...no condemnation, and an immense love that will never end...here's how he puts it:

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Romans 8:1, ESV)

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.' No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:35-39, ESV)

There are absolutely no greater truths in all the world...eternal truths that motivate, purify, empower, and give courage to complete all the the Lord has given us to do as we run the race that takes us home.

With that in mind, here are some of the ministry updates from October/November 2017:

Kids Crossing

- **Cross Time Sunday School (10:05 AM):** All Cross Time classes are studying the post resurrection activities of Jesus Christ and his disciples this month. We praise the Lord for this Christ honoring curriculum! Also, we currently have all the teacher spots filled, praise the Lord.
- **Early Childhood (2&3 year-olds):** Praise the Lord, he has brought us all the teachers and helpers, for all the services, and for both odd and even months!
- **Children's Church:** The Gospel Project curriculum worship segment continues to work well for Children's Church. We continue to see around 7-9 students each week.
- **Wednesday Evening Programs:** The 2017/2018 Awana year is well under way, with an average of 60 clubbers attending. We are blessed to have 30+ volunteer to help but could use more men in both the Sparks and T&T groups. Please pray that the Lord sends the necessary number of volunteers needed and that our kids are touched and transformed by the power of God's word throughout this year.

Adult Ministry

- **Adult Electives:** The new 2017 fall session is in full swing with approximately 100 people attending the following 4 classes:
 - The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Part 2 - Scott Holwick/Matt Zmarzley
 - Daniel: Phil Norris
 - How to Study the Bible: Rich Mastronardo
 - Romans: Part 1 - Dick Bickings
- **Student Ministry:** See Pastor Mike Notary's Report.
- **Senior Fellowship Ministry:** Plans are being made to attend the Pinebrook Christmas Banquet on December 9, 2017.
- **Men's Ministry:**
 - **Bethel Series:** A new Bethel Series cycle taught by Dick Bickings on Saturday mornings from 9:00-11:00, is going very well, with 10 eager-to-learn students to learn the OT together this first year.
 - **Men's Bible Studies/Prayer:**

- Thursday mornings from 6:15 AM – 7:30 AM, This early morning bible study group is currently studying “OT Couples”.
 - Thursday mornings from 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM, This Men’s Bible Study is currently studying the book of Ephesians.
 - Saturday mornings from 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM, This men’s pray time is for men who are serious about going before the throne of grace together to cry out to God for their marriages, family, jobs, neighbors, country, etc.
- **Women’s Ministry:** Here is an update from Laura...

“Bible Studies: Tuesday mornings are such a blessing as we go through the book of 2 Corinthians. Kelly Minter is a gifted teacher and we are all enjoying the word of God as it speaks to each one of us. Tuesday evening is just about done. The ladies are now going to finish it out with us in the mornings. Still working through what we will be studying in January. I am also hoping to offer this study again in January in the evenings possibly on a Thursday evening in my home.

Monday evenings are going well for Vicki Cowley as she leads the Daniel Prayer study. They also meet on alternating Monday’s for a time of prayer based on what they have studied.

Tis So Sweet: Linda Visco is leading this evening book study. We have about 10 or 11 ladies come to her house and we are enjoying taking a closer look at what it looks like to be a godly friend, and what godly friendships look like.

MOPS: We are just about at capacity of moppets! This is great and we have a great bunch of moms coming out to be ministered to on Thursdays. Amy and Suzi Hardy have done a tremendous job leading this ministry this Fall.

MOM to MOM: We have about 10 moms if they all can make it, and about 20 children. We love to disciple these young moms on how to be godly wives and mothers. Lisa Pyles is such a blessing as she walks this journey and leads these women.

We have added two new women to our team; Cindy Lasso and Lois Fevere. These two have been such a blessing to this team and have really used their gifts to bring glory to the Lord.

Welcome to the Well: They met here at the church this past month. This night of ladies continues to grow and flourish. Vicky and Linda continue to pour out on the ladies and make them feel welcome.

We are excited as retreat plans are coming together smoothly and we are so excited about a great weekend together this coming March. I am humbled to be speaking at this retreat.

Lunch at Laura's: This was my smallest group thus far. God is so good and it was a wonderful time of fellowship together.

I continue to meet with different ladies in and out of our church.

As a team, we meet every month to pray and to plan. I am so thankful for each one of them and the privilege to serve along side them.

Blessings, Laura”

Discipleship Support

- **Kinship:** Praise the Lord for this year’s 20 Kinship groups, and for Bob and Laurie Gill who have worked tirelessly to place people in these various groups. We are looking forward to our Thanksgiving Dinner sponsored by our Kinship Groups on Sunday, November 19, at 5:00 PM. Please pray that the Lord will continue to use these groups to disciple, grow, and meet the needs of our people who attend.

Other:

- Continued to visit and provide physical & Spiritual care for several people in our church.
- Facilitate the Men's Prayer Group each Saturday mornings.
- Taught Membership, Romans and Bethel classes
- Continue with my Seminary Studies, taking a course on Church History as time permits.

Respectfully Submitted, Dick Bickings, Pastor of Discipleship

WORSHIP/COLLEGE MINISTRY UPDATE

Jeremy Harkins, Worship Pastor October-November

MUSIC

In the month of October the theme of the worship was based on the "Solas" This complemented with Pastor Tim's sermon series.. As the songs were put together they centered around Scripture Alone, Christ Alone, Grace Alone, Faith Alone, to the Glory of God Alone.

Jennie Flicker will be leading the Christmas Choir with a Joy medley for the up-coming Sunday morning service before Christmas.

TEACHING & SHEPHERDING

- I am meeting with a college student at Lehigh University and we are going through his life struggles with him and walking through the bible with him together
- Continuing to study through the book of Hebrews with a college student
- Meeting a college student at Lafayette for encouragement in his walk with the Lord
- We continue to have our college fellowship both at our home and the Trafford's home, Our subject of study has been going through Ephesians 2 and what Paul is talking about in regards to Grace alone by faith alone and its application in our current culture.
- I made a number of visitations to those in local hospitals to pray and encourage those who are dealing with affliction
- I had the privilege opportunity to lead worship for the Ministerium at Pinebrook on October 3rd and 4th
- Our College Fellowship during Sunday school has been expositing through the book of Proverbs and Romans with Dan Trafford and Adam Whitmer as they rotate teaching.
- We are looking to add Max Whylings to the teachers for the College Age Sunday school class
- I met visited with a praise team member who has been recovering from surgery
- I am meeting with a student from Northampton Community and we're going through discipleship together.

Additional Areas

- I started to get plugged into the Board of Youth and Young Adults to help establish vision and direction within the BFC in the lives of college age students
- I was able to participate in Candy Carnival with my family
- Felt very blessed and loved during Pastor Appreciation Month
- The Martin Luther Pot luck dinner was a great way to hear the life of Martin Luther and his devotion to Christ and the Word of God
- We had a wonderful meal for Pastors/Elders provided by Laura Sommons and the womens ministry
- Attended a Pastors appreciation breakfast at Calvary Baptist. I was able to get to know some of the other pastors in our community and enjoy a wonderful breakfast.
- The staff also invited the Pastors over to the Hunsbergers home for a wonderful homemade breakfast. We felt deeply loved by our brothers and sisters in Christ!
- I was able to celebrate my grandmother's passing in spending time with my family and orchestrating her funeral service. Praise God she is in His presence

MERGE Ministry Update: Oct. and Nov. 2017

Upcoming Schedule:

Nov. 17-19 – MS and HS Fall Retreat @ Three Springs Ministries
Nov. 26 – G3 Student Leadership
Dec. 3 – G3 Student Leadership
Dec. 18 – Youth Staff Meeting
Dec. 19 – MERGE Christmas Party

Update:

Current Study Series:

As we near the end of 2017 we are also nearing the end of our Person of Jesus study. I am praying that our time in the Gospels has encouraged our youth to be the hands and feet of Christ to those around them. Our desire is that they know the deeply personal love of Christ in their lives and that they would put their faith in Him alone. Please pray that our youth would be receptive to God's Word, the Spirit's leading, and a hope in Christ.

MERGE Fall Retreat:

We are only days away from heading on our MERGE Fall Retreat at Three Springs Ministries in Morris, PA. We have over 40 people attending between leaders and students. After prayer, our youth staff agreed on the theme, "The Cost of Following Christ". We are excited to dig into God's Word as we consider what the true cost of being disciples of Christ requires. While considering the cost we know that it is important to also consider the reward we receive in Christ Himself! Our three main sessions will be "Self Reflection and Sanctification", "Sacrifice and Service", and finally, "Selflessness and Suffering". We are blessed to have Pat Barry and Swannie Griffin teaching our first two sessions and I will conclude with the final one.

We are also excited that my family will be able to attend the retreat as we continue to grow in relationship with our leaders and our youth. Jenn and I believe it is important to live our family life in front of our youth with wisdom. This opportunity seemed to be one way in which we could do that. I am excited to see how my older boys will interact with the youth who have so graciously received them already. Jeremy and Lindsay Harkins will also be attending the trip as he has accepted our invitation to him to lead worship this weekend. We appreciate your continued prayers as we love and serve youth with the hope of Christ.

Student Leadership:

Student Leadership began on Sept. 24 and Jenn and I are excited at the opportunity to challenge these youth to grow in their faith, care for other youth, and leading in their spiritual gifts. We currently have 13 High School youth who are committed to these times of study, fellowship, and growth. As we have spent time with these leaders we are

beginning to connect with them on more personal ways. At times it feels like they are "testing the waters" as they begin to share smaller pieces of their life until they know that we are "safe". Jenn has already begun to meet with some of the girls individually or in smaller groups. Her continued desire is that they know the unwavering faithfulness of their Savior and that they are deeply loved in Christ. It is humbling to see her excitement for God's Word and deep passion for shepherding young women through it. As guys often are, relational progress has been slower but I know that God will continue to provide opportunities to grow with one another in community.

Youth Volunteer Staff:

Jenn and I are continuing to host monthly Youth Staff dinners at our house. We have enjoyed the fellowship and support we have received from such sacrificial and capable leaders. God has certainly blessed our ministry with wonderful leaders and mentors for our youth. Our own children have become increasingly attached to all of our volunteers as they've become more familiar with them during these times. It has been fun to see these relationships grow and it warms our hearts that our leaders would be so caring for our entire family. We continue to pray that our family would be a blessing to them as well.

Prayer Support:

- 1) Please pray that despite the busyness of the approaching holiday season that our minds would be focused on Christ. Pray that all the activities surrounding this time of year would not be about activity but instead fellowship and celebration of God's abundant blessings on our life.
- 2) Pray for specific discipleship opportunities that our leaders are currently working through. Pray for wisdom, patience, and grace as we enter the messiness of other's lives fully aware of the messiness of our own.
- 3) Pray for peace for our youth. Many are struggling to find peace in busy schedules, increased pressure in school/athletics, and relational trials.
- 4) Please pray that God would continue to grow our ministry not necessarily in number but in the production of spiritual fruit.