



a **YEAR** *in*
REVIEW

FISCAL YEAR 2023
GENERAL CHURCH ✦ ANNUAL REPORT

The mission of the General Church is to help people live a heavenly life through the teachings of the Lord God Jesus Christ in His Second Coming.



New Church

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting

On those who fear Him,

And His righteousness to children's children,

To such as keep His covenant,

And to those who remember His commandments to do them.

PSALM 103:17-18

www.newchurch.org

Letter from Bishop Buss

The words, “We will serve the Lord,” stood as a theme for this past year. This phrase springs from a covenant with the Lord that Joshua caused the Children of Israel to renew (Joshua 24:18). It can stand today for our own commitment to the Lord to be led by Him toward heaven.

This past year the General Church sought to support this covenant in many ways. One was by a return to in-person worship and schooling, while retaining the ability to reach online worshipers. Another was through the resumption of travel; the Bishops held in-person leadership meetings in Togo, caught up on delayed ordinations, held four sessions of Regional Clergy Meetings, and traveled to many places that had not had an Episcopal visit in years. This past year also saw the renewal of school visits by General Church Education, culminating in a very well-attended education conference in June. There was also a wonderful celebration of one school’s 100th year of operation.

This past year also saw the church continuing to work through challenging issues, including responding to a significant petition around gender and sexuality. A task force helped the Bishop’s Office respond respectfully with an affirmation of the teachings and vision of marriage and a sincere commitment to kindness.

Planning for the future also took hold, with some new strategic projects that the General Church is pursuing, as well as a renewed commitment to hosting a General Church Assembly in June of 2024.

It is a blessing to work with the many people who serve the General Church and who worship within it. May we all turn to the Lord with that ongoing dedication that has us say, “We also will serve the Lord.”

With affection,



Rt. Rev. Peter Buss, Jr.
Executive Bishop
peter.buss.jr@newchurch.org



New Church



New Church

A YEAR IN REVIEW

Fiscal Year: July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

OUTREACH

General Church Outreach is actively engaging a larger audience by promoting New Church content through videos on our website, www.newchurch.org. We use these videos to invite people to join online small groups, where we provide guidance and mentorship. Our goal is to help these groups grow into new circles and eventually become General Church societies.

To enhance our outreach, we analyze internet search patterns to create relevant New Church content that addresses common questions and information people seek online daily. This strategy involves identifying individuals with an interest in the New Church, even if they are unaware of it, and welcoming them into growing General Church communities that support their spiritual journey.

The recent technological advancements resulting from the Covid-19 lockdowns have enabled us to connect with more people worldwide. As we emerge from the pandemic, we anticipate an influx of newcomers to your church, which we view as a blessing for the growth of the Lord's New Church on earth.



GENERAL CHURCH EDUCATION



More than eighty New Church educators gathered on the Academy of the New Church Secondary Schools campus this past June, 2023, for a two-day education conference hosted by General Church Education. This was the first education meeting of this scale since 2010 and included attendees from all six US General Church schools as well as guests from the Secondary Schools, Bryn Athyn College, and Glencairn Museum.

The New Church Vineyard website—www.newchurchvineyard.org—was refreshed with a more visual, streamlined design and a wealth of new materials for New Church education. Search by **Bible References** for resources on specific chapters of the Word; **Themes** for materials on spiritual topics such as the Lord, the Word, and Divine Providence; and **Collections** for access to our premium Sunday school series and topical studies for all ages. Over 6,000 resources are available!



SOCIETY MILESTONES



Kainon School in Westville, South Africa, celebrated 100 years of offering primary education on March 4, 2023. Bishops Pete Buss and Brad Heinrichs were both in attendance. Brad reports that it was “an inspiring event and a wonderful testament to the powerful impact New Church education has had on a group of people for several generations.”



Bishop Buss made a trip to South Korea in April and was able to personally extend congratulations and gratitude to the Rev. Yang, Gyu Dae of South Korea on his retirement from active ministry after 40 years of faithful service. A celebratory dinner was arranged for him and his wife, Mrs. Eun, Suk Hee. Rev. Yang served most recently as Pastor of the Seoul New Church and as National Pastor for South Korea.

Pastoral Moves Below are a few of the changes in pastoral service that have occurred during the fiscal year 2023:

- ▶ **Rev. Malcolm Smith** accepted the role of Assistant Pastor of Bryn Athyn Church after serving in Westville, South Africa. **Rev. Joel Glenn** stepped into the role of Pastor of New Church Westville.
- ▶ **Rev. Eric Carswell** came out of retirement to serve as interim President of Bryn Athyn College (beginning May 1, 2023).
- ▶ **Rev. Mark Pendleton** now serves as Regional Pastor for Oak Arbor and New Church of Boulder Valley (in addition to serving as Pastor of the Glenview New Church).
- ▶ **Rev. Jean Atta** took a role as Regional Pastor to California (in addition to serving as Pastor of the New Church of Phoenix).

Clergy Meetings This year, clergy meetings took place at the following locations/dates:

- ▶ SOUTH AFRICA: Westville, South Africa / March 6 – 7
- ▶ ASIA/AUSTRALIA: Seoul, Korea / April 22 – 25
- ▶ EUROPE/SCANDINAVIA: Stockholm, Sweden / June 5 – 8
- ▶ BRYN ATHYN: June 28 – 30
- ▶ WEST AFRICA: Accra, Ghana / August 15 – 18
- ▶ WESTERN US: Boulder, Colorado / September 12 – 14
- ▶ GREAT LAKES (US & CANADA): Glenview, Illinois / September 19 – 21

Ordinations

1ST DEGREE

(11/6/2022)

- ▶ Sachio Nakato
Kyoto, Japan

2ND DEGREE

(9/11/2022)

- ▶ Kuroakegha Ebute-Metta
Yenagoa, Nigeria
- ▶ Justin Eric Schorran
Kitchener, ON, Canada

2ND DEGREE

(10/16/2022)

- ▶ Richard Michael Glenn

(10/30/2022)

- ▶ Dong Yong Yang
Seoul, South Korea

Membership

Membership July 1, 2021	5,360
New Members	64
Resignations	3
Deaths	50
Membership June 30, 2023	5,371

Current as of June 30, 2023. Totals are subject to change. A complete membership report can be found in the November/December 2023 edition of *New Church Life*.

Board of Directors

Wendy Baker
Annette Baltz
Darren Bau-Madsen
John Berridge
Craig Bostock
Beth Brock
Rhett Brown
Wade Buick
Brynna Carswell-Smith

Greg Clay
Jesse Cole
Charles Ebert
Charlotte Gyllenhaal
Kirk Hasen
Grant Heinrichs
Robert Heinrichs
Barbara Horigan
Keith Hyatt

Rene Johnson
Ethan King
Stephanie Klippenstein
Catherine McQueen
Erik Odhner
Torrance Pitcairn
David Radcliffe
James Uber
Ned Uber

Wayne Wadsworth
Tanya Woker

Ex-Officio Members

Peter M. Buss, Jr.
David O. Frazier
Bradley D. Heinrichs
David H. Lindrooth

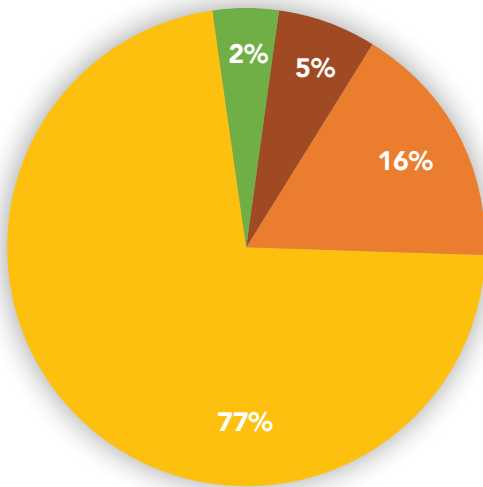
Donor Participation Gifts directly support the programs and resources mentioned in this report. Thank you to all who support the work of the General Church. We are grateful for the strong and steady gifts from our donors.

893 DONORS Supported the General Church in FY23



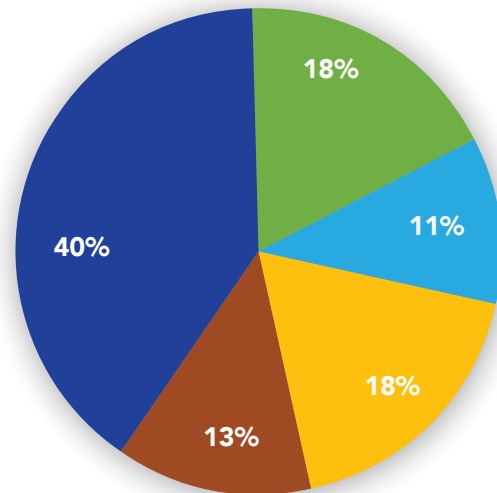
FINANCE

INCOME
\$6.2M



■ Sales & Other (2%) ■ Transfers In (5%)
 ■ Contributions (16%) ■ Investment Income (77%)

EXPENSES
\$6.0M



■ Congregations (18%) ■ Education (11%)
 ■ Ministry (18%) ■ Outreach (13%)
 ■ General Admin (40%)

The General Church spent more than 90% of its operating budget during the fiscal year 2023 on its core mission offerings and roughly 10% on strategic priorities. Those core mission offerings include support and training for ministers, curriculum development and programs for New Church educators, aid to congregations and elementary schools, as well as outreach efforts to promote the growth of New Church teachings. Our strategic priorities shifted slightly this year, and we refocused our energy toward five projects bolstering our mission offerings. In the coming years we will continue to allocate resources to these new projects for the training and development of ministers and teachers, support for renewing congregations and starting new ones.

We are thankful for your support of our mission and strategic offerings. Here are several highlights about our finances from this past fiscal year.

- ▶ Total contributions to the General Church for both unrestricted and restricted uses, inclusive of planned gifts, exceeded \$1.3m compared to about \$1.1m last year.
- ▶ We ended our fiscal year with an operating surplus of approximately \$200k, driven largely by those healthy contributions, plus, our expenses were modestly under budget.
- ▶ The endowment grew by about 1% after investment gains, and after all uses were subtracted, where investment income accounts for about 77% of our operations.
- ▶ Roughly 24% of our budget was spent on our core programs supporting New Church education and Outreach efforts.
- ▶ Including our operating fund depicted in the graph above, the General Church provided roughly \$1.1m in support of congregations and schools.
- ▶ We spent about 20% of our expenses supporting global operations outside North America.

David Butler, Controller
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David Frazier, Executive Director
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