As we wove this year’s annual report together, it felt as if God placed a gentle hand under our lowered chins and lifted our gaze back to heaven. Time and time again, as we gathered the stories that fill these pages, we had to take a step back and pause in awe of the God we serve.

The collective exhaustion that weighed heavy on us all throughout the past year is not absent in these stories. But, even though it is present, it does not define them. By faith-filled obedience and Spirit-empowered tenacity, ordinary men and women from our church family were able to bring forth images of eternity into our present circumstance. Through steadfastness, we were able to watch God accomplish far more than we could ever ask for—more than we could ever fathom. We’re rejoicing that, throughout the past year, He elevated His name above all else.

As you read through this report, please don’t rush. Sit down and spend time reading the honest stories of everyday people. As you do, our hope is that He would gently lift your chin, tilting your gaze upward, and remind you of all He has done and all He has still yet to do among us. Let your hearts be in awe of the God we serve.

We love you church and are thankful for your continued perseverance on this side of eternity.

–The Elders of The Austin Stone Community Church
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The Austin Stone Stats

When The Austin Stone was established 18 years ago, it was founded on the mission to love God, love the church, love the city, and love the nations. Today, that core set of values is at the center of every ministry, congregation, and worship service—from small groups to corporate gatherings, Kids to College, and everywhere in between. Here’s a snapshot of the fruit that was produced during the past 12 months by the faithfulness of our brothers and sisters and a result of God’s provision for our church.

**BAPTISMS**

- Total: 125
- Downtown: 66
- North: 10
- Northwest: 15
- South: 4
- St. John: 22
- West: 8

**PARTNERS**

- Total: 2,627
- Downtown: 718
- North: 430
- Northwest: 259
- South: 135
- St. John: 629
- West: 456

**AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE**

- Total: 10,478
- In-Person: 3,697
- Online: 6,781

**GROUPS**

- Total: 382
- Weekly Average Attendance: 889
KIDS CHECK-INS

10,030

TOTAL  DOWNTOWN  NORTH  NORTHWEST  SOUTH  ST. JOHN  WEST

568  3,358  3,325  468  2,793  2,843

GENEROSITY

$26,439,853  $20,732,772  $1,153,479  $592,068

TOTAL  GENERAL FUND  FTN FUND  MERCY FUND

$3,705,000  $218,296  $38,238

BUILDING FUND  LOCAL MISSION FUND  ASI FUND (FOR SDP)
MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS
It’d be easy to believe that, once summer rolls around, the College Ministry at The Austin Stone finds itself in a lull.

After all, the students, the heart of their ministry, leave for months—moving out of Austin in a mass exodus each May not to return until August. But, even in a slower season, God continued to utilize the College Ministry to make this side of eternity look a little more like His kingdom.

A few years ago, the College Team began to dream up what the summer months could look like—how they could create a space for students to remain engaged in discipleship. For a while, they tossed around the idea of a summer program, but a plan never quite solidified. But, when the pandemic brought about cancelled internships, restricted travels, and shut down camps in 2020, the door for summer discipleship swung wide open. In 2020, College at The Austin Stone launched its first-ever Summer Discipleship Program (SDP). At that time, the program was designed to be a virtual experience for students to engage with each other and learn from various teachers about biblical discipleship. In total, 72 students registered and faithfully completed the program.

Going into this past summer, it would have been easy for the College Team to host a similar program. But, God had other plans. Through the nudging of the Holy Spirit, the team realized that God was calling them to create something far more impactful than they could have dreamed up on their own.

Instead of hosting a virtual Summer Discipleship Program in 2021, the College Team planned and executed a two-month, intensive discipleship and missional experience created to deepen participants’ understanding of what it means to leverage their lives for the gospel. Through those eight weeks, 18 students had the opportunity to engage in evangelism, disciple-making, and mission mobilization while learning what it looks like to practically follow Jesus and further develop their knowledge of God.

The heart of the program was simple. If students believed the truth of Matthew 6:33, then how should they seek the kingdom of God with the talents and resources He has gifted them?

For the first five weeks, the students and leaders lived on-campus together in the dorms of Concordia University in Austin. Designed to mirror Jesus’ time with His disciples, the group walked through life in close proximity to one another—intentionally building relationships in discipleship groups and life transformation groups (LTGs). They received theological and ministry training from leadership at The Austin Stone—learning how to effectively share the good news of Christ and live their lives in response to it. During this period,
they served every Sunday at services and went out to care for the marginalized in our city. They even followed our Students Ministry to South Padre for the annual Beach Camp event where they helped tear down and set up various environments throughout the week.

After those initial weeks, the program traveled to New Orleans where participants engaged in church planting within a diverse context. For six days, they served alongside a local church to support various service projects like packing meal bags for low-income families and engaging in evangelism outreach throughout the city. They then packed up and drove to Clarkson, Georgia, home to the most diverse square mile in the United States. Students engaged with a local refugee ministry through friendships, English classes, and job training.

Our mission statement at The Austin Stone is that we love God, the church, the city, and the nations. This past summer, SDP got to experience our mission, not just understand it. Through theological teachings and consistent time in His Word, they grew in their love for God. When they served each Sunday at services and volunteered their time, they exhibited a tremendous love for our church. By engaging with the marginalized in Austin and by going out to serve other cultures and communities, they drew close to those considered “less than” and loved the city God placed them in. As they sat down with stateside goers and entered into conversations with refugees, their love for the nations flourished.

If we truly believe in the impact and importance of the God-ordained mission of The Austin Stone, then we can celebrate the faithfulness of the 18 college students that sacrificed their summer because they didn’t want to be anywhere else than where God called them to.
Miraculous Impact

THE STORY OF OUR FOR THE CITY MINISTRY

We all stumbled into this year a little worn and bruised. With great hope for a clean slate, we gazed expectantly toward what 2021 could bring. We made plans, reestablished old rhythms, and clung to an optimism that, no matter what comes, it couldn’t be worse than last year. But, it’s still been a year of hardship. From a historic winter storm to continued battles for racial justice to the ongoing pandemic, this year has not looked like we hoped. And yet, through the work of our For the City Ministry, God established The Austin Stone as a trusted body of Christ in our city. He took what could have easily been shattered and empowered us to go and serve the marginalized as a church who is present and represents the heart of Christ.

At the beginning of the year, For the City had an aspiration and a God-given desire to build up their team and re-express their mission to seek justice and mercy for the marginalized in Greater Austin through kingdom presence, kingdom entrepreneurship, and Christian witness. Their hope was to have a broader impact throughout our city and to become truly present—not just because of physical location, but in the way they engaged and served the community.

But, just a few months into 2021, the historic winter storm ravaged the city of Austin. Despite a lack of preparation and knowledge for a storm like this, For the City stepped into action without hesitation. Through partnership with members of our church family, the permanent campuses of The Austin Stone were transformed into shelters and distribution centers. A make-shift Uber operation was organized and over 60 drivers volunteered to transport supplies and resources throughout the city and were tapped for rescue efforts for those desperately in need. One of the volunteers remembers,

“I got to drive a stranded woman to safety. During the drive, I learned she was someone who grew up in the church but had walked away. When I began to share that I was a part of the church, God used our conversation. I was able to pray with her that she recommitted her life to Christ.”

From a worldly perspective, three full-time staff members and a resident should not have been able to create the impact that came about because of these efforts. But, through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and God’s kindness, they did. In total, over 4,500 individuals were served in the midst of a catastrophic event.

And as the need in our city has continued to grow, our For the City Ministry has responded—pushing
"I got to drive a stranded woman to safety.

During the drive, I learned she was someone who grew up in the church but had walked away. When I began to share that I was a part of the church, God used our conversation. I was able to pray with her that she recommitted her life to Christ."
forward in faith even when they didn’t know how the end goal would be accomplished.

Because God has used our church to show up, He’s filled the nets. There are so many opportunities that have become available for us to serve the marginalized in the city we call home through For the City’s partnerships and persistent faith. Through creative reimagining of what it means for our church to lead out in serving and caring for our city, there are more pathways than ever for us to pursue to engage in ministry opportunities.

And, we have more people with a desire to serve them.

Even amidst struggle, God graciously sparked a revived love for our city among the people of The Austin Stone. He utilized a difficult season wrought with unexpected twists and turns to establish our church as a trusted body of Christ where He’s placed us. Through the obedience of our For the City Ministry, tremendous impact was felt in various areas of need in Austin. And, they realize this had nothing to do with their ability to serve or bring about good works. It had everything to do with God’s choice to move.

The future of For the City aims to answer the simple question—what can we do with the influence God has given us that intersects with doing social good for the name of Jesus? The end vision is to be a people that love the presence of God so much that we go to the margins because God is remarkably present there.

We can accomplish plenty of good things. But if that’s all we do, we’re missing the heart of God.

He wants far more for us than simply accomplishing helpful tasks. He wants us to draw near to Him—to be in His presence. And, as we do that, we’re able to gather glimpses of eternity. What a miraculous impact and glorious gift.
IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

Over the last year, For the City’s impact has been felt city-wide. Here’s a snapshot of the work Christ accomplished through our localized mission efforts:

- **$1.02M** Raised and Distributed to 108 Local Churches
- **835** Responded to Serve in the First Months of the Pandemic
- **$211,000+** Donated to Partners and Regular Attenders in Need
- **42** Leaders From The Austin Stone and Other Churches Across Austin Gathered to Build Relationships and Discuss Racial Justice/Reconciliation
- **550** Hours of Biblical Counseling Donated
- **12,000** Meals Donated to Medical Care Staff at Hospitals
- **16,500** Gallons of Water Distributed During the Winter Storm
- **264** Faithful Volunteers Served During the Winter Storm
Despite the closing of borders, lockdown of countries, and limitations on human interaction, the gospel has continued to advance throughout the nations. Even as the world implemented necessary restrictions, God’s promise remained unshaken. “Every tongue, tribe, and nation will know My name.” (Revelation 7:9) He never halted His movement among the unreached. Instead, regardless of countless obstacles, He opened pathways for thousands to hear the sweet news of Christ for the first time.

As the pandemic persists, our For the Nations Ministry has seen God open doors time and time again to advance the gospel—both in the field and back in the States.

Through goers’ efforts in South Asia, there’s a thriving food distribution effort among communities that would have otherwise been off-limits due to COVID restrictions. Because of these opened pathways, the goers have seen more and more people hear the gospel for the first time. In Southeast Asia, a goer couple is distributing Bibles provided by our church family’s generosity among their community. There’s now a flourishing spiritual movement in that area. And, across the globe, over 1,820 churches have been planted in the past year as a direct result of the ministry efforts of goers from The Austin Stone!

While our goers have experienced joy in how the Lord has miraculously moved, they’ve also experienced suffering. The toll of loss throughout the past year has been great. And it’s been compounded by the stress of relocation and the separation from family. Like many of us stateside, our goers endured a season of pruning—a time where God revealed issues of sin, affirmed calling, and shifted focus back to His purposes. They walked through particularly painful sanctification in order to prepare for faithfully growing in fruitfulness—to be singularly focused on making disciples among the unreached. For our goers, it’s been a time of hopefulness to grow, learn, and modify in order to bear future fruit and engage in a better way for their longevity and health in the field.

But, the call of the Great Commission is not only directed at those who sell all their belongings and move overseas. It’s a call for all of us—as God’s holy priesthood—to join in His work to make His name known to the ends of the earth. Stateside, God has been moving through the dedication and generosity of people at The Austin Stone. Whether through engaging with For the Nation’s virtual Mission of God class where over 200 students learned about God’s heart for all nations or by providing housing and other physical needs for more than 35 goers who had to return to the
States, God’s work was not hindered by the pandemic and neither was His abundant supply.

Our ability to adapt in this past season and continue to remain faithful has allowed us to experience a small part of what our goers face every day. While we lived in social isolation from one another for a time, they face cultural isolation for years. As we stutter step back into normal rhythms, they wrestle with creating brand new ones in an unfamiliar environment. And yet, they joyfully endure, knowing that, as sojourners, they’re able to live on mission in a unique way.

The events of the past year served as a humble reminder to willfully and joyfully make sacrifices for Jesus because it is a joy to be able to sacrifice our lives for the flourishing of the gospel. People have voluntarily died to their desires in order to serve—still financially and sacrificially giving to embrace God’s mission through whatever means He’s called us to.
IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

Over the last year, For the Nations’ impact has been felt throughout the world. Here’s a snapshot of the work Christ accomplished through our global mission efforts:

- **142** Austin Stone Goers Currently Serving Overseas
- **~$1,060,500** Donated to the For the Nations Fund
- **14** Goers Launched to the Field in the Last 12 Months
- **9,630** Intentional Spiritual Conversations Among the Unreached
- **13,622** People Professed Faith in Jesus
- **3,514** People Were Baptized
- **1,826** New Churches Among Unreached People Groups
Brian and Dawn Smith are long-term members of the Northwest Congregation. They first joined the precursor to Northwest, Church at Canyon Creek, in 1992 and have continued to serve as faithful saints throughout the decades. They graciously sat down for an interview to discuss their history with the congregation, how they experienced the transition from Church at Canyon Creek to the Northwest Congregation of The Austin Stone, and what they are most hopeful for looking forward to in the years to come.

How long have you been a part of the Northwest Congregation/Church at Canyon Creek?

Brian Smith: We first joined the Church at Canyon Creek in the beginning of 1992, so basically 30 years. We had moved to Austin for Dawn’s job and were brand new to town when we found Cypress Creek Baptist, the precursor to Canyon Creek. The people were very friendly and we were the same age as most members (twenties and thirties). It was easy to get involved and feel plugged in. We were sort of thrown into leadership roles where we didn’t know what we were doing, but we learned to figure it out!

One specific example that comes to mind was when I was invited to join the building committee in late 1992, and the guy who was running it got a job transfer shortly thereafter. So I was immedia-

Dawn Smith: Since we were from Ohio and Pennsylvania, we came to Texas and didn’t know anybody so the church became our family. We’ve been here ever since.

What caused you to stay through the transition of the Church at Canyon Creek to the Northwest Congregation of The Austin Stone?

Brian: We had exposure to The Austin Stone through our daughter who attends the Downtown Campus so we were generally familiar with the church. But, we chose to stay through the transition because we loved the preaching, local and global missions focus, the people, vision, plurality, and elevation of the gospel.

We’ve always had a passion for international mission, but had not always been focused on the need to impact our city. To see the For the City Ministry’s efforts and mission has been a great
encouragement and opened our eyes to that area of ministry.

**Dawn:** There was a time before the transition where a group of us decided to meet every Monday night at the Church at Canyon Creek to pray specifically for our church and her leaders. We saw God faithfully answer our prayers each week, even though our church continued to struggle and there didn’t seem to be any significant changes coming. We closed each of our prayer times with Ephesians 3:20, “Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” Never in a million years could we have imagined how He would come to do that!

Our elders wisely called the congregation to a month of fasting and prayer before taking any step to join another church. And, apparently, at the same time, The Austin Stone had also been persistently praying for God to provide an opportunity to plant a church in Northwest Austin. The whole process has taught me that, when it feels like God is delaying answering my prayers, He is actually working and putting things into place. It just takes time. And when He says “no” to a specif-
“The whole process has taught me that, when it feels like God is delaying answering my prayers, He is actually working and putting things into place. It just takes time. And when He says “no” to a specific prayer, He is still saying “yes” to the better thing that motivated that prayer.”
ic prayer, He is still saying “yes” to the better thing that motivated that prayer.

But, even when God answers a prayer, doing immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, it doesn’t mean there won’t be challenges. We wanted our church to grow. It had been depressing prior to joining The Austin Stone to see beloved friends leaving and our numbers dwindling. So, one would think as we opened up as the new campus of The Austin Stone and the auditorium was packed, there would be great rejoicing. But, instead, I felt like a stranger in my own church. I didn’t know anyone. No one knew me. For the first time, I felt unknown in my church family. As I started to mourn that, I sensed Jesus reminding me of two things—my purpose in life wasn’t for Dawn to be known, for He already knows me, but for Him to be known and upon this rock I will build my church, not Dawn’s church. I was so grateful for this reminder because it turned my focus outward to introduce myself and make others feel welcomed, rather than inward where I would feel sorry for myself in isolation.

As you’ve walked throughout the past 30 years, what are some of the milestones that stand out to you in relation to the life of the church?

Brian: In the 2000s, the Church at Canyon Creek had a sense that we should be more involved with global missions. There was a group of people who began to meet in 2002-2003 and started praying into that. That yielded a set of short-term going from 2004 through 2010 timeframe. That decade laid a foundation for what we would call goers today and learning how to be engaged with the world.

Dawn: Looking back at the big picture, God’s faithfulness to our church in the ups and downs has been incredible. One of the major things that comes to mind is when we made the decision to sell our church property. At that point, we were located at El Salido Parkway off Highway 620 which is just about three miles from where the current campus is. As we were outgrowing it, we were hoping to build a bigger campus but there were complications with land on either side of the building.

Brian: God literally shut down the opportunity for expansion in that location, so we decided to move to where we are today. It was an unbelievable show of God. We had no idea that today would happen when we built that facility. God was ten years ahead of us. He was saying, “No, I want you here because someday this is going to be The Austin Stone.” As we sat in frustration, hitting our head against the wall of God’s sovereignty, He was already creating something far more than we could’ve asked for.

Coming out of the transition, even amidst a pandemic, the Northwest Congregation has experienced a surge of growth. What has that looked like from your perspective?

Brian: We’ve seen so many more families and young adults come worship and want to be a part of our church family. There have been so many newcomers getting connected to Adult Bible Fellowships, Missional Communities, and forming
relationships with people from other campuses. It’s given us a new energy.

In any church life, you’re going to have folks who have been there for a long period of time and have matured with it and you’ll have new adds. If you don’t have the backfill of new people coming in, then the church ages, slides through time, and trickles away. That’s the inherent risk. So, the beautiful thing about what’s happened in the last couple of years is there is this massive backfilling coming in. That’s wonderful because it’s supporting the physical resources we have like the campus itself while also allowing us to have mentoring relationships form. It’s exciting to see the growth after a season of dwindling.

Dawn: The exciting part of growth has been bringing in more families, attracting more young adults, better utilization of the facility, and more opportunities for serving. It’s also been amazing to see the surge of growth in college-aged people coming to our campus. For years and years, we had prayed to reach Concordia students. We have tried and tried and haven’t been able to reach them. So, it’s been really encouraging to see college kids in the lobby on Sundays or to introduce ourselves to someone and find out they’re from the college! We’ve also been praying for God to provide the opportunity to minister to the international population that calls our city home—especially the diverse demographic that live in our neighborhood. Through our English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, we’re able to reach these people and hosting the class on Zoom has allowed us to reach Atlanta, Georgia, Oklahoma, countries in the Middle East, and a country in Asia.

If you were to give a word or phrase to summarize what the past year has been like at Northwest, what would you say?

Dawn: Stretching. The stretching of our facility as we’ve experienced dramatic growth, but also in having to adapt to change. Some things are welcomed while others require crucifying preferences or familiarity. We’ve been stretched spiritually through the preaching and elevation of the gospel in all things. We’ve also seen our new and existing leaders get stretched as they care for the body through the transition from Church at Canyon Creek to The Austin Stone and throughout the pandemic.

Personally, the last year and a half has opened our eyes to the issues of racism. We’ve been stretched in our view of racial reconciliation. The Austin Stone has done a good job of sharing resources and stories to help us engage with that issue and realizing our view of the world isn’t always correct. It’s caused us to think about our perspective and become more humbled by the things we don’t fully understand. Moving beyond our current limits and seeing God do more than we could ever ask or imagine has felt like standing up to stretch after being confined to a chair for a long period of time.

What are you most hopeful for as God continues to move through the people of Northwest in the upcoming year(s)?
Dawn: We’re hopeful that God will continue to do things we cannot explain through our efforts in the church, city, and world. We’re also hoping that we would keep being a church that seeks God for greater things.

What’s one piece of encouragement you’d like the people of The Austin Stone to know?

Brian: God had and will have perfect provision for us. There’s been a lot of change throughout the past 18 months. But, as the church, we have a heavenly call to live in empathy and togetherness.

Dawn: We have the Spirit-ordained ability to celebrate despite all the change.

Dawn: When you’re frustrated, sad, or afraid, remember the growing pains of the past and how God used them to make our church more vibrant and effective. It’s okay to mourn, but at some point we need to move on and enjoy what else God has to offer—proactively find your place in it.

There’s also a precious gift in supporting your church family through various seasons of life and knowing each other deeply. Having been a part of this church for 30 years, we’ve gotten to enjoy the treasure of multi-decade friendships. There have been times when Brian and I were frustrat-

“As we sat in frustration, hitting our head against the wall of God’s sovereignty, He was already creating something far more than we could’ve asked for.”
ed or disappointed or hurt by our church, but by jumping ship, we would’ve lost those friendships and we would never have learned how to “bear with one another” and experience unconditional covenantal love.

I think all in all, for every congregation of The Austin Stone, the verse that comes to mind is Phillippines 1:4-6, “In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
A Place to Call Home

SOUTH’S LAND PURCHASE

There’s an undeniable sense of relief that envelops you as you crawl into your bed after returning home from travel. When you pull back the covers and nestle into the familiar space, a peace comes over you as you lay your weary head to rest.

After nearly a decade, our South Campus has finally found its home.

Back in 2013, the search began for a permanent location to house the South Congregation of The Austin Stone. The search was not easy. In fact, it was wrought with countless hours driving around the city, deals that seemed perfect but ultimately fell through, and amounting frustration as the dream felt farther and farther away. But, in a year where difficulty abounded, God provided. In June 2021, the purchase was finalized for the land to build our new South Campus on, and with it, a renewed hope has dawned at the promise of building a new foundation—both physical and spiritual—in South Austin.

Not only did God graciously provide the land to construct a building, He perfectly orchestrated the surrounding details. Normally, when a land purchase is made, a site plan has to be drawn up and submitted for approval—a process that adds many months onto the timeline. In this case, the property was purchased with an approved site plan in place, cutting down the time it will take to complete the building. God not only took care of the macro, He was in the details too.

Located in an area of Austin where churches struggle to take root and grow, the South Congregation should not have survived. But it did. And even more than that, it’s thriving. The importance of this cannot be overlooked. Statistically speaking, South Austin is one of the most unreached pockets of the city. In an area that desperately needs to know Jesus, our South Congregation has blossomed and is thriving amidst adversity. While the building itself isn’t an end-all-be-all fix, it’ll serve as a tool and a milestone for South’s people to pursue loving their neighbors and bringing people to know God. This purchase is a perfectly-timed gift as the congregation moves forward with momentum in reaching the lost in South Austin. Having a permanent home is much more to these brothers and sisters than just a building. It’s an open door to have a greater kingdom impact.

Without battling the uncertainty that comes with shifting from one location to the next, the consistency of an established campus will lift the weariness caused by constant transition so that a greater and deeper sense of unity can be formed. Having a space to gather, to settle into, to call their own, will dramatically impact the way our brothers and sisters are able to carry out the mission of God and serve in South Austin. With the new building comes the ability to organize minis-
“This purchase is a perfectly-timed gift as the congregation moves forward with momentum in reaching the lost in South Austin. Having a permanent home is much more to these brothers and sisters than just a building. It’s an open door to have a greater kingdom impact.”
try opportunities, allocate volunteers from set-up and tear-down to fill a need in our Kids Ministry, and create a worship environment that allows people the space to rest and connect with God.

The mutual feeling among the people of South is one of excitement paired with the utmost gratitude for the generosity provided by members of our church family and by God. They see this blessing as a catalyst to devotion to Him. After not having a location to call their own for nearly a decade, there’s a shared realization that, “We don’t have to have a building—but we get to. By God’s grace, we have a place to call our own.”
Nomads & Remnants

DOWNTOWN CONGREGATION

There’s a sense of uncertainty that comes with not having an established place to call your own—an exhaustion that accompanies the ever-lingering question, “But, what comes next?” Yet, as we see in Exodus, God does not leave His people alone to fend against apprehension. He is with them, for them, never yielding His plans and work among them. This has been the story of our Downtown Congregation the past year.

Now on their third venue since resuming in-person services, the nature of Downtown’s location has been nomadic. But, the nature of its people has been one of remnants—a group with a fervent desire to endure. And God is producing fruit through that faithfulness.

He’s planting the seeds for healthy sexual discipleship to bloom among our church body through the devoted work of several Downtown lay leaders as they’ve carved out a continually-growing space for over 30 men and women whose stories include sexual brokenness—specifically navigating elements of same-sex attraction—to fight for faithfulness in how they steward their sexuality. Together, these brothers and sisters gather weekly and boldly walk into the raw reality of what it looks like to share a common God-given burden and still cling to following Jesus—no matter the cost.

God also produced fruit through the 120 individuals who met every Wednesday night over Zoom for over eight months. Pushing past the barriers around meeting to persevere in their spiritual growth, they fought to be equipped through The Austin Stone Development Program, a doctrinal course that focuses on systematic theology, character formation, and spiritual disciplines. Hungry for commitment, these leaders and participants stepped into the unknown and faithfully battled for steadfastness.

Throughout the past year, God has shown that He didn’t need a permanent building to produce fruit among the people of Downtown. He just needed a tribe of steadfast sons and daughters willing to follow where He was leading.
Tilling the Soil

NORTH CONGREGATION

Transition is a difficult thing. When comfortable habits and established ways are turned over, there’s almost always an accompanying sense of uncertainty. But, just as the tilling of soil produces new growth, transition creates space for revival.

Amidst all the changes the congregation has waded through, God has begun to renew the hearts of North’s people. As new staff were introduced and continual adjustments made to the ways they gathered to worship, a fresh understanding of the importance of community and a fervent desire to pursue it took hold. Month after month, the North Congregation has continued to grow in a refreshed, Spirit-led desire to be connected with one another.

And, as new connections have been made and old ones rebuilt, there’s a sense of nearness and belonging that’s been established. Despite all the variability brought by the last year, there’s a unified sense of family among the North Congregation. People wanted to join together—and they’re doing it. They have fought to have communion with God and with each other, blossoming into a community marked by authenticity and growing maturity as disciples.

God has utilized this season of uncertainty to bring about new life at North. He’s tilling the soil to produce new growth and deeper roots. Through transition, He’s bringing about revival.
In January 2020, we celebrated as the Church at Canyon Creek joined our family to become our Northwest Congregation. But, just as the staff, elders, deacons, and congregants began to nestle into new rhythms and environments, everything came to a sudden halt. Plans had to be changed. Priorities shifted. And while the past 18 months have posed challenges for us all, they created a unique set of difficulties for the people of Northwest who had only just begun to meet and know one another. But, despite the barriers that pushed against them, they faithfully pursued unity with each other and sought after the flourishing of God’s vision among them. Through the power of the Spirit and perfect provision of the Father, they’ve experienced a blossoming growth as they’ve come together as a family.

In the past year, through God’s kindness, over 270 individuals from Northwest have committed to the mission and vision of our church, entering into formal partnership with The Austin Stone. God also created over 20 new Groups for men and women to live in biblical fellowship with one another. And, God isn’t finished growing the Northwest Congregation. He is continuing to bring in new faces each Sunday and drawing people to this church family.

The people of Northwest have balanced the beauty of preserving the unique 32-year history of the Church at Canyon Creek with where God is calling them to as a congregation of The Austin Stone. Through this blending of the Church at Canyon Creek, The Austin Stone, and brand new people coming together to worship Him, God is lifting our gaze forward to our promised eternity, united and flourishing around His throne.
There was a shared sense of loss among the people of South during a year that was broadly defined by hardship. From the departure of beloved staff to trying to navigate transitioning worship environments, our South Congregation has endured tremendous change. But, as they locked arms to lament and mourn, God worked to bring about a purer sense of devotion among them—a faithfulness to each other and to Him.

Even amidst the trials, God has and is continuing to spring up a new well at South—one that is overflowing and spreading throughout their community. Located in an area of Austin frequently referred to as “the place churches go to die,” our South Congregation is making an undeniable impact for the kingdom of God—even as they’re still healing. Whether through people moving cross-country to be a part of the congregation, the thriving Deaf Ministry that calls South home, or all those who have been with the congregation from the beginning, God is being magnified through the devotion of South’s people.

There’s a sense that, even though so many things are different than they once were, something better is on the horizon. A feeling that, with what remains, beauty will come. And, while it’s impossible to return to what it once was, God is crafting a story for South that’s better than anyone could have imagined.
Committed in the Waiting

ST. JOHN CONGREGATION

The past year for our St. John Congregation has been defined by waiting—waiting to get back to fellowship with one another, waiting for a sense of normalcy. But, instead of leaning out and drawing away from the church, the people of St. John remained committed to each other and to God’s holy purposes. And more fruit is being produced from their dedication.

There’s a thirst and a longing for community—with one another and with Jesus. This past season, the congregation hosted a Lament Class where men dug into a biblical definition of manhood rather than the culturally-crafted caricature of masculinity. This group sought vulnerable spiritual growth and intentionally spent time examining who Christ says they should be. Other ministries have thrived too. Partner gatherings have had over 400 people present, and service attendance has been at pre-pandemic numbers with more people of color in attendance than ever before. The Women’s Ministry had over 65 women study the book of 1 John together and saw 70 women attend backyard gatherings to spend time in community with one another. After praying for God to raise up 60 individuals to join the upcoming Austin Stone Development Program, God moved 36 men and 30 women to register to receive theological training and equipment to be better disciple-makers.

The waiting certainly isn’t easy. Waiting for something rarely is. But, even still, the people of St. John have been and will continue to be committed to seeing what God is doing. Just because we’re waiting on something from God, doesn’t mean we should stop pursuing Him. And, through patient waiting, God will bring about His glory.
WE HAVE THE CERTAINTY OF A MERCIFUL GOD WHO ACTS WITH POWER TO SAVE US
Epicenter of Hopefulness

WEST CONGREGATION

In the midst of a year where disconnection defined daily life and cultural events impacted how we viewed the world, the people of our West Congregation stayed the course. Even while they faced uncertainty on what it would look like to gather and what it would mean if they couldn’t, the congregation fought for dedication to God’s plans and purposes.

Coming out of 2020, the West Congregation, like many of us, felt winded and battered. But, as they emerged on the other side, a brewing sense of optimism took hold and has continued to grow throughout the past few months. There’s a reinvigorated passion and desire for engagement. In their tiredness, they’re still seeking the church.

With everything that’s happened, one would think that attendance numbers would have gone down and people have faded away. But, the reality is, more and more people are pouring in through the doors of West. At their Easter service, people were singing so loudly that the broadcast worship service couldn’t even be heard over the roar of their united voices. Over four times as many people are engaging with prayer gatherings than pre-pandemic. The Women’s Ministry is thriving, creating spaces for over 60 women to meet and pour into one another. The Young Professionals Ministry launched and has taken off, seeing high-growth and a desire from that demographic to be discipled and mentored.

God has even worked beyond what human hands could accomplish in bringing people to Himself. One Sunday, a woman was on a neighborhood walk with her dog and came across the West Campus. She stopped to ask a greeter what was happening and ended up staying for the service. Afterwards, she signed up to attend the Women’s Gathering. God led a woman who simply decided to take a walk one morning into the embrace of His bride.

This is the epicenter of hopefulness for West. That God, even amidst struggle, has graciously sparked a renewed desire to seek Him and love His church. People are continually returning to the plow with calloused palms and sweat on their brow, to faithfully pursue the work God has called them to. By trusting in the strength of the Lord, they were able to experience, and are continuing to experience, a Spirit-enabled hope that’s allowed them the endurance to push forward in faith into whatever may come.
FINANCIAL UPDATES
As you’ve seen throughout the previous pages, God is at work in and through The Austin Stone. He has utilized your generosity to accomplish miraculous things in our church, city, and throughout the nations! We’re so grateful for you!

We hope the information below gives you a glimpse of how great our God is and how faithful He has been to resource the work He's called us to. Every number below has played a part in the stories we get to share.

Overall, tithes and offerings ended within 2.5% of our annual forecast thanks to faithful year-end giving from our church body. In addition, designated contributions to support special purposes like global and local missions, as well as the Mercy Fund, far exceeded our forecast due to winter storm relief efforts in February and continued generosity towards COVID-19 relief.

Since the pandemic limited our ability to gather and host events, we spent under budget for the year. The only two areas over budget were the counseling center and local mission due to increased counseling scholarships and unplanned expenses related to the winter storm and COVID-19 relief.

We’re so thankful for your continued support! Please join us in praying that God continues to multiply your gifts for His name and His glory.

If you would like to see the church’s finances in a little more detail, please visit austinstone.org/give to see audited financials from previous years. The Fiscal Year 2021 financial statements will be made available in late November after our annual audit.
## FISCAL YEAR 2021 UPDATE*

**AUGUST 2020 - JULY 2021 | (IN THOUSANDS)**

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<td>Global Mission**</td>
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<td><strong>190</strong></td>
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*In FY21, the church purchased land adjacent to our North Campus to accommodate congregational growth, as well as land in South Austin as a future home for our South Congregation. Both purchases were approved by the elders and partners of the church and were funded from charitable contributions. North’s property was purchased for $700,000 and South’s property was purchased for $3 million. To not skew the information above, these purchases and the associated contributions have been removed.

**For FY21, National Mission is being reported with Global Mission.**
Year after year, we’re constantly amazed by your faithful generosity. Your benevolence has made a felt impact in our church, our city, and throughout the nations. Because of your kindness, God has been able to work in powerful ways.

Below, you’ll see the current year’s budget (Fiscal Year 2022) that was approved by elders and partners at The Austin Stone. Our budget is not just a compilation of numbers, but a representation of hopes and plans for how God might work among us in the coming year to grow our love for Him, our church, our city, and the nations.

Looking ahead to Fiscal Year 2022, much of our planning and prayer is focused on the reconnection of the life, community, and worship of our body. Our elders and staff have prayerfully developed a budget that aligns with this hope and reflects wisdom and faithfulness for what the Lord might continue to do through us.

We ask you, church, to be part of this, not only in your generosity but also in your participation. Would you join us in asking God to fuel His work through The Austin Stone? That we would be able to continue to support our goers all around the world, meet needs in our community, equip the saints, support the counsel and care of the body, produce music that helps cultivate our worship, and raise up our next generation?

As always, we encourage you to take a look at the updates on austinstone.org/give to remember the stories and progress of God’s ministry through our church over the previous years.
# FISCAL YEAR 2022 APPROVED BUDGET

**AUGUST 2021 - JULY 2022** | **(IN THOUSANDS)**

## INCOME

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## EXPENSES

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## NET PROCEEDS / (DEFICIT)

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