

# 2022 Report of the Work of the Trilacoochee church of Christ



# 2022 Report For The Trilacoochee church Of Christ

- Authorized by God
- How the work of the Lord is to be supported
- The uses made of the contribution as instructed in The New Testament
- How Evangelism is to be supported
- How Edification and Limited Benevolence are to be supported
- The scriptures authorize a public report of the work of the local church

# How the Work is Supported

- The work of the Lord is supported by the freewill offerings of Christians, as instructed in the Word.
  - 2Cor. 8:1-5 - “Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God.”

# How the Work is Supported

- The members of this congregation do so with purpose of heart, pleased to do the will of God without public acknowledgement.
  - Matt. 6:1-4 - “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

# The Uses Made Of The Contribution As Instructed In The New Testament

- Evangelism: teaching the Gospel to the lost
- Edification: building up Christians through preaching and teaching (includes providing and maintaining a place for worship and Bible study)
- Limited Benevolence: ministering to the physical needs of poor saints

# How Evangelism is Supported

- Phil. 4:16-17 - “For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account.”
- 2Tim. 2:2 - “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

# How Evangelism is Supported

- But how are we to fund the preaching of the Gospel?
- What are the scripturally authorized means and methods of supporting the work of the church?
  - 1Cor. 16:1-2 - “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.”

## 2Corinthians 8:1-6

- “Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: 2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. 3 For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, 4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. 5 And not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and then to us by the will of God. 6 So we urged Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also complete this grace in you as well.”



# 2Corinthians 8:7-12

- “But as you abound in everything--in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all diligence, and in your love for us--see that you abound in this grace also. 8 I speak not by commandment, but I am testing the sincerity of your love by the diligence of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. 10 And in this I give advice: It is to your advantage not only to be doing what you began and were desiring to do a year ago; 11 but now you also must complete the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to desire it, so there also may be a completion out of what you have. 12 For if there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what one has, and not according to what he does not have.”

# How Edification is Supported

- But who is to support this work and who is to do this work?
- Do the scriptures supply a plan?

# How Edification is Supported

- Every member of a local congregation has a Christ-ordained role and purpose.
  - Eph. 4:11-13, 16 - “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ... 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

# The Bible Authorizes a Public Report

- Do the scriptures authorize a public report of the work of the local church?
- Should we keep these matters hidden or speak openly of them?

# The Bible Authorizes a Public Report

- Acts 14:21-23, 26-27 - “And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed... 26 From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.”

# 2022 Events and Work

- We experienced an increase in our attendance over the years of 2020 and 2021. While we are not completely back to our attendance levels of 2019, our increase over the past year has been substantial and consistent.
- We noted a considerable increase in our offerings in 2022. We were able to replace some old and failing equipment that facilitates our assembly and worship, i.e. the HVAC and projection systems.
- We experienced the passing of souls precious and dear to our hearts: Chuck Feduccia, Opal Bracewell, as well as family members of disciples here.

# 2022 Events and Work

- We witnessed the baptism of Aaron Fink in July.
- We witnessed a few persons restored by confession.
- We were delighted to receive as members of this congregation persons who placed membership with our family: Les & Donna Heiden, David & Paula Balderson, and welcomed little Landon Goodell.
- Sadly, we were compelled to exercise local church discipline for those who departed the faith: Joel Morrison, Travis & Lana Loyed, Jeff & Holly Huffer, and Barbara North.
- In addition, Ron & Janice Byers moved their membership to a congregation in north Brooksville.

# 2022 Events and Work

- We had two Gospel meetings with Thaxter Dickey in the Spring and with Wilson Copeland in the Fall.
- We planned for our annual sing and diligently spread the word about it; and, recently held it as one of the best I have ever shared in.
- We have had the custom of having Doug Sanders present a sermon on fifth Sunday evenings, for which I am grateful (four times each year). We also enjoy the practice of having different brethren present Wednesday invitations: Scott Black, Larry Winn, Steve Melton, Dennis Kenaston, Les Heiden, Doug Sanders, and also Haden Black. We look forward to encourage others to participate as well.



# 2022 Events and Work

- We have had challenging Bible studies in the adult Bible classes. We studied the Holy Spirit with Scott Black, the Wisdom Literature, Sowing the Seed of the Kingdom, and The Life of Jesus Christ Through the Eyes of John.
- Our Thursday Indepth Bible class on second and fourth weeks each month typically has about twelve persons in live attendance, and about 15 who view the live stream. However, within a week, we have between 80 and 100 persons who view the class online.
- The women's Bible study meets on first and third Tuesday afternoons each month at the Melton residence and usually has 15 or more in attendance.

# 2022 Events and Work

- We currently have an archive of over 600 videos of Bible classes and sermons on Facebook available to anyone who wants to view them. We average between 60 and 120 viewers each week.
- We updated our website, and according to the raw data get over 100,000 hits on it per year. All sermon recordings, including outlines and charts, all classes, invitations, and bulletins are uploaded weekly.
- Our daily Bible message has grown to well over 1,400, and we get an average of 200+ views per day including an average of 7 shares.
- Our world has changed; electronic media is the way people are most commonly reached today. At the same time, personal, face to face contact is still the most effective.

# 2022 Events and Work

- We engaged a few physical work projects:
- Work parties to take care of maintenance; Jay Winger cleaned the outside of the building, Andy repaired the soffit and fascia, the fence was repaired twice, and there were two work parties to clean the building before our Gospel meetings and area wide singing service.
- Max Campbell and Andy Castle take care of mowing the lawn as volunteers.
- And what often goes unnoticed, but should never go unmentioned: the sisters in this congregation have cleaned it every week and maintain it beautifully; and every week the communion is carefully prepared without fail.

# 2022 Events and Work

- Jill Campbell along with several volunteers upgraded the supplemental song book twice.
- Max & Jill Campbell and Donna Heiden have done the work of providing pictures and updated information for our new directory soon to be published and distributed.
- And what is often taken for granted: Max and Jill arrive early to open up the building, and Scott Black lingers afterward to close it.

# 2022 Events and Work

- This is a fact that often goes unstated but should be repeated frequently: The bulk of all the work of a local church is not done by the evangelist; his role is only a minor portion of the sum total of all of the work accomplished. By a wide margin, most of the work of a local church is done by volunteers, members who give of their time and energy to do the countless things that need doing. The work of elders, deacons, teachers, song leaders, treasurer, members who encourage each other and share the Gospel with others, and all of those who give untold hours to maintain a place of assembly is done by unpaid workers in the Kingdom of our Lord. And in my experience, never has that been manifested better than it has been here. God bless you for this!

# The Work of Volunteers

- Treasurer, count offering, make deposits, pay salaries and expenses
- Count attendees
- Keep Insurance policies and inspections current
- Maintain baptistery garments
- Purchase cleaning and paper supplies
- Oversee well, plumbing and septic maintenance
- Assist with building security
- Records maintenance
- Maintain fire extinguishers
- Assist in opening and closing the building
- Maintain fire and carbon monoxide alarms
- Schedule teachers for classes
- Maintain First Aid Kit and safety supplies
- Order all class materials
- Taking attendance
- Schedule readers, waiting on the table
- Prepare for Gospel meetings and special services
- Cleaning the building
- Greeting visitors and making them welcome
- Prepare minutes of elder's meetings
- Record sermons and Bible classes
- Oversee lawn maintenance
- Assist with building security
- Maintain communion preparation schedule
- Prepare communion
- Maintain communion supplies
- Oversee heat and air conditioning maintenance
- Schedule song leaders
- Assist with building maintenance outside scope of janitorial duties
- Direct themed song services
- Assist counting offering
- Select scriptures for Sunday readings
- Maintain emergency call list
- Add prayer list and notifications to Facebook page
- Escort elderly and disabled in and out of the building
- Assist visitors to find seating and amenities
- Participate in emergency notifications
- Assistance during power failures

**And this is by no means a comprehensive list!**

# 2022 Attendance

- Average attendance was 50 on Sunday morning
  - Highest was 66 on 7/3; Lowest was 39 on 9/11
  - This represents an average increase of 8 persons per Sunday AM service.
- Sunday evening average attendance was 39
  - Represents a 22% drop from morning. This is good in view of the fact that most congregations with a Sunday evening service have a 40% drop in attendance.
  - Highest was 61 on 7/3; Lowest was 29 on 7/17

# 2022 Attendance

- Wednesday attendance average was 29
  - This represents a 42% drop in attendance over Sunday morning. We must do much better.
  - Highest was 38 on 4/20; Lowest was 24 on 8/17.
- Moral issues created by live streaming:
  - It is not a substitute for assembling for worship.
  - It creates an opportunity for dishonesty for some.
- Average attendance for past years:
  - 2019 Sunday AM 53; PM 41; Wednesday 33
  - 2021 Sunday AM 42; PM 31; Wednesday 25
  - 2022 Sunday AM 50; PM 39; Wednesday 29



# 2022 Attendance

- Visitors -- We had over 800 visits from persons who are not members of this congregation.
  - Many of the visits were from members of the church and their families.
  - Non-member visitors received follow up contact.
- Average of 15 visitors per week, with 5 visitors per service.

# 2022 Attendance

- Gospel Meeting average attendance: 44 at ten weekday services.
  - High - 58; Low - 36
  - Attendance by members - an average of 31 per service; high 41, low 22 (We must do better!)
- Attendance by visitors - 13 per service
  - High - 26; Low - 7 (Note: visitors outnumbered members at two services)

# 2022 Attendance

- Annual singing service in January 2022 - attendance 88.
- Note that Scott Black takes the attendance at every service and uploads it to the members' only section of our website. This task goes unnoticed and un-thanked by most, but is very helpful to the elders and to me as the evangelist.

# 2022 Offerings

- 2022 offerings = \$113,906.60
  - Monthly average = \$9,492.22
  - Weekly average = \$2,190.51
  - Largest 2/27 - \$2,819.00; lowest 4/3 - \$1,660.00
  - The Lord has richly blessed us and the disciples who were abundant in giving.
- Average offerings over the years:
  - 2019 offerings = \$98,650.63; weekly = \$1,897.13
  - 2021 offerings = \$101,466.00; weekly = \$1,951.27
  - 2022 offerings = \$113,906.60; weekly = \$2,190.51
- Total expenditures = \$123,943.66 representing a loss of \$10,037.09
  - Monthly average expenditures - \$10,328.64
  - Weekly average expenditures - \$2,383.53

# Supporting Evangelism in 2022

- We suspended our support for evangelists until such time as we grow in number and offering. At that time, this congregation will resume that good work.

# Supporting Local Edification in 2022

- Two Gospel Meetings: Spring - Thaxter Dickey; Fall Wilson Copeland
- Two additional men received compensation for preaching: Noah Works and Jesse Flowers.
- Total for Gospel meetings and guest speakers: \$3,378.08
- Total for class materials, Internet, and livestreaming of classes and services - \$6,712.79
- Paul R. Blake's salary as evangelist
- Total for local edification in 2022 - \$89,265.87
- As a percentage of total expenses - 72%. That means that 72 cents of every dollar contributed goes for preaching and teaching the word of God in this community.

# 2022 Operational Expenses

- Total expenditures - \$123,943.66
- Operational expenses - \$34,681.79 (28% of total expenditures)
  - Operational expenses: maintenance, utilities, cleaning supplies, insurance, repairs, replacements, and miscellaneous.
  - In addition, we replaced our HVAC system, the projection system, and the dehumidifiers in the class room annex, all of which were old and failing. Those expenses came to \$30,388.14 or 88% of our operational expenses.

# 2022 Limited Benevolence

- There were no benevolent needs that required use of the local church treasury to relieve.
- There were individual benevolent efforts by kind hearted and generous disciples here. Some known to me; most are known only to the persons involved and the Lord.



# Policy of Financial Disclosure

- Jay Winger, who serves this congregation as treasurer, generates a monthly financial report distributed in the business meetings, and it details every use made of the offering to the Lord in this place. We wish for all to be informed of the fact that all uses of the offerings are limited to scripturally authorized activities for the church.

# Upcoming Works for 2023

- It is our hope that we will continue to increase in number, both by encouraging our own members to return to worship who have yet come back, as well as reach out to others and gather them into our family here.
- We are planning two Gospel meetings for this year, and will be planning meetings for coming years as well.
- We have Bible studies prepared for this year: Sunday morning Bible class will be taught by Steve Melton and Scott Black on a “Harmony of the Parables of Jesus.”
- Followed by a “Harmony of the Illustrations and Figures of Speech of Jesus” taught by Paul Blake.
- The Wednesday class will be studying the subject titled “The Life That is to Come” taught by Paul Blake.

# Upcoming Works for 2023

- We encourage in home Bible study efforts to continue as well as to grow in the number of persons involved.
- We will continue to handle our own minor repairs, maintenance, and cleaning, which will require volunteers. We have never seemed to have a shortage of volunteers here at Trilacoochee.
- In view of the healthy and substantial offerings of the disciples here, we will consider whether we can offer some support to evangelists in other places.
- As always, we strongly encourage you to be diligent in efforts to find persons with whom you can share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Psalm 133:1 - “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”**

