

# EQUIPPED

to serve

M A G A Z I N E

WINTER 2022

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NEXT STEPS...NEW DAYS...NECESSARY SEASONS

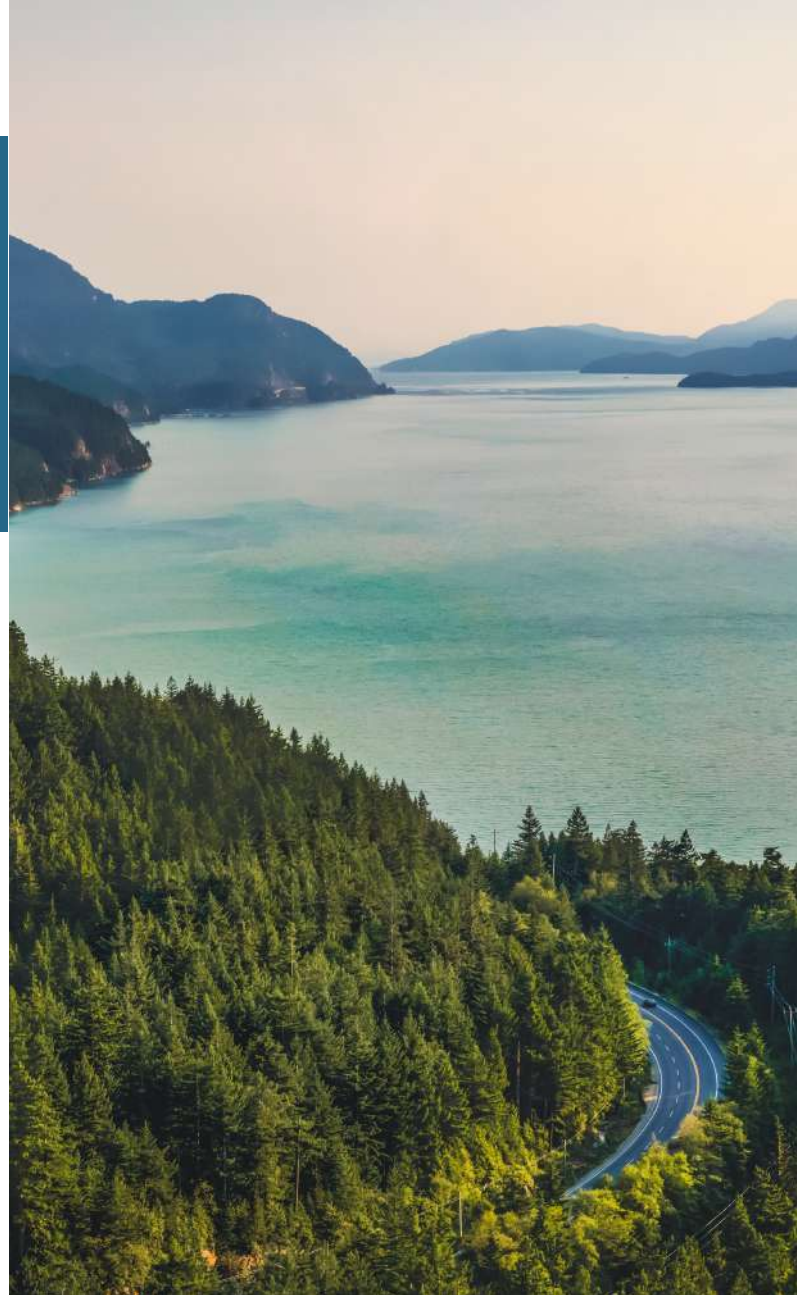
[WWW.ERCF.CA](http://WWW.ERCF.CA)

# NEXT STEPS... NEW DAYS... NECESSARY SEASONS...

*Approaching this closing chapter of 2022, we've heard the word **unprecedented** so many times it has lost its sting—but it's still true—we've never been faced with so many changes, upheavals, and challenges as these past few years!*

It's important we understand **God is at work in our circumstances**, so we will...

- take our **next steps** to trust and experience Jesus **IN** our circumstances
- recognize Jesus brought us into a **new day** of hope, even when we don't understand everything
- be able to see this **necessary season** of disruption as part of His plan for us



**ERCF HAS BEEN NO EXCEPTION TO ALL THE UPHEAVAL. PRE-COVID, THE ERCF LEADERS ENGAGED IN PLANNING ABOUT TRANSITIONS AND CHANGES WE WERE HOPING FOR. WE GOT STUCK IN THE IMPLEMENTATION—THEN COVID HIT, DISRUPTING WHATEVER PLANS WE HAD!**

**There are new challenges we face:**

- a significant drop in Sunday service attendance (*for varied reasons*)
- a considerable decrease in donation trends
- the need to adjust our staffing and reorganize our church structure to align with our financial deficit



# AS WELL, THERE ARE MANY NEW OPPORTUNITIES:

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- *more than ever, our wider communities recognize the need to practically assist the needy and vulnerable—and, this is actually part of ERCF's Mission... expressing the unconditional love of Jesus to everyone!*
  - *radical changes require re-focusing on our vision and mission—which will make us more effective*
  - *the new guests and attendees on Sunday mornings translates into more people we are able to serve and encourage along our journey of growing in faith and love, bringing hope to our community!*
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## Where are we going from here?

- The practical expression of Jesus' self-sacrificial love (as individuals and church family) to neighbours and friends in our local communities will become a powerful force bringing transformation!

Coming alongside people around us—with no personal agenda other than our love—will open conversations and new relationships God will use to both enrich our lives and enlarge the community of faith. ***Many people need to belong before they believe!***

- As important as Sunday services are for the long-term benefit of all ages, at ERCF we say “***circles are better than rows***”. By this we mean communicating within a small group setting has greater potential for transformation than sitting in a row on a Sunday morning.

Our prayer is for everyone at ERCF to connect relationally and share life with a smaller group of people.

- Refocusing attention and resources on children and youth— to address their unique problems and needs they face—means serving families is more critical than ever before. One of our tools is the Orange Curriculum.

*"The Orange Strategy aligns leaders and parents to create community around a timeless message that mobilizes the next generation to love God and serve others." -ThinkOrange.com*





# WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?

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*By Pastor Jim*

## ***For the Record...***

I am honoured to serve everyone who calls ERCF their home.

That said, during this time of transition—preparing us for the next Chapter of ERCF—my goal is not to retire or leave; it is to serve most effectively.

An important way for me to serve is to do what I can to prepare the next generation to lead. This will involve my stepping back and allowing others to step forward.

Although my responsibilities will shift in the New Year, I will remain the Lead Pastor until we finish navigating the staffing and structure adjustments. We are preparing for greater effectiveness in our mission to express the unconditional love of Jesus to everyone!

## ***Next Steps...***

- We have a pastoral selection team preparing to prayerfully search for new pastoral leadership. Please join with them in prayer.
- We will communicate progress regularly!





## Wildlife Camping Retreat

Wildlife kicked off the season with a camping retreat! There were 15 kids who enjoyed Friday evening through Saturday afternoon at Freeman's Pond. It was great to watch them connect and interact as they swam, played games, hung out around the fire, worshiped and ate together.

They played hard!

It was quality time to get to know each other, as well as the leaders who will be there to make Wildlife a great season in their lives. We are so thankful we can be together again. A big shout out to the leaders who invested so much time and energy into the retreat as well as our regular meetings (1st and 3rd Fridays of each month). Thank you Wildlife Leadership Team!

## Amplified Camping

It was a shivery, frosty weekend but that didn't deter our youth! Amplified kicked off the season with a camping trip to Albion Hills again! There were 35 youth setting up tents, stoves, picnic tables, chairs around the fire, and over all just trying to stay warm. From Friday to Sunday they sang, played, laughed, cooked, did dishes and really just had a great time connecting as a whole. What a pleasure to see so many young people having a blast just being together. There was even one brave young man who decided to go for a swim - on October 15th - brrrr, just a little cold! It was a great weekend!

A huge "Thank you" to the Dippels for donating wood that kept us all warm, as well as Pioneer North for lending us a trailer to haul all the stuff to camp and back!!

A big shout out to the Amplified leaders who invest so much into the lives of Youth. Thank you!







*I shared with him that in Philippians 4 we are told how to overcome the anxiety that comes from not knowing.*

*"The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."*

# DEALING WITH LIFE'S UNCERTAINTY

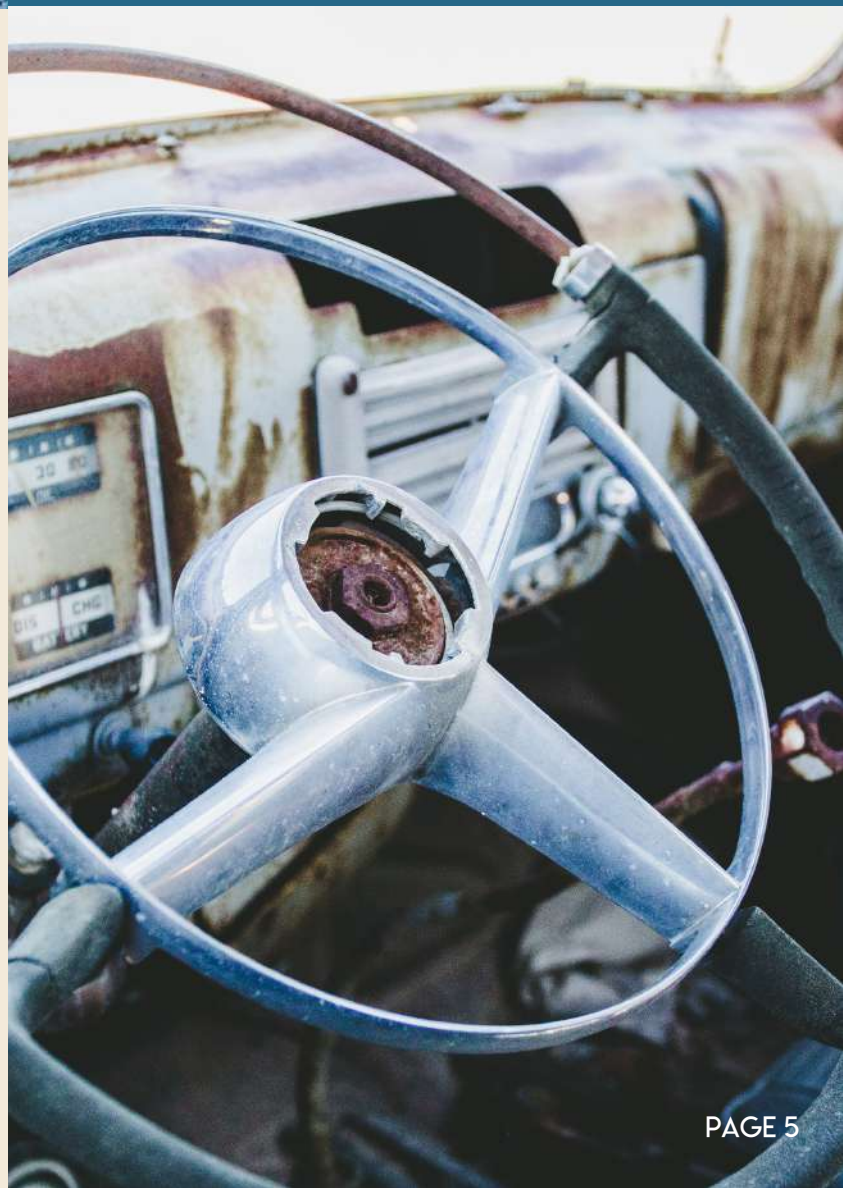
BY: WILLIAM DOLDERMAN  
ON BEHALF OF THE PASTORAL ADVISORS

As I sat in a hospital room with a friend who suffered an injury that nearly cost him his life, and facing numerous surgeries in the future, I asked him a question so I could know how to pray for him

*What is your biggest fear at this point?*

His answer was that he did not know what the future held for him. Would he ever walk again? Could he ever carry his newborn infant? Did he still have a career that had looked so promising? As I sat there in the quietness of the intensive care, I felt that God was telling me something to share with him, so I did. I shared that nothing has changed with regards to not knowing what the future holds because none of us do.

*What is important is that we know who holds the future.*



# THINK ON THESE THINGS

It is not by accident that after it says “do not be anxious about anything”, it says to “think on these things”, and to practice it.

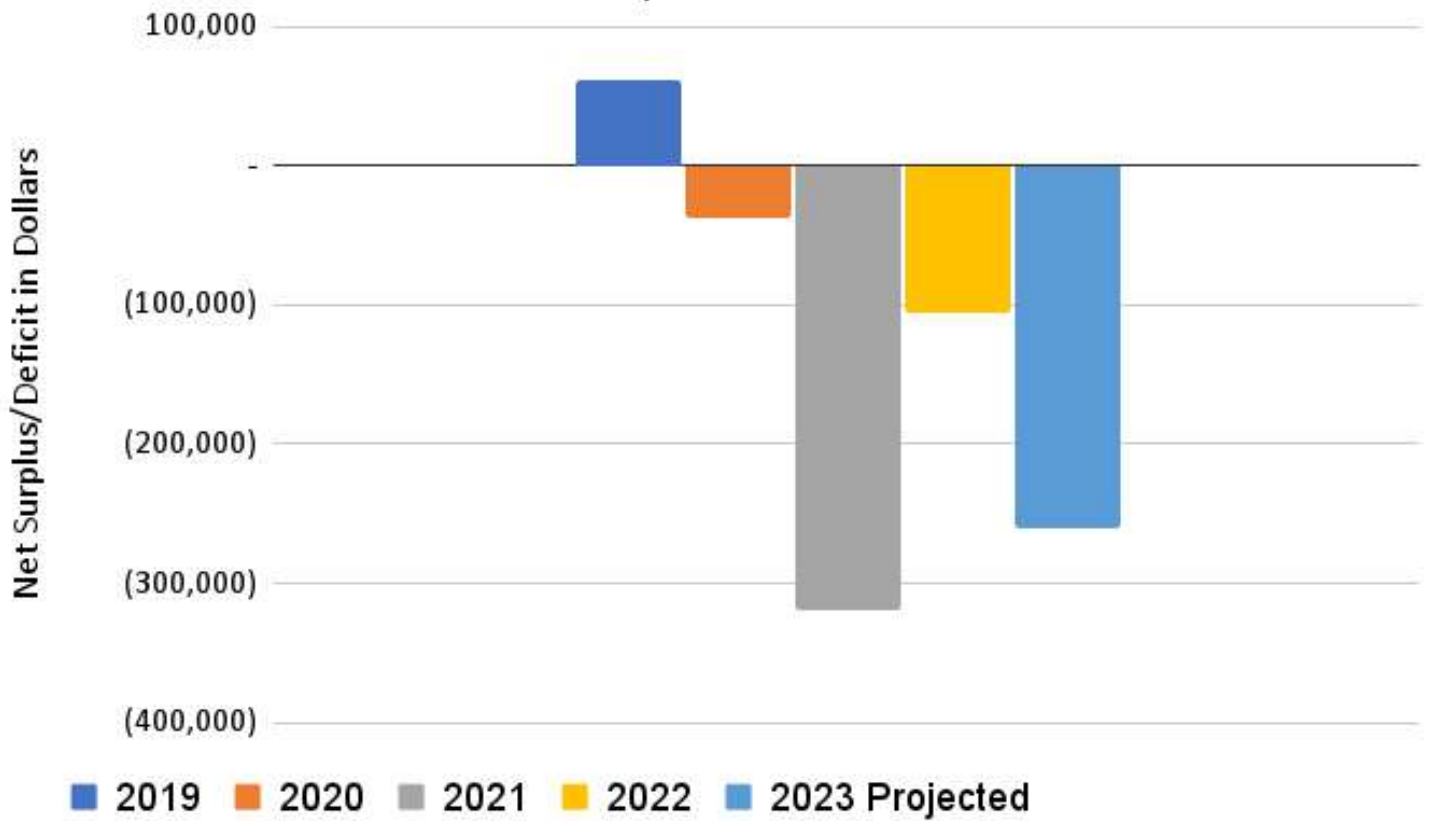
Whether it is in our personal lives or in our church setting, none of us know what the future holds but we know that God knows the future and has shown us the way to deal with the anxiety that we may experience. This is never easy when we are in the thick of life’s challenges, and that is why we need each other to lean on for encouragement and strength.

Grab a pad of sticky notes and write down things that are good, true, honourable, pure or lovely so you can post them—and then think on them!





## Annual Financial Comparison without COVID benefits



# FINANCIAL UPDATE

*by Jelena Gordon on behalf of  
the Board of Directors*

Our vision as a church is to grow in faith and love, bringing hope to our community. In fact, when the local church is healthy — it is the hope of the world! One aspect of a healthy local church is its finances.

Over the past few years, pre- and post-COVID, we have seen a decline in average monthly donations. Even through the financial deficits, we are thankful to have witnessed God's faithfulness in providing for our needs (including large donations in times of need, staff who have not taken salaries for a time, volunteers stepping up, and COVID-related benefits that helped to offset deficits).

As we do our best to steward our resources and finances moving forward, the Board of Directors and church leadership are in the process of evaluating how to refocus ERCF ministry to be more effective, cut back on expenses, reduce paid staff, and change our organizational structure. Looking across the past couple of years, we see a trend towards a yearly deficit (considering church income vs. expenditures) that we will also see in 2023, without significant change.



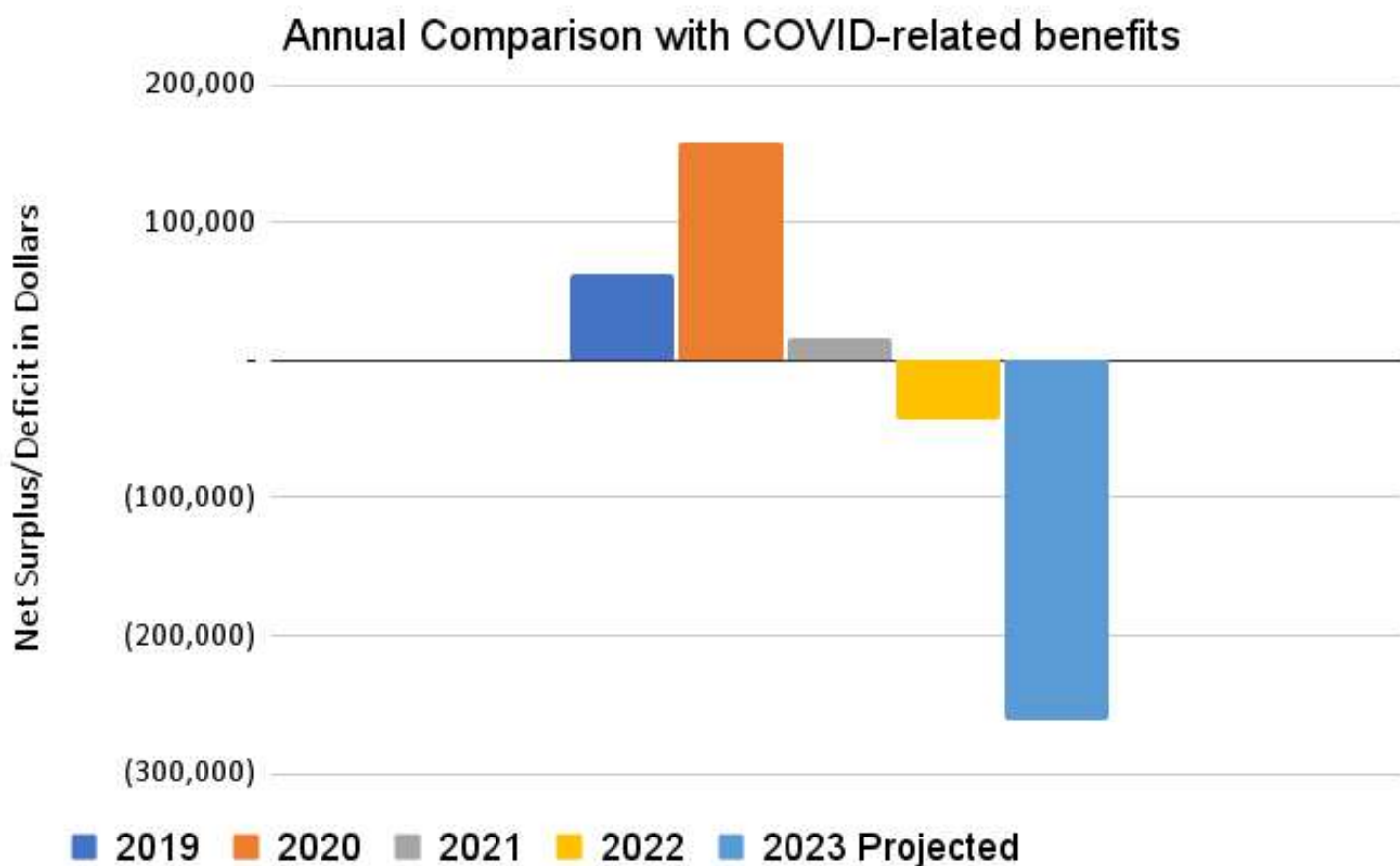
Figures for 2023 are based on (conservatively) budgeted amounts across departments and expected expenses. In 2020 and 2021 (and to some extent, 2022), large deficits were offset thanks to COVID-related benefits.

*Now, change can feel uncomfortable, even scary, to some extent — but we must keep in mind that change also brings positive energy and momentum! Oftentimes, the process of change or pruning (see John 15) can be the catalyst for some really neat things.*

*As beloved author CS Lewis noted, “There are far better things ahead than any we leave behind”.*

*Will you continue to pray along with us over the coming weeks and months, as we go through this process of change?*

*Together, let’s trust in the Lord’s plans for our church family, and remember our mission is to express the unconditional love of Jesus!*



# The Unstuck Group & The Action Team

by Sharon Dolderman, Initiative Coordinator

*keeping the train moving*

**The Unstuck Group** is a church consulting group, although they don't love the term "church consulting"! They prefer 'we coach you as you lead change'. They are not here to tell us what to do but 'rather help clarify where God's called us to go and how we are going to get there'.

Several months ago, a team of ERCF people were selected to attend a 2-day session with the Unstuck group. They worked through a process to help bring alignment and focus to ERCF church ministries... together moving in the same direction.

**When there is alignment**, everyone in the organization has clarity around how their roles connect to the bigger picture. Team members are in tune with what success looks like, and they are able to hold loosely to methods (strategies) and much tighter to mission. Priorities are clear, and pruning is possible. (the Unstuck Group)

The process is like building a structure you need to start from the ground up. We begin with the **Foundation**. Next is the **Direction**. Then, at the top we have **Action**.

## **ACTION**

how each ministry contributes and how we personally contribute

## **DIRECTION**

where we are going, what success looks like, how we will accomplish our goals (Vision, Goals, Strategies)

## **FOUNDATION**

these are the things that don't change (Core Beliefs, Mission, etc.)

## **FOUNDATION: what's NOT changing at ERCF!**

- Core Beliefs
- Grace emphasis – non-performance-based relationship
- Baptism as a believer
- Our view of Scripture
- Jim's role will change—but he is not going away 😊
- Our view of spiritual health
- Pastor-led church model

Our Governance model (Pastoral Advisors, Board, Lead Pastor)



# UNSTUCK ACTION TEAM

Three Initiatives have been identified to focus on, to bring change and better health to ERCF ministries: This is where our ERCF Action Team comes in!

The Action Team is a group of staff and volunteers who identify and prioritize where changes need to be made in some ministry areas so they are aligned and moving together in the same direction.

Our Action Team includes some of the original group of people who worked alongside the Unstuck Group. Action Team members include:

- **Communication:** Brayden deVries, Christel Gordon, Kayla Brubacher, David Thiessen
- **Discipleship Pathway:** Ryan Dolderman, Jeremy Gordon
- **Children & Youth:** Luisa Krause, Merf Bauman, Erica Martin

*So what does this mean as far as change?*

*For some of us change is hard, and for others it's exciting!*



## WHAT MAY CHANGE...

- The name of the church
- Vibe
- Potentially, the people who attend
- Status Quo
- Jim's role in 2023:
  - length of his transition from Lead Pastor to Teaching Pastor
  - role of the Lead pastor vs Teaching pastor
- ERCF's Staffing & Structure in the New Year

*We needed a smaller group of people for planning—but the really important part is not what happened in planning—it's the **doing of ministry:***

- *making things better*
- *ensuring no one falls between the cracks*
- *reaching the vision of **growing in faith and love, and bringing hope to our community***
- *engaging all who call ERCF their home!*

**So we need everyone together to make it happen! (Pastor Jim)**

It's exciting when we are all "pulling together" in the same direction for the glory of God! Be part of the "doing" even if the one, single thing you do is pray!



Elora Road Christian School has had a great start to the new school year. We welcomed three new staff, Adrian Burkhardt as our grade 5/6 and grade 1-6 French teacher, Julie Klapwyk as our grade 7/8 French teacher, and Arden Reinhart as our Educational Assistant. We were also excited to have Jen Mullett return from maternity leave to teach grades JK to 8 music and grade 5/6 math and art.

**Other staff includes:**

**Annette de Vries: JK/SK teacher**  
**Dee Butler: Grade 1/2 teacher**  
**Leslie Bauman: Grade 3/4 teacher**  
**Patti Tan: Primary Relief teacher**  
**Pam Tuck: Grade 7/8 teacher and Vice-Principal**  
**Valerie Duimering: Head of Special Education**  
**Alicia Sellers: Office Administrator**  
**Cindy Westendorp: Principal**

**We were also excited to welcome 10 new families and 23 new students to ERCS in September. Our enrollment now sits at 80 students and 43 families. One of our new families is from South Korea. It's exciting to see our students welcome these children into our school.**

ERCS benefits from membership in two organizations. Edvance Christian Schools Association provides our school with leadership and teacher training opportunities. They also offer guidance and support to our School Governance Committee through training sessions and access to different resources such as policy and procedural documents. The Christian School Foundation draws Christian Schools and donors together. They also provide bursaries to member Christian Schools. This year ERCS received an \$8000 Belonging Bursary which allowed us to hire Arden to support the needs of our Special Education students. We also received \$10 000 in Partnership Bursaries for 5 families to help cover their tuition costs. Some of these families also qualified for the ERCS Single Parent Bursary.

ERCS also benefits from the many committed parents and volunteers who are part of our Parent Council and School Governance Committee. We are thankful for the contributions each of these individuals makes to our school. Special thanks to Rob van de Pol for installing the new fence in the schoolyard.

For more information about Elora Road Christian School contact us at [school@ercf.ca](mailto:school@ercf.ca) or check out our website [www.eloraroad.ca](http://www.eloraroad.ca).



# 9th Annual Daughters of the King

## Princess Ball 2022

### THANK YOU!

*We couldn't have done it without you!*

We truly do have the absolute BEST group of volunteers! Both of these evenings...every aspect...held the touch of a person giving of their time, energy, and giftings so that 320 ladies could experience Jesus in a whole new way.

YOU made a difference. Lives were changed.  
Because YOU chose to serve. Thank you.



*"At first I was afraid, but the performers were a great distraction. The videos and speakers were so heartwarming. It's so good to see women celebrating women and their stories help each other give hope"*

*"The food was delicious, the whole thing was amazing and the evening changed my life, for real"*

*"Once Colleen was done speaking I thought I had so much hope for myself, even more than when I first walked through those doors"*



# PROVISION FOR THE VISION

This past spring, our team decided we needed to move in order to give better care to our residents and implement the next phase of our vision for Elora House. We asked God to open doors and help us to find a home that would allow us to have Stage 1 and 2 in one home.

We had specific things we were looking for. Two weeks after this decision, I met a local businessman who was very interested in helping us with our housing needs. He decided to purchase a home and let us rent it for the cost of the utilities and taxes. **THIS WAS A HUGE BLESSING!** We now have more than double the space inside and we have a beautiful large backyard. **THIS** is such an amazing gift from God. We have doubled our capacity for space with the residents and will be able to keep the girls long term if they require a longer stay.



During the move over the summer (which was a lot more work than any of us could have imagined) we have built many new relationships with community partners. I have had the privilege to join other panelists to help bring awareness to our community regarding sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

Unfortunately, there is a big need in our community for a home like this. We give our residents unconditional kindness and love without judgment. We provide their basic needs and give them the opportunity to rest, rebuild and restart their lives. They receive different forms of therapy, along with learning life skills, exercising physically daily, practice gratitude journaling and are able to engage in arts and crafts. Our program is for the mind, body and spirit. Many of our residents have experienced the love of Jesus and are exploring their faith. They have the freedom to make their own choices and we love and support them regardless if we agree with their decisions.

## HOW TO PRAY

At the time of writing this article, we have 3 residents with 2-3 more expected over the next 2 weeks.

- Please pray for us that God brings us the girls that are ready to have a fresh start and are committed to the process.
- Please pray for our CARE TEAM that we are led by the spirit of God in every decision we make.
- Please help us by spreading the word and sharing our website with others. We are always looking to increase our monthly partnerships to bring long term special care to these precious daughters.



Thank you for using your giftings to love on our kids!

Did you read the little boxes? YES? GOOD! Now pick a date to keep your status as ACTIVE!

# SOS 2022

## Safeguard Operating Standard (SOS)

ANNUAL RENEWAL REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN ACTIVE SOS STATUS - FOR CHURCH ONLY

# NOV/DEC 2022

### NOTES

Annual Renewal Training of SOS screened volunteers serving in 2023 will be in person at ERCF.

Please choose one of the following dates (half hour session) to attend to keep your

SOS status active:

Sunday, November 27th 10 am

- Kids & youth only



Tuesday, November 29th 7 pm or 8 pm

Sunday, December 4th 11:30 am

Monday, December 5th 7 pm or 8 pm

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND ANY OF THESE DATES, CONTACT SHARON DOLDERMAN TO SET UP A TIME TO MEET WITH HER.

sharond@ercf.ca

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
30	31	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
<b>NOV 27</b> SOS Renewal 7/8 classroom KIDS/YOUTH ONLY 10 am	28	<b>NOV 29</b> SOS Renewal Family Room 7pm OR 8 pm	30	1	2	3	
<b>DEC 4</b> SOS Renewal Encounter Room 11:30-12	<b>DEC 5</b> SOS Renewal Encounter Room 7 pm OR 8 pm	6	7				

Christmas 2022

*Don't miss Christmas*

December 11, 18, & 25 @ 10 AM

Elora Road Christian Fellowship

Our gift to YOU this Christmas! ENJOY!

**rightnow** MEDIA

Over 10,000 free videos for you and your family

<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/join/ercf>



**“The Netflix of  
Christian Bible Study”**