

Maranatha Church

Ministry Investment Plan - Update

June 2019

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. (2 Corinthians 9:11)

The 2018/2019 Ministry Year is drawing to a close. The following are some highlights of the year we have enjoyed together!

Discipleship: Children & Youth

Dina Zomer

This past year in Children and Youth Ministry we have been blessed with amazing volunteers! Sunday School, GEMS, Cadets and Youth could not happen weekly without the willingness of adults wanting our little ones and teenagers to know that Jesus loves them.

Teaching Sundays was a goal that we set in front of us. We are grateful that there is an eagerness to learn about God and dig deeper into the Heidelberg Catechism together. We will continue to shape these teaching Sundays in the new ministry year.



One of the many highlights of Youth Ministry was on the Saturday of the Winter Retreat. We were blessed with the presence and stories of members of the 55+ group. Stories of faith throughout the generations are so important to share and we are grateful for those who shared their joys, struggles and commitment to follow God through-out the joys and storms of life.

Another highlight has been the monthly Cambridge-wide youth worship nights called the Cave. It is a blessing to see our own youth worshipping, learning and connecting with other Christian youth in our community.

Discipleship: Adult

Norm Sennema

Our primary means of discipling adults is through our Sunday messages. Our sermon series included: Discipleship (Ministry Shapes, Sep 2018), the doctrine of God (God of Moses, Oct 2018), the doctrine of sin (Getting Serious About Sin, Nov 2018) the kingdom of God (Narnia Series, Dec 2018), money (Jesus Changes The Way I Think About Money, Jan/Feb 2019), sharing our testimonies (Hello, My Name Is..., Mar/Apr 2019), making a firm commitment of faith (Standing Firm Together, May 2019), and the meaning of worship (Worship, Its More Than You Think, June 2019).

In addition, our Teaching Services have helped us reflect on key doctrines taught in our confessions, including: the doctrine of God, Creation, the Incarnation of Jesus, the Trinity, the Image of God, our Sin and Misery, the Atonement and True Faith.

One new way of engaging adults is by changing our printed order of service to a handout with scriptures, questions and room for notes. The hope is that individuals, families and groups will use these sheets for further reflection and discussion.



Two new men's groups started this past year - a weekly group on Tuesdays, and a monthly group on Saturdays. For those who attend these are a good way to learn and grow together through mutual support and accountability.

A volleyball night has been held for adults on Monday nights which has provided an opportunity for some Young Adults to meet together. They have indicated their desire to meet for regular spiritual encouragement as well, and are working with Dina to set this up.

We currently have 7 small groups with 70+ attendees through the year. The hope is to place a greater emphasis on expanding small groups for the coming year, so that everyone has the opportunity to be a part of a group for mutual support and accountability.

Worship

Mel VanRootselaar



This year has been an amazing time of learning about and experiencing worship! For Advent we kicked off the season with a movie night watching *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. We then followed the story each week and focused on different symbols and how they relate to Jesus. It was an amazing time of experiencing this wonderful story in a new way and many were blessed.

Our Holy Week services were very different this year as we walked alongside Jesus to the cross. We added a new service called Maundy Thursday, which is the night before Good Friday. This service was a time of worship and preparation for Good Friday and Easter Sunday. We had the opportunity to have our feet washed and we also experienced communion together, all as we sang praises to our Saviour. On Good Friday we continued walking alongside our Saviour through seven different stations set up throughout the church and experienced Jesus' seven last words. Easter Sunday was a time for us all to come together again and celebrate our Risen Lord!

We are currently wrapping up our season with learning more about worship and what it really means. This entire ministry year has been such a blessing as we've had the opportunity to experience things both figuratively and literally.

Special thanks to all the teams that help lead in worship (praise team, sound team and projection team, live stream). As we serve together, let us continue to learn what it means to be worshipers, and not just worship leaders.

Fellowship

Rick DeGraaf

We give thanks to God that each of our 10 Faith Families (FF) are led by Coordinators who arrange meeting places and coordinate communication and mutual concern within each FF. Since September, we have met 6 times as separate FFs and 2 times as FFs together at the church for a meal, the last one being in conjunction with our cadets' cub car races. For these congregation-wide events we now provide name tags.

The FFs have been a blessing as indicated from the comments received. A common thread is that people are meeting other members they otherwise would probably not meet. There is also evidence of greater caring among our church families as some FF's take extra effort to write cards to ailing members, shut-ins, missionaries, and students for encouragement. New members have commented how being a part of a FF early on helped them to become more included in our fellowship.



We have also coordinated the Fellowship Camping for July 5-7 and are planning with staff a service and picnic at Churchill park on July 28th – the first time in decades!

In pastoral care, the 7 serving Pastoral Care Workers along with Pastors Norm and Rick have met 5 times for training, coordination of visits, mutual accountability and encouragement. We have been able to coordinate and encourage visits, provide private communion services to our shut-ins and have provided other mobility and care services to meet the needs of some in our congregation. It helps to have a team that is actively thinking about the needs within our congregation.

Service

Deacons

Our congregation is active in serving our community in a variety of ways, including: the Community BBQ, Community Garden, Community Kitchen and Friendship Club. This summer we are partnering with a community member to host a Kids Summer Lunch Program for families who may struggle to feed their children. This is an extension of the Lunch program currently run at Chalmers Street Public School.



Our deacons actively support members of the church and community through their benevolence fund. They also help us in supporting a number of local and global ministries like World Renew, Gleaners, Urban Hope, the Food Bank, and our church missionaries Leah DeVos and Janelle Sennema. In addition they have coordinated a Shoe Drive, Potato Drive, and Baby Bottle Drive. They continue to investigate new ways of encouraging and increasing our congregational giving.

We have welcomed our second refugee, and continue in the process of helping others begin their new life here in Canada. Since 1987 Maranatha Church has been involved in over 2500 refugee applications, with over 700 coming to Canada. We give thanks for the great support of our congregation and our Refugee Support Team.

Support

Carolyn Vanderzwaag, Denise Gibson

Through our facilities and our office, we are able to provide space and support for a wide variety of ministries, both from the church and the community. The office continues to be a busy place through the spring and summer months, facilitating church events and community groups.

One major change was hiring Denise Gibson as an employee, instead of a contract position, in order to comply with CRA regulations. This change has gone well and Denise is a welcome member of our staff ministry.

We've had many new faces join Maranatha and have enjoyed welcoming them and corresponding with them to help them feel welcome. We've had 6 families transfer in in the last year and many more new faces besides. This past April we held a "Welcome to Maranatha" lunch held for new attendees... over 30 people attended! We've had the joy of facilitating 3 baptisms and have held several memorial services for members that have passed away. We continue to work with the Elders to improve how we welcome and include new members.



We continue to use social media to promote our ministries. From our new web page, to live streaming our services, to Facebook posts, more of what we do is available to the church and the community. We've also seen updates and improvements on the Bridge App which has helped it become an even more helpful resource for us.

Leadership

Elders



2018-19 has been the first year under the new leadership model. While not without a learning curve, the transition has been positive. Much more of the day-to-day operation of the church's ministries is being carried out by staff and ministry leaders, freeing up elders to focus more on providing spiritual oversight and guidance for every aspect of the mission and vision of Maranatha Church.

One of our goals was to have a leadership training event and team building exercise for the new Elder Team. In October, Cathy Cranbury led the elders and staff through a series of exercises that helped us understand our different gifts and how we could better work together.

Another goal for this year was to clearly communicate the new leadership model to the congregation. Based on the feedback we received during the nomination process, we have some more work to do on this.

We encourage members to work in, and focus on their gifts. For example, the Pastoral Care Workers are ministering to shut-ins and others who require support, while other members are leading in congregational prayer. What is most encouraging was the feedback we received at a Ministry Leaders Meeting held in May. Deacons, staff, pastoral care workers and elders met to discuss their experiences working with the new model. Most of the feedback was very positive. The consensus is that this model – with its clear delineation of tasks and responsibilities -- is working well for Maranatha, and that those leading in ministry are feeling encouraged as they carry out their calling.

One final goal was to take steps to meet Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act requirements. Cathy Cranbury has offered to investigate the details and implications of complying with the soon-to-be-enacted legislation which deals with, among other things, governance issues. This is a complicated issue, and will need to be handled well.

Giving Thanks!

These are just some highlights of many different ways that God is at work in our congregation. There is a positive spirit and momentum that is growing among us, and we look forward to seeing how this will grow in the coming years.

Thank you to all our supporters and workers. We could not do this without your giving and serving.



Feedback!

If you have any questions or comments, we ask you to share them with any of our Elders, Staff or Ministry Leaders. We welcome your encouragement, as well as your suggestions and offers to help. We are still learning and growing as a church, and your feedback can help us.

If you want more information about the church's ministry, or how you can be involved, contact Carolyn Vanderzwaag, our office administrator. She will gladly answer your questions, or direct you to whoever can help you.

Contact the Church Office for more information.

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