

LIVING HOPE  
CHURCH



# LIVING HOPE CHURCH

## November 2023 AGM

ADJUSTED FISCAL: Jan – Jul 2023

Sunday, Nov 26, 2023  
Living Hope Church Hall  
2182 Comox Ave, Comox

11:30 Potluck Lunch  
12:30 Meeting



# LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



*Kwulh / Seal Islets, located just north of Jai7em / Sandy Island.*

We begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the ancestral and unceded territory of the Pentlatch, leeksun, and K'ómoks First Nation. We express gratitude for their faithful care and stewardship of this land since time immemorial.

Unceded means that this land was unjustly taken from the K'ómoks for the settlement and profit of others, and we acknowledge that we have benefited from this injustice. As followers of Jesus, we confess our shared part in the pain and brokenness that the church at large has perpetuated towards Indigenous Peoples in North America and around the world. We acknowledge the ongoing generational trauma of Residential schools and recognize that we have all inherited the legacy of their impact. We respect and learn from the good work Indigenous people are doing in reclaiming their cultures.

We also remember the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, and the call to His followers to be reconcilers. As Living Hope Church, we affirm our commitment to pursue reconciliation with one another, with Indigenous Peoples, and to call our community to be people of peace.

# AGENDA

11:30 AM Soup & buns Lunch

12:30 PM Meeting Called to Order

1. Review of Meeting Procedures
2. Agenda Approval
3. Adoption of April 2023 AGM Minutes
4. Pastor's Address
5. Ministry Reports
6. Jan-Jul 2023 Financial Report
7. Aug 2023 – Jul 2024 Budget
8. Prayer for Pastor & Elders

2:00 PM Meeting Adjourned



# Jan-Jul 2023 REPORTS

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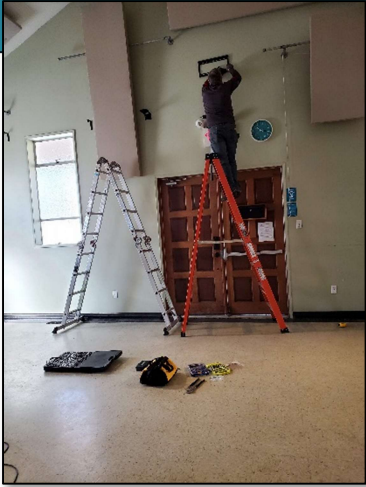
*This report provides an update on some of the activities that we have conducted from **January 1 to July 31, 2023**. At a Special General Meeting held earlier this year, the church voted to change the fiscal year from the calendar year (Jan 1-Dec 31) to one that follows our ministry year more closely (Aug 1 – July 31).*

*Note: Not all ministries of the church are included in this report. However, be assured that the leadership of Living Hope Church appreciates all the time and energy you spend sharing your gifts with our church and our community. May God bless you richly for your service.*

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# PASTOR'S REPORT



Dear Living Hope Church. I pray for God's peace to be with you all. The first half of 2023 has been very special to worship together in our church. Every Sunday brings new ways in which we all are making this our spiritual worship home. I've really appreciated working alongside those who make our Sundays happen in preparing the day for us.

I have been encouraged by the early signs that our move to this property has brought about the fruit we had hoped for. It is wonderful to welcome new faces to our congregation, to use the space to form connections with each other, and to invest in our relationship with valley by providing a good space for arts, culture, and community engagement.

It has also been a learning curve for leadership and those involved in caring for the building. No surprise that buying a building and learning what needs repair is a sizable undertaking. Financially we were not making things work Jan-July because of lower-than-expected rental income and donations. We are improving our reporting practices and budgeting accordingly and working on increasing our income.

There is so much to recap and remember through the 7 months! Here are a few highlights:

One of our early opportunities to welcome the community took place through the Open House in April. This was a chance to meet our neighbours and show how we intend to steward the building. Through door to door canvassing and advertising in the paper, word got out and we had over 200 people come. We had a rotating group of people welcoming those coming in and giving tours. The Anderson Jazz Trio performed in the chapel while guests enjoyed snacks.

There was also information about upcoming concerts and activities. One of our renters told me that she was already hearing how our taking on the space was being viewed very positively by the community.

Since worshipping at the new property, it has been special to have an increased relationship with the K'ómoks First Nation. It is good for us to have a space from which we can develop a positive relationship towards reconciliation based on truth. So far this has happened through welcomes given and received, an archeology seminar by Dr. Jesse Morin highlighting significant and traditional indigenous connections to this land, and letters of support. I look forward to us finding ways of continuing to lean into what it means to be Christians who bless others and work toward reconciliation, particularly with those who have been hurt by the church in the past.

Next, I want to highlight a special weekend of the summer – at Camp Selah. We had 3 flotillas of tubular thrill rides down the river this year. I think some 25 people rode the current, and about that many decided it felt a bit much for them this year. There was epic baseball, soccer, and football matches, great food, perhaps a little late-night shenanigans, and a wonderful warming potluck on the Sunday. Thank you to everyone who helped make this a great weekend.

This is our first year (partial) in the building, and first year on the new fiscal calendar year: A little bumpy, but with lots of great stories. And as we get the rhythm down, I can see us dancing and blessing one another with the light and life of Christ, and continuing to invite others to join in.

Yours in Christ, Rev. Micah Smith

# ELDERS' REPORT

Dear Living Hope Church Family,

It is with gladness that I speak on behalf of the elders to express our gratitude for you. It is now a year since we arrived in our new home, and it has been a year of learning! Learning about our new "old" home and what it means to be homeowners, learning about operating a business alongside a church, learning about the new folks who have joined us and are becoming dear to us, and learning about how we want to be together as a church family, through it all. You have been generous of heart as we have taken the steps that have appeared before us, and tried new ideas, and navigated challenges. It has been wonderful to see how God has provided just the right people at just the right time, finances when we have needed them, and joy in our worship that builds tenderness amongst us in our fellowship together. The elders are grateful for you, and we pray for you, as we wait upon God's moving to deepen our church life together so we can extend God's grace to our community. We know you pray for us, too. That is a

gift and your desire to encourage us and work with us has made it our joy to serve you as elders.

As we move into a season of advent, awaiting the Light that is come into the world, may our hearts continue to be tender towards each other and filled with wonder at what the Lord is doing amongst us. In these troubled times in the world, we remember with faith and no small amount of hope, that "God so loved the world"; He so loved the world that he sent His son, so we can be filled with life because of faith in Him who has overcome the perils of the world. May you each know His loving, comforting, peace-filled presence with you in the days ahead and may the joy of the Lord be your strength.

Grace and peace to you,  
Jacquie Anderson  
Board Chairperson



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Our kid's ministry is being run by a collection of people dedicated to caring for the faith growth of our children. There currently is no captain of this ministry. Over the past few months, we have seen an increase in regularity of attendance from our families with young children, and it would be good to rebuild this ministry this year with greater cohesion and direction.

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*But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children."*

*Matthew 19:14*

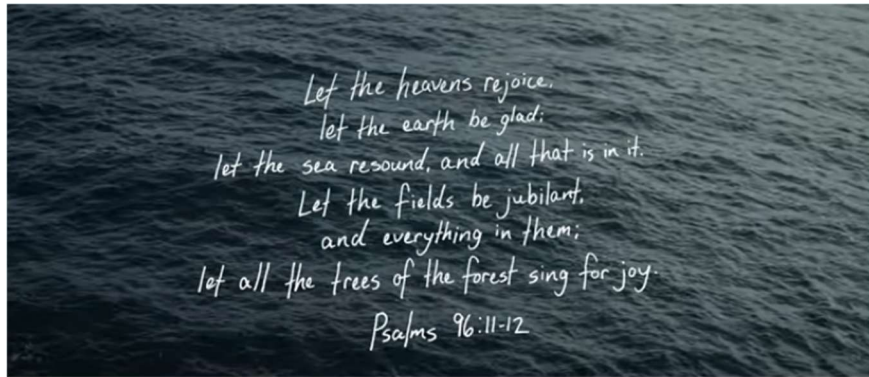
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# YOUTH

January to June saw youth meeting in the hall at church for games and fellowship. Bob Vantol concluded his time serving as youth coordinator, and we are so grateful for the years he led the ministry and for all those who helped with him to really care for our junior youth in particular.

Going forward, Naomi Ciantar and Julia Tabernero are beginning to bring our senior youth together every couple of weeks for games and fellowship.

# WORSHIP MINISTRY



Psalm: noun – from the Greek *psalmos*, “song sung to the plucking of the harp or a stringed instrument to glorify God”; from the Hebrew *mizmor*, “a song of praise, prayer, supplication, complaint or testimony”.

The Hebrew name of the book we know as Psalms is rooted in the word *h-l-l*, the same root as the word hallelujah- that word is *tehilim*: to praise, to sing, to radiate light, to shine...

To shine...

I am one of those people who sings in the car, like, really sings. Embarrassing my children kind of singing. Having a young guy in the construction van beside me at the red light start dancing because my windows were wide open and for King and Country's song “Joy” was on the radio kind of singing. Scaring hikers deep in the woods at Seal Bay Park kind of singing (probably didn't help that it was The Lonely Goatherd from The Sound of Music and there was yodelling). There is power in giving voice to joy and to sorrow, to mourning and lament and praise. It is such a privilege, my dear Living Hope family, to hear you lift up your voices, to shine out the love you have for our Saviour, to lift

songs of praise, of prayer, of supplication, of complaint and of testimony. A privilege to pray with you, to sing with you, to raise our voices together to the glory and beauty, the grace and love of our God, to join with the heavens and earth and wind and waves and trees in praising His great majesty. I pray, so much, for His love to shine, for His light to radiate out of us, that people look at us, hear our voices, and know Whose we are....

Speaking for Julia, for Jacquie and Doug, for Vicky, for myself, and for our team families, we want to thank those who keep us organized, who dedicate time and energy to sound and to media. Thank you for your service, your dedication, your kindness. We are grateful; you are seen and so so appreciated.

It is, and has been, an honour to lead you and be in congregation here with you.

In love and in gratitude,

Lisa Stephens-Deith

# MISSIONS

The Missions Team coordinates the outreach ministries of the church, both globally and locally. When we consider our financial giving to global ministries, we prioritize those who have gone out from our church, or from the Comox Valley, as well as those who serve with our denomination through the Global Advance Fund.

During this time period, we made the decision to discontinue financial support to from our tithe account to Teach Beyond and Rescue Cambodia. In the case of Rescue Cambodia, there is still the option to give to a designated fund for those who wish to continue contributing. We have also discontinued donations to Compassion Canada, as the child we initially sponsored is now an adult. Our budgeted giving to Local and Global Missions was also put on hold due to the overall church financial situation.

On the local front, the Living Hope For Ukraine group continued to meet on a regular basis to discern ways to support displaced Ukrainians in our community and to pray for them and their country. In collaboration with Christ the King Church, we have helped deliver groceries to Ukrainian households weekly. As well, there was a great outpouring of generosity on the part of the Living Hope congregation to help the Kapravchuk family of six resettle in the Valley, for which the family praised God.

Our calling to be missional people continues. With the acquisition of the Little Red Church, we are praying about ways God might be calling us to use our facilities for outreach to our community. If you are interested in knowing more about the Missions Team, or joining us, please contact Krista.

Respectively,

Krista Barlow



# WIDOWS' GARDEN PROJECT

Since our last report to the AGM, a team had formed and through the summer had been preparing to travel to Uganda in October. Funds for 2024 Project activities (\$US 22,000) were sent ahead in late summer as per usual but did not reach the Project account in Kampala in the usual way. We've been attempting to resolve this problem ever since.

Ugandan regulations governing the charitable and humanitarian activity of overseas organizations require that an entity like Living Hope must either be formally registered with Ugandan authorities as a nongovernmental organization (NGO) or delegate its activities to a duly registered Ugandan NGO. For 8 years, the Project has been operating without this authorization. The funds have been blocked by the Ugandan bank until we could produce the relevant documentation.

Awaiting a resolution of this impasse, the team decided to postpone the visit.

Our recent negotiations to partner with a suitable Ugandan NGO proved in the end to be unsuccessful. We have since recalled the funds and have been informed that they are on their way back to Living Hope's bank account.

Meanwhile, with Elly Nankunda's able assistance, a community-based organization (CBO) named "Hope Gardens" has been established to operate in the Widows' Gardens Project area. It has been formally registered with the Isingiro District authorities, its membership is made up of representatives of the original widows' groups, and its constitution and mandate encompass the objectives of both the WGP and the UPP. A CBO is not as all-encompassing as an NGO and its activities are

relegated to the subcounty level, but that fits the needs of both the Widows' Gardens Project and the Uganda Possibilities Project.

As you may recall, the UPP is an outreach of Bay Community Church in Comox, initiated by Pearl and Marvin Morin, 2018 WGP team members. The UPP has sponsored orphan students, enhanced the infrastructure of the local primary school, provided emergency housing to widows and their children, and financed COVID vaccinations and mobile eye clinics from Mbarara for the Project community.

It will be possible, once a dedicated bank account in Uganda is opened for the "Hope Gardens" CBO, to send Project funds directly to it. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) has now been agreed-upon and signed by both parties (Living Hope and Hope Gardens), and we expect Project activities to resume once funds are available.

The team (two Comox couples, the Konways from Bay Community Church and the Tibbles from Christ the King RC Church) plan to meet with me soon after the funds return to Canada in order to reschedule a visit to the Project, departing possibly in late March 2024.

We hope to take on another 100 widows this time from newly formed groups in Karokarungi and Kigabagaba, which would bring the total number of widow beneficiaries to 938.

Due to a specially designated gift, there will also be money to start micro credit programs in four widows' groups which do not currently have the means to provide small loans to members. Supplementing the plot-leasing activity with micro credit has been recommended by successive project

evaluations undertaken by visiting students from the University of Utrecht in Holland. This will help provide additional income through small business ventures and even enable the groups themselves to offer newcomers money to lease their own plots.

Please pray for the safe return of Project funds, the health and safety of the Project team, and for the effectiveness of Hope Gardens CBO under the guidance of Elly Nankunda, newly minted Chairperson.

Thank you, as always, for your prayer cover and for critical administrative and financial support.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

David Moore

WGP Volunteer Project Officer

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# LITTLE RED CHURCH

September 9, 2023

Since Living Hope Church purchased the “Little Red Church” property: policies, procedures, logistics, and administrative tasks have dominated the first quarter of 2023. Over the next quarter and 2/3, there has been more work in establishing user groups for the hall to increase community use of the space. The purpose of increasing community use is three-fold, to provide a needed service for the community, to increase revenue for the upkeep of the building, and to increase opportunities to be a light for Jesus.

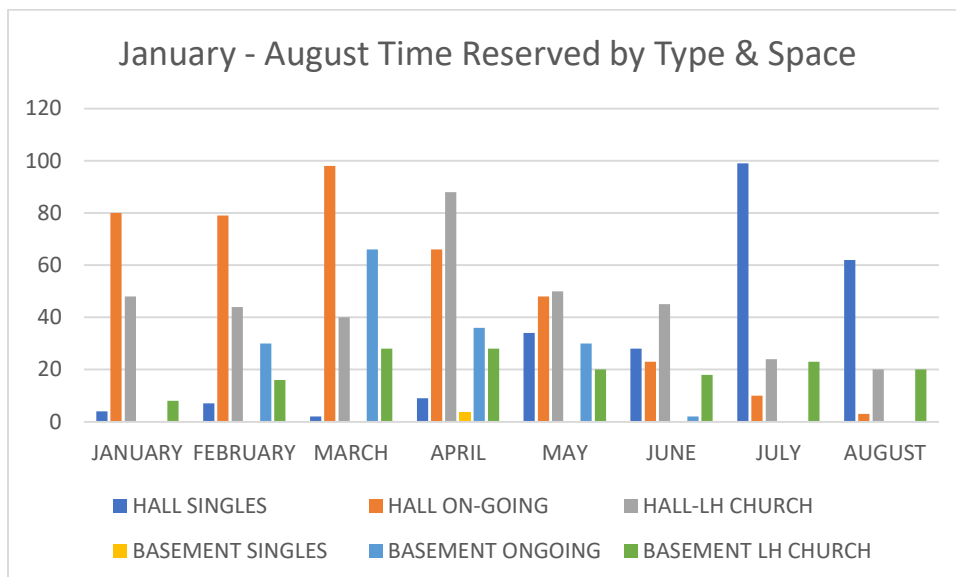
A rhythm of tasks has been established. A snapshot of tasks is listed below.

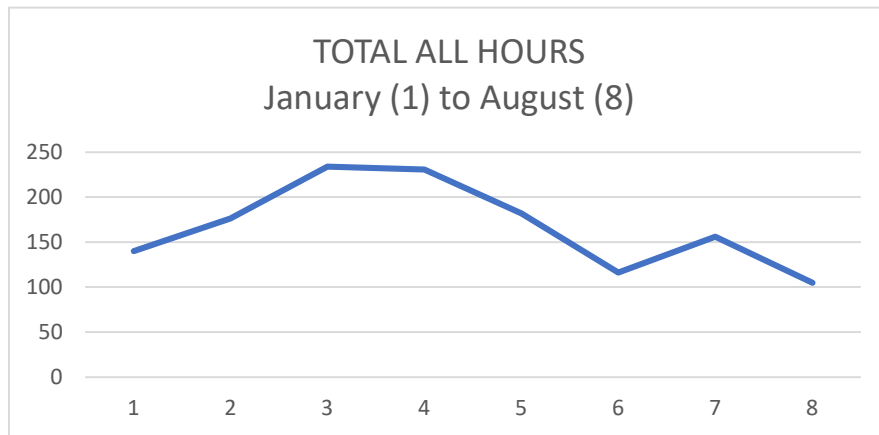
Daily tasks include,

- Daily management of emails,
- Daily updates, approvals & monitoring of the online reservation system.
- Weekly management of site custodial,
- Weekly site monitoring,
- Monthly, management of entry codes,
- Monthly invoicing & bookkeeping tasks
- Monthly Living Hope Staff meetings
- User Group meetings & tours, and
- Website updates.
- 



The charts below show the Hall and House Basement usage by hour from January to the end of August.





As you can see in the previous chart, Living Hope spaces are being used from 100 to almost 250 hours each month. If we imagine that there are approximately 12 hours in the day that spaces are generally used, then we see that spaces are occupied 28% – 68% of the time every month. More use means more wear and tear on the spaces, which translates to the need for more janitorial and maintenance. Although user groups generally do some tidying this is not enough to ensure that the spaces are thoroughly clean. We have hired four hours of janitorial each week. Right now, this translates to minimally keeping up with the demand, however, regular, deep/ thorough cleaning is not possible with only 4 hours a week.

September is the time when programs start up again. We have had several new ongoing user groups join us at LRC this month. From January through August, the average income was \$2,348. In September the prepaid reservations received were \$4,616.50. This is an increase for which we are thankful. With our current reservations, we expect a monthly income through June of about \$2,600 - \$3,000. From July through August, it is expected that the income will be around \$1,000 each month. Without additional rental or fundraising income and considering the current reservation an average monthly income of \$2,500 is expected.

I am happy to serve in the role of managing rentals, but I would appreciate help. Would you like to help in any of the following ways? Please connect with me.

- On-call for urgent needs (Such as a user group needs someone to come and open for them.)
- Someone to substitute for me if I would like to take a few days off. (I will provide training.)
- Spring cleaners
- Monthly deep cleaners
- Advertising/ Marketing of the space to targeted organizations.

My goal as I serve in this role is summed up in Matthew 5:14 – 16

**“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”**

Sincerely, for His Kingdom purpose,

Vicky Trill



# Jan-Jul 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT

Coming Soon.

# Aug 2023-Jul 2024 BUDGET

Coming Soon.