



## **Pastor's Report to the Church**

Annual Church Meeting  
Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

***Bridgeway Church of the Nazarene***  
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***To the precious family, leaders, members, people, and community of Bridgeway Church:***

Greetings to you and yours, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ! It is a true delight and distinct privilege for me to share this, my 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Report with you, since your reception of our family in 2006.

It is hard to believe that it has been 17 years. In this time, and in all of the various ways we have collaborated and worked as His Church on Mission, we can certainly attest to the fact that there have been times of celebration and challenge; tribulations and victories; growth and maturity. In it all, by it all, and through it all, we can report and share: God has been with us! He is with us!

This is the greatest news I can share: That He has not left us, nor will He! This is in despite of what we endure, face, or go through. His power and presence is what we anticipate, draw from, and rely upon—in our lives, in each area of ministry, and in the Mission He has given us, Himself.

We are grateful and humbled for His grace, love, and mercy. We find hope in His promises. We rejoice in His undeniable certainty; that He truly has our best interests at heart; that He loves us with an everlasting love; that His plan includes all who would believe and receive Jesus Christ as Lord.

To summarize in just 5 or 6 minutes, this past year of ministry and mission that this church has been engaged in, involved with, or provided for—would be a tremendous undertaking. It couldn't do proper justice, and potentially, we would miss something or someone.

Not intentionally by any stretch—but with the massive amount you gave to, invested in, and were a part of—recounting it all would be a project for sure. The fact is: You, the families and people of Bridgeway, have been actively involved, incredibly passionate, and greatly willing to help, to love, to share, and to witness. All in the Name of our Lord—all for His glory—all to raise up His banner to a world who so desperately needs Him.

From our Worship times together to The Colony Gatherings; from DOCK Ladies Ministry to the Tuesday Prayer Meetings; from gifts given to fund the ministry and mission to multiple layers of help through the Love Fund; from the Beaufort Walk-About to counseling sessions; from delivering food and meals to those grieving to taking someone to their doctor's appointment; from cleaning up and organizing the church to showing up for scheduled work days; from serving in Kid's Church to praying for the Preschool; from sharing your gifts in Praise+Worship and on the AVL Team to bringing your kids to rehearsals so they can be a part of a Special Presentation; from VBS to Alabaster; from the Prayer Mobilization for North America to giving to our NYI Youth Ministry for the upcoming trip to Tampa Bay in July—all of this is possible, because of YOU!

Thank you—thank you for giving and serving and trusting the Lord. There is no question: we couldn't do this without you.

Two years ago, when we conducted and held our 2020-2021 Annual Meeting, after navigating a lengthy period under a Global Pandemic (Covid-19), I made some references to the fact that:

- It was a year, a season, like no other;
- Most all of us were totally unfamiliar with this territory;

- We learned while we lived isolated and separated, for months;
- It was a struggle for people, for families, for businesses, for society, and yes—for the church.

While we don't need to recall all of the details and history of that, I bring it up to state that for several families here—this past year (2022-2023) has been equally, if not more, challenging. In many ways, whether it be financial, physical, relational, or spiritual—or some combination of these—many have endured or are still contending with levels of trial and even uncertainty. We know firsthand as there are no exceptions. In several ways, I am still there—praying, following, waiting on so much that seems to be outside of our realm of control.

What this past year has taught me—more than anything else, is that in all of it, what I need to do and what God desires I do, is truly *surrender* it over to Him. To put surrender to His plan and purpose to even higher levels of faith and response. While at times easier said than done; it is what our Lord wants from us:

*to follow Him;*  
*to take up our cross and follow Him;*  
*to trust Him in increasing levels;*  
*to live in His fullness;*  
*to remain teachable;*  
*to be available;*  
*to rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us in all things*

This is equally true in life, in faith, and in ministry. There are good days and there are bad days. There are mountaintops and there are valleys. There are victories and there are also losses.

But one thing remains constant: He is working out His Plan and He cares deeply for us, both individually and as a corporate body of believers, at Bridgeway.

While we close out a church year, we can savor what God has done and celebrate how He has been faithful and present in so many ways. It is undeniable. We have felt, seen, and witnessed the greatness of God. Today, we seize the opportunity to share and report and be a part of His work. That He would use even me, even us, to accomplish His will in some way. For what lies ahead—we trust Him and put tomorrow entirely into His hands, as there is no promise of tomorrow. We anticipate tomorrow, and we hope for it—but we do so knowing that today is the day the Lord has made.

As we hear, receive, celebrate, and feel the challenge of the ministry reports this evening—may we, together, feel the stirring of the Holy Spirit in how He may have us get more actively involved in the furthering of His Kingdom and His Mission. That is what this is really all about. As Oswald Chambers so eloquently put it: “work out what God has worked in.”

*There is a place and a space for you here. You have abilities, gifts, and skills that no one else has. You were beautifully and wonderfully made. In this coming year, in whatever time God gives us—I look forward to working shoulder-to-shoulder with you to fulfill what He is calling us to. Together, under His guide and direction, we will accomplish great things for Him. Thank you for being a part, for being actively involved, and for giving the Gospel away. I am grateful and humbled beyond words.*

*Pastor Porter*