

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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Introduction

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4

As I reflect on the year gone by, and look forward to the year to come, I am overwhelmed by how blessed we are to have such a special place to call our spiritual home. For many of us, we may have forgotten just what a unique place we have here. The physical beauty of this place reminds us how blessed we are every time we step on to our campus. Each week the artistic excellence we experience reminds us of our blessings. There are regular reminders scattered through our experiences at Riverbend that make us proud to call this place our home. However, it is not how we feel about this place that makes Riverbend so unique.

The distinctive of Riverbend is not in its beauty, or in the consistent artistic excellence we experience each week, or even in all the dynamic and gifted people who call this place their spiritual home. The distinctive of Riverbend is in our commitment and dedication to give away all these things we hold so precious. While we allow ourselves to enjoy the gift that this place is to us, we are committed to the idea that it is not ours to hold on to, but it is ours to share. Creatively. Relentlessly. Generously. Lovingly.

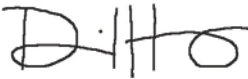
We are uniquely dedicated to the idea that anyone and everyone, no matter their history, their politics, their situation in life, or even where they find themselves on their spiritual journey, deserves to be blessed by the Grace that has blessed our lives. This is the place for those who have been bruised, battered, broken and bored by life, just like us. Riverbend is a home for hope for them, because it is a home for hope for us.

As we were reminded this past year, this kind of mission comes with significant risks and challenges. It is neither cheap nor easy. It is not for the faint of heart. It is for those whose personal faith is deep enough and strong enough to risk their own comfort for the sake of others. This is why so very few communities of faith are willing to take such risks, pay such a price, live so close to the edge, and to be so openly generous and gracious.

This is also why in the coming year it is our intention to grow deeper in our faith, so that our faith can go wider. We are putting in place the people, the programs and the plan for strengthening the spiritual substance of our community. We do this not simply to fill ourselves, but that we might be deep enough, strong enough, and knowledgeable enough, to expand our reach, and to serve better.

This annual report is an excellent accounting of our activity over the past twelve months. As you read and examine this report I would encourage you to make note of the trajectory of growth that we are seeing in the most substantial areas of the ministry – those areas that make us both deeper and wider. We are, in my humble opinion, on a path of unprecedented spiritual growth that shows no sign of diminishing in the years ahead. In this, we are, and we will continue to be, unique.

SDG,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Haney". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "D" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dr. Dave Haney
Senior Pastor

2015

Continuing to Reach Wider – Beginning to Grow Deeper

For the past 37 years Riverbend's mission has been to have wide-open arms, inviting anyone and everyone to come experience God's grace. Regardless of backgrounds or beliefs, age or nationality, rich or poor, all have been welcome. Our mission was simply to serve the bruised, battered, broken and bored of our community and the world; reclaiming, restoring and reproducing for the cause of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.

We continue to be committed to that mission, but our vision is such that in addition to reaching out to those far from Christ, we also want to find ways to take our congregation deeper in their faith, helping us to develop men and women who would become reproducers for the Kingdom of God.

As we look back at 2015 and into 2016, hopefully you will begin to understand our strategies for how to do both well, which will bode very well for the church for the future.

Reaching Wider

Looking back at 2015, Riverbend's reach continued to expand across the city, as we looked for new and creative ways to connect with a wider diversity of people across the city.

At the end of August, Dr. Haney revisited the past ten years of what God had been up to through Riverbend, and looked forward fourteen years to 2029 when Riverbend will turn 50 years old. He talked about the continuation of our mission to reach and influence a wider range of people in Austin.

In 2015, we continued to expand our influence across the city, by coming alongside other spiritual leaders and organizations in various parts of the city, who were doing great work. We looked for creative ways for Riverbenders to help them in their efforts through our human and financial resources. We saw this happen in many different areas of the city including:

- NACC in the Rundberg Neighborhood, where Riverbend came alongside Pastor Rick Banda and his North Austin Christian Church located on Rutland Ave., adjacent to many low-income housing complexes. Riverbenders got involved with their programs that provided food and clothing to tens of thousands of people in need. During the summer, we placed a part-time employee, Jessica Jimenez, at NACC to help them further develop their ministries. Her first

effort has been focused on developing a housecleaning business where immigrants cleaned houses for donations to the church's benevolence fund. This fund, in turn, was used to help support those in need at NACC.

- Nuevo Amanecer Ministries in the Rundberg Neighborhood is another ministry doing awesome work, where Riverbend has come alongside Pastors Santiago and Homelina Dorrance to support their efforts in the Galewood neighborhood along with three other neighborhoods with other young pastors that the Dorrances were investing in. Six different outreach events were held with Riverbend volunteers providing food, arts and crafts, and toy items, as ways of connecting this Nuevo Amanecer with the residents of the community. Pastors Santiago and Homelina did an amazing job of ministering to the local residents, helping to provide them with food, jobs, and other needs, and Riverbend helped them in this effort. In addition, Riverbend created and dedicated one to two MLF truck-runs per week to the Galewood area of Rundberg to support the homeless and indigent poor of this area.
- MLF's Community First Village is a brand new village under development, designed to house the chronically homeless of Austin. This village is located on 27 acres along the east side of the city, and Riverbend has been involved in helping them plan and develop the property (design of homes, placement, coordination with builders, etc.). Riverbend volunteers have been physically building four micro-homes and one community kitchen. These homes will be complete and occupied by approximately April, 2016.
- Travis Heights Food Pantry – 2015 saw the launch of a new food pantry in the Travis Heights neighborhood of Austin by Pastor Stanley of Travis Heights Church (a church plant of NACC from Rundberg). This food pantry was sorely needed to serve the poorer residents of the projects, as well as homeless, in South Austin. Several Riverbenders from the South Austin area began to serve regularly at this food pantry, and are working with Pastor Stanley on plans for ways to expand that for 2016.
- 2015 brought the development and initial launch of Missions Hills Church, a new church plant. Pastor Dave Sunde was released and resourced by Riverbend to work on launching a new church designed to connect with people whom Riverbend most likely would not connect with. He spent most of 2015 planning, developing a core team, and hosting "learning labs" in his home, as he transitioned out of his former role as an Adult Community Group Pastor. Beginning in 2016 they will launch as a new church. Riverbend will continue to help resource this new church plant for the next two years.

Other significant efforts Riverbend made in 2015 to reach a wider audience included:

- Hosting a "sold-out" Daddy-Daughter dance in February, attracting 350 families. While many of these were Riverbend families, this event also attracted a lot of folks who didn't attend church, but heard about it and were attracted to this amazing event.

- For 2015, Riverbend brought back the citywide “Christmas Sing-Along”, an event that was hosted for years by the Austin Symphony but dropped two years ago. This “sold-out” open-to-the-public event attracted over 2,000 people from across the city.
- Twice a year Riverbend has the ability to draw thousands to its Easter services and Christmas Eve services. For Easter Sunday 2015, we attracted nearly 5,200 people (up nearly 300 people from the prior Easter). For Christmas Eve services, with the addition of a fourth service, we were able to attract nearly 7,000 people, up 400 people compared to the prior Christmas Eve services. Direct mailing to 20,000+ residents in the local area was key in helping us to reach a wider audience.
- We hosted the Saturday morning Easter Eggstravaganza Saturday – an Easter egg hunt for children that attracted over 600 families, many from the neighborhood around us who were not part of the church.
- Riverbend also hosted the Family Fall Festival in mid-October – an alternate activity to Halloween that attracted a thousand people to come in costume, with tons of games, activities and food for the kids and families.

Communicating Better

A challenge for Riverbend was to be able to communicate effectively to five generations of members as well as the community at large. A variety of improvements were made in 2015 to help us in this regard, and these included:

- The launch of a new and improved website. This new website was not only an aesthetic improvement but much more intuitive and easy-to-navigate. This was paramount given the wide diversity of ministries offered through Riverbend Church and its affiliates.
- The launch of the first Riverbend APP for smart phones, making it possible to access media (sermons, music, etc.) as well as event information and other information quickly and conveniently from your smart phone. Launched in the summer of 2015, over 3,600 users have already downloaded this APP.
- A new in-house videographer was hired so that we might be able to develop a lot more video content for use in our services, as well as distribute through social media.
- Updates were made to our cameras and projection system in the Home for Hope, giving us HD quality for our TV production and broadcast, as well as much improved viewing inside Riverbend Centre/Home for Hope. The TV program continued to be aired on Sunday mornings, and attracted on average approximately 6,000 viewers each week.

Growing Deeper

Dr. Haney casted vision for the need in the future for our congregation to grow deeper if we're going to have the "horsepower" (spiritually developed and empowered members) to continue to reach and have a spiritual voice into a wider segment of Austin. Our key strategy, begun in 2015, is to have a key focus on implementing a spiritual formation strategy over the next several years. It is to be implemented through a series of one-on-one mentoring relationships, as well as the development of spiritual formation small groups. Both of these intentional "discipling" strategies are targeted to develop future leaders, mentors, and spiritual shepherds for the church. It is being implemented at the top, with all of our pastors challenged to be leading in this reproductive strategy, with hopes that lay leaders will eventually be involved as mentors investing in others in the future.

Staff Transitions

An era came to an end on October 31, 2015, when a memorial service was held in the Home for Hope to pay tribute to founding Pastor Dr. Gerald Mann who passed away that month. Gerald had retired in 2005 after pastoring Riverbend for 27 years. He passed the baton to Dr. Dave Haney, who is only the second Senior Pastor at Riverbend in its 37-year history. While 2015 can be remembered as the year when we lost the "Preacher Man", it is also a year of rebuilding, as we turned over and added a variety of new staff whom are already making a significant impact on our ministry. The following new hires joined our staff in 2015, and/or early 2016:

- Scott Vermillion, Pastor of Adult Community Groups, specifically "first half" adults. Scott is a seasoned pastor, coming to Riverbend from Denver where he served as a Senior Pastor of a smaller church for the past five years. Scott replaced Pastor Dave Sunde who was released to launch the new Mission Hills Church plant.
- Pam Mears, Administrative Assistant to Scott Vermillion, and also supporting Kevin Hedges and Peter Sleeper. This is an incremental support position designed to help support our community group efforts, which is the primary place where our new spiritual formation strategies will be implemented.
- Casey McPherson, Worship Director for the Resonate Service. Perhaps a "divine transition", Casey McPherson is an accomplished singer, songwriter, and lead singer of one of Austin's most popular bands called Alpha Rev. Over the past seven years Casey's life-trajectory has been impacted by Riverbend, as he first came to sing a song, which eventually led to writing a song for Easter services, followed by leading worship on an ever-increasing basis at Riverbend. Following the resignation of our previous worship leader, Casey McPherson assumed the responsibilities full-time in October of 2015, and the Riverbend community is blessed to have such an accomplished musician and singer to help lead worship and continue to develop the Resonate service, our fastest growing service for the past several years.

To help support our efforts in other areas, we also added Dani Powers as our Graphic Artist, Peter Longno as our videographer, Jay Tucker as tech staff, and Sam Guinn and Teri Richards to support our facility/maintenance team. Intern positions were also developed for Student Ministry and Children's Ministry, and we added a ministry coordinator in Missions to help with the development of our Rundberg efforts.

Spiritual Formation Efforts

Riverbend's Pastoral staff processed and embarked upon a spiritual formation strategy, using two primary mechanisms to help build spiritual depth in our church body. One is through one-on-one mentoring relationships, where each Pastor has been challenged to come alongside at least two mentees over this next year, investing in them, and, hopefully, helping them to develop and become future mentors for the church. Secondly, each Pastor has been challenged to develop a spiritual formation program run through small groups with the intentional purpose of developing future spiritual shepherds, mentors, and leaders for the church.

Although these metrics were established in 2015, each Pastor in their own way and timing will begin to implement this long-term strategy in 2016. The expectation is that over the next five years we could be producing several hundred spiritual mentors and leaders for the church.

Financial Results

Each year it seems that in unexpected ways, God provides for Riverbend to have the resources it needs to continue to pursue the mission and vision that He has given us.

2015 financially came in slightly below our budget. Giving income was \$4.111 million, down 3.6% (\$149,181) to our budget, but 1% ahead of prior year actual. All other income was \$1.564 million, which was flat to last year, but down 1% to budget, due to less revenue generated by the Remembrance Gardens and weddings. Consequently, our total income for the year ended up at \$5,674,892 versus a budget of \$5,853,323, down 3%, but was flat to last year's total income.

Our total expenses were less than budget by \$43K, so the total net budget shortfall was \$130K.

2016

Making It Happen – Wider & Deeper

As discussed in the previous section, our primary efforts for 2016 will be focused on two overall initiatives:

1. Reaching Wider. Continually strategizing ways to reach a wider people group across Austin who have yet to experience the message of grace that God stands so readily to make available to them. As our mission has been for 37 years, we want to continue to reach the bruised, battered, broken and bored for the cause of Christ.
2. Growing Deeper. Simultaneously to connecting with new folks who are seeking God, we also want to be taking our congregation deeper in their faith, with a greater understanding of who God is, what that means for them in their everyday lives, and empowering them to live the lives that He is calling them to, with their families, in the workplace, in their neighborhoods, and in the church.

Reaching Wider

Optimism abounds that a portion of the 7,000 guests that made it to Riverbend for Christmas Eve Services in 2015, who don't normally attend church, will make their way back to Riverbend in 2016. Anecdotal evidence indicates that some of this is already happening in early January, and we have high hopes that our strategies below will continue this momentum.

Connecting Through Music

As Austin is the “live music capital of the country”, we can't help but use music and musicians as a way to connect with the city. Throughout the year Riverbend will be bringing in a series of musicians and vocalists from across the city as a way of affirming musicians in the city, as well as attracting people who might not otherwise find their way to Riverbend or any church for that matter, but who will come to see a particular musician playing. Starting in January, we'll be using music from Willie Nelson to set the stage for worship, and will feature Austinite Kim Deschamps, who has played with Willie over the years, on the pedal steel guitar. A little later in the spring we'll bring back Grammy-winner Mike Farris on a Sunday morning. Our hope is to continue to bring in high-profile musicians throughout the year, affirming them, and using them as a draw to reach the wider community of Austin, as we invite them to join us.

Well-known Austin singer and songwriter, Casey McPherson of Alpha Rev, recently joined Riverbend's staff as our new Resonate Worship Leader. He has a particular zeal to use his

music and influence with musicians across the city, to reach those who are skeptical of church, just as he was a few years ago. He and the programming team will be planning a myriad of different ways to accomplish this throughout the year.

At the same time, Carlton Dillard, the Worship Pastor for the Celebration service, entered into an agreement this past year with SUN Radio 100.5, to host a show called “Bridge Radio”. It is giving him a public voice, connecting him with singers and songwriters from across the city, many of whom are coming to Riverbend to participate in services. It gives him direct access to the secular listeners, as he blends a message of music and grace together in his discussions with the musicians, inviting all to consider a faith relationship with the Almighty.

Connecting Outside the Walls of our Campus

The seeds that were sewn missionally in 2015 will bear even more fruit for 2016, as we continue our efforts to expand our reach across Austin and across borders, involving more and more Riverbenders. Specifically:

El Salvador Mission – multiple trips are planned for 2016, including general trips for adults in the spring and fall. In addition, there will be a men’s trip in June, a student trip in July, and a medical trip in the summer. Hundreds of lives are being impacted in El Salvador – people with so little, living in a dark, violent place because of all the gang influence, are experiencing the joy of walking and trusting in the Lord. Children who might have grown up in the gangs, are instead continuing on and getting high school and, in some cases, college educations and are in turn giving back to the community. Youth, instead of turning to the gangs for fellowship and support, are finding that on the soccer fields with the Salvadorian missionaries that Riverbend has planted and supports. Even a water filtration system that Riverbend installed five years ago is being turned into a revenue-generating business to help support the school, thanks to the backing of some Riverbenders and a dedicated effort to get it up and running.

Nuevo Amanecer Ministry in Rundberg – our efforts with Pastors Santiago and Homelina Dorrance will expand for 2016 in their mission to the Galewood Drive area of Rundberg. Riverbend is helping them to rent their first space around the corner from their apartment complex. Based on early indications from December to January, it’s already helping them to reach dozens more folks in the community. This space will be utilized not only for church services, but will evolve as a neighborhood development center with a variety of ministry opportunities that will evolve out of the use of this space, enabling a wider diversity of Riverbenders to get involved using their gifts and talents to help support this community.

NACC in Rundberg – we will continue to find ways to expand our influence in Rundberg by working with Pastor Rick at North Austin Christian Church. We are currently looking for a home/duplex to purchase in the area to help start a halfway house and program for women in trouble (homeless, battered, recently released from prison, etc.). They already have a men’s halfway house program called *Straightway* that supports up to twenty men at a time, and the

new women's program would follow a similar model. Funds have already been committed by Riverbenders, and we are currently praying for God to make the right location available for this use.

Travis Heights Food Pantry – plans are in place for 2016 to expand the number of volunteer opportunities to serve the residents coming to the new food pantry that opened up in 2015 in South Austin. We have hopes to build out a backyard covered patio that can be used to create opportunities to build relationships with the residents as they come for food. In addition, outreach events in the poorer “projects” area a couple blocks away are being planned as a way to connect with and build relationships with the residents. We'll also be creating designated MLF truck runs to the projects in an effort to further relationships and look for different ways to serve the residents in need in this community. This will provide many new opportunities for Riverbenders who live South, to engage missionally in serving the least of these in an area closer to their homes.

Community First Village – in 2016, Riverbend will complete the construction of the four micro-homes and one community kitchen that they began in the fall of 2015. Plans are for the residents to occupy these new homes approximately by April 2016, and for Riverbenders to help them in the assimilation process. In addition, we are planning to host at least six worship gatherings for the community at large, feeding 200+ residents and volunteers, and hosting a time of worship and teaching. We will look for various other ways for Riverbenders to serve this faith-based community that is helping the chronically homeless to not only have housing, but also to live a dignified, faith-filled life.

“Be the Church” Events – as a way to increase the missional involvement of our congregation, we are planning a very significant Missions Sunday, tentatively labeled “Be the Church”. Dr. Haney will be preaching a series on serving missionally in the latter part of September, and on the third Sunday our hope is that at least 500 Riverbenders will leave the services and head out that day to serve the city on any one of 25+ different projects. To prepare for this, the Mission's Team is organizing a series of smaller events, one for first quarter and one for second quarter, each one to involve ever-increasing numbers of adults to participate, so that we will be ready for the big event in September.

Connecting with Young Families

For the past five years we've had a focused effort on reaching the young families. This included retooling our staff, developing new adult community groups, and constructing a new student and children's center. For 2016, those efforts continue as we create programs that attract a wider range of young families to Riverbend.

Recently, we brought on to our staff, Pastor Scott Vermillion, a seasoned pastor with experience in Denver and North Carolina, who will oversee the adult ministry to first-half

adults, particularly those with families. He'll invest in building leaders and helping to develop spiritual formation strategies for adults with young kids, elementary kids, and teenage kids.

At the same time, our programs to children through Pastor Todd Mears and his team, and programs to middle school and high school students through Pastor Doug Congdon and his team, will continue to expand and reach more and more kids. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the strategy's working, as the kids are dragging the parents to church these days because they are so excited about what they experience on Sunday mornings.

We will continue our focused efforts on attracting and creating an environment to minister to young families, as part of expanding the reach of our overall ministry, and enabling us to have an influence on the next generation.

We'll continue to host four major attractional events in 2016, designed to attract young families from the Austin community who might not otherwise attend church. These include:

- The Easter Eggstravaganza event, an Easter egg hunt for 14,000 eggs the morning before Easter Sunday, complete with bounce houses, face painting, train rides, a petting zoo, and more.
- The Family Fall Festival, held in mid-October as a Halloween alternative event, draws six to seven hundred kids and families in costume, to a time of music, bounce houses, food, cake walks, magicians, and more.
- The Daddy-Daughter Valentine's Dance – a sold-out event that brings 350 fathers with their daughters to an event that celebrates their special relationship, creating memories through photo ops, a dance floor and dinner.
- The city-wide family-friendly Christmas Sing-Along – a free event offered to the city for families to come a few weeks before Christmas to sing Christmas carols and engage with Santa, Frosty, Rudolph and other characters.

All of these activities are intentionally designed to reach out to a secular audience, inviting them to come have a great first experience at Riverbend, and, in the process, sowing seeds that this is a place they might consider bringing their family to in order to learn about God and to grow spiritually.

Growing Deeper

As Dr. Haney indicated in his vision-casting sermon in August of 2015, if Riverbend is going to continue to reach wider, there is an inherent problem with that – we're not strong enough. We need to help our existing members grow deeper in their faith, developing new leaders, spiritual shepherds, and mentors who can come alongside people younger in their faith and build into

them, helping them to grow as well. It is the “reproduction” part of Riverbend’s mission that we’ve not focused on as intentionally in the past.

Spiritual Mentoring. One of the most powerful ways to help others grow spiritually is through spiritual mentoring. Having a person who is spiritually mature invest one-on-one in another who is younger in the faith. For 2016, each of our pastors has been challenged with investing in at least two other men or women in our congregation who have the potential to become a spiritual mentor within the next year. The hope is that a year from now, instead of 11 mentors (our pastors), we would have 33 spiritual mentors released to invest in at least two others (a total of 66 mentees) for the next year. If that were successful, by 2018, we would then have those 66 mentees become mentors, which means we would have 99 spiritual mentors investing in nearly 200 mentees that year. The thought of 300 spiritually mature warriors to help us develop and lead new ministries, and pour spiritually into hundreds of more people in the future is a very exciting proposition for our church. All of this is happening behind the scenes, while we continue our strong push on Sunday morning with programming designed to attract new people into the faith.

Spiritual Formation Groups and Programs. Each pastor has been charged also to begin to formulate spiritual formation small groups with programs designed to help them grow spiritually. Each of these groups and programs will look different depending on the pastor, but all will share a common set of core theological concepts and training that they will take the people through in order to help them grow stronger in their faith.

There are two major programs in development that will kick off during 2016.

- ***RiverMEN’s Master Discipleship Program.*** Pastor Norm Schoenfeld and a small group of Men’s leaders will be leading a five-month “Master Discipleship Program”, starting in January and running through the end of May. A select group of men were invited to participate of which 21 men have committed to go through this extensive program. The expectation is that the men coming out of this program will become future leaders, mentors, and spiritual shepherds for the church.
- ***A Women’s Spiritual Formation Program – “The Deeper Journey”.*** Diane Haney has volunteered to lead an effort to develop a custom-designed program to help develop a core team of spiritually mature women, through the use of mentoring and spiritual formation small groups. She is currently in the development stage of this program, with plans to launch an initial phase of the spiritual formation small groups by the end of February 2016. Riverbend is thrilled to have our Pastor’s wife, Diane, who recently retired after 28 years of teaching, to be called to this exciting new ministry, and what it can mean for the development of select women of Riverbend for the future.

Stay tuned for more developments on spiritual formation as each of our pastors develops and launches their own programs designed to serve individuals within their spheres of influence.

Creative Arts & Communications

Riverbend is a church that places a great deal of emphasis on artistic expression reflecting our belief that we are to mirror our Great Creator: God. Being creatively inspired also means being open to non-dualistic thinking and embracing change while responding to new promptings from His Spirit. The result for the Creative Arts Team (CAT) and Communications Department in 2016 is to build upon a year in which growth was encouraged by seeking the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit to bless, lead, inspire and renew us in our endeavors. A progressively evolving culture requires attention, but shouldn't necessarily provide direction: God and His Word are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Riverbend continues its legacy and belief that God welcomes us into a relationship with Him just as we are, right where we are. As a representation of this belief, our Sunday morning experiences are designed to meet people at whatever part of their spiritual journey they may be on. In many cases, we realize people may be starting from the beginning of the trailhead, or maybe even coming back around to rejoin a path they once followed. It doesn't matter: God will faithfully join us on the trek wherever we are and we are completely confident in God's power when encountering His Grace.

In addition to Austin's increasing cultural diversity, on any given Sunday one might find a great deal of spiritual diversity in our congregation – but all with one common theme: a desire to know God and receive His love, mercy and grace. Because of the amazing beauty and outstanding functionality of the Riverbend campus, we are able to draw in people with a variety of programs and events: "Birthdays 360", "Weddings 360", numerous national touring concerts, World-class conferences and seminars, our Christian pre-school, our numerous different recovery and support groups, or any myriad of the thousands of events that occur on Riverbend's campus each year. Each of these represent a potential funnel to our Sunday morning experience which represents the wide-open front door calling all to join in worship, community and celebration.

Possibly the greatest blessing for the CAT and Comm. Dept. in 2015 was how God brought new staff members to an already 'loaded' team. The CAT music staff has been under incredible music direction and leadership through the talents of 26-year Riverbend Maestro Carlton Dillard and Co-Producer Susie Keck who bring a polished and professional direction to our 9:45 Celebration service. The Riverbend Choir continues to be growing and vibrant both musically and spiritually. As a Community Group, the choir represents a perfect example of faith in action through a community that loves and supports each other in the Spirit of Christ. As Pastor, Carlton began laying the groundwork for intentional mentoring and small group strategies for the choir and Celebration musicians – with fruitful results already manifesting.

Again, adding to this team, and in response to vacancies and new positions, God showed up BIG

in bringing fresh, amazingly talented, Christ-devoted, staff to the team. Casey McPherson was already a part of the Riverbend team as an occasional guest Worship leader for our 11:15 Resonate service. Already highly successful as a national original recording and touring artist (Casey and his band Alpha Rev have been an Austin darling for ten years), Casey felt God's call to full-time ministry at Riverbend in September. With a blend of deeply Spirit-led worship, attuned alt-rock sensibilities, and brilliantly original arrangements and compositions, Casey is dedicated to using every bit of his giftedness to lead others to experience the presence of God authentically, in life-changing, breath-taking fashion. "Holy Spirit, You are welcome here."

Communications Department

The Communications department handles all web, print, social media, promotion and advertising, Church APP, video and other media-related activities and projects. 2015 saw the launch of a new, more current, streamlined and more user-friendly website – that also reduced monthly hosting costs. Enhanced functionality and consistent integration with multiple ministry coordination platforms has resulted in more efficiency and better user experiences. And again, in response to vacancies and new positions, Riverbend was blessed with new staff members to complete a team that is just beginning to realize its seemingly limitless opportunities and impact.

Danielle Powers (AKA Dani) began at Riverbend as a contract Graphic Designer, but it wasn't long until her incredible technical skill, design aesthetic, and inspiringly positive, creative attitude, garnered her a full-time position as Graphic Designer and Comm. Dept. Creative Lead. Dani continues to sprout and flourish regardless of the challenge put before her – all with a Christ-filled dedication and devotion. Her work is on display in just about every possible medium RB has: website, print materials, APP, banners, worship backgrounds – basically anything visual digital or otherwise, Dani has her thumb on it.

Peter Longno was another answer to prayer fulfilling a *long* search for a Video Producer. The wait was worth it. Peter brings an incredibly fresh, relevant, cutting-edge visual story-telling ability to what is becoming an increasingly crucial part of the creative expression of our Sunday morning worship services. Whether it be a life-change testimony video, a creative take on scripture, a humorous look at life, motion graphics, animations, or simply video announcements, Peter combines immense natural talent with dedication to the craft to expand his abilities and help take the CAT in a whole new direction.

Internship Program:

In 2013, the Riverbend CAT began the search for talented, ambitious artists and technicians eager to take a first, or next, step in their career pursuits. To date, the CAT and Communications department have brought in several interns from local schools and

universities.

Jay Tucker continues in an expanded role of Tech Coordinator being tasked with greater responsibilities and assignments after originally being brought on as an intern in 2014. A graduate of the Art Institute of Austin, Jay has blossomed in his pursuit of event production, live and recorded audio engineering, sound for video, and technical administrative duties. Jay has turned his blessing into blessing others as he shares his knowledge and passion with intern Roy Morris – a high-school student looking to learn the craft of live event audio production. Roy has been a tremendous blessing to the technical arts team through unusual (for that age!) dedication to *early* Sunday morning start times.

Most recently, the CAT and Communications department has accepted the internship of Catherine Amman from nearby Concordia University. Catherine is pursuing a career in music business and production, and marketing. Her contributions will be greatly appreciated.

Technical Upgrades

2015 also saw a significant upgrade to the Home for Hope broadcast and projection system. This system was designed to be used now in the Home for Hope and later to be re-purposed in other parts of the Riverbend campus, as we continue to upgrade our facilities. Partnering with a local contractor, we were able to purchase and install:

- (4) HD cameras – (3) of them robotic
- All new camera shading and control equipment
- A new 11K projection system
- A new 24' wide projection screen

Besides the benefit of a brighter, sharper and wider aspect ratio experience in our main services, we are also now in full HD glory for local broadcast on KBTC FOX 7, Sunday mornings at 9:30.

Bridge Radio Show - www.facebook.com/bridgeradiowithcarltondillard

2015 saw Carlton Dillard begin a new radio show called The Bridge on Sun Radio 100.1 FM. The name Bridge carries the Riverbend mantra of combining sacred with secular. Starting with the premise of a local music program, Carlton took the concept further by calling upon his vast experience in the local Austin music scene to interview up-and-coming and established musicians with a dual purpose: share the nuts and bolts of the art and craft of song-writing and performance; and share how their faith has – or will – play a part in their life and career. The result has been new exposure and promotion not only for Riverbend, but also for the artists that we believe God has uniquely gifted to carry messages of hope and redemption to a hurting and lost world – in Austin and beyond.

Original Recording Projects

With the addition of new Resonate Worship leader, Casey McPherson, came the vision and drive to begin in earnest Riverbend's own original recording projects – with the possibility of a record label start-up. This strategy represents both evangelical outreach opportunities as well as Riverbend Worship community enrichment. Already writing and recording out of the Ice Cream Factory studios here in Austin, Casey has brought a desire to produce Christ-centered worship *and* original (sacred and secular) song projects with these goals in mind:

- Live Resonate single releases every week
- One Resonate studio record every year
- One Riverbend Christmas record every year
- One Celebration Service Record every year
- Development of Riverbend and Austin-at-large original recording projects drawing upon current and future relationships within the Austin music community
- Riverbend's own recording, onsite recording studio.

Distribution would be through a multitude of channels including mechanical (CD/Vinyl) and digital mediums (iTunes, digital downloads, etc.). The CAT is just beginning to scratch the surface of this new venture with vigor and passion.

Sunday Services and Events in Review

Continuing a trend from the previous four years, Riverbend saw increased attendance beginning with an incredible Christmas Eve experience in 2014. 2015 ended with more blessings as close to 7,000 men, women and children celebrated the birth and further divine purpose for God coming to earth to be with His creation. In addition to Easter, overall attendance gains for the year were impressive and gratefully received.

- We kicked off the year with a high-impact series called *WALK ON* — a Riverbend-infused look at our own spiritual lives against the backdrop of the songs of U2.
- Good Friday's *Stations of the Cross* immersive garden experience continues to grow as we added two additional services on Maundy Thursday bringing the total to six *Good Friday* services.
- The fall saw an incredibly huge celebration realized in our series called Re-Vision. This series was designed to reflect on our past, rejoice in our present and re-imagine our future, while also celebrating Senior Pastor Dave Haney's 10-year anniversary with Riverbend. Festivities were scattered throughout the campus all morning long.
- 2015 also saw the return of the Riverbend Christmas Sing-Along with members of the Austin

Symphony Orchestra. This year we were able to add in a pre-concert experience on the plaza with Spirit Radio, a tree lighting, cookies and cocoa, caroling and a live nativity.

- And, again topping last year's attendance, we experienced the highest attended Christmas Eve services ever. With a keen focus on outreach, many first-timers again came to experience a glorious blend of the traditional and the new.
- Riverbend Centre and Riverbend Centre for the Performing Arts both saw incredible events, conferences, seminars and concerts in 2016:
 - Tabla master, Zakir Hussain, accompanied by the finest jazz musicians in the world.
 - A new Unplugged Series in the Smith Family Chapel
 - The 2015 Willow Creek Global Leadership Summit
 - Brene Brown
 - Willie Nelson

The missional objective for our team on Sunday mornings is to leverage the time, talent and treasure of our congregation as follows:

Time: Our congregation, coming together with our worship leaders, musicians, staff and volunteers in three services to fellowship, and to worship God.

Talents: We tap into many incredibly gifted and talented professionals and volunteers to serve our congregation and lead them in worship on Sunday morning, hoping to help them encounter the Spirit of God as they participate and engage in the worship and the message of the day.

Treasure: We use our treasure, the incredible resources of the Riverbend campus (our Chapel and Home for Hope buildings, as well as all of our equipment and technology), to convey the timeless truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In doing so, our desire is those coming would begin to live their lives differently based on what they learn about His will for their lives.

As a result, Riverbend Church continues to offer three completely different styles of worship experiences each Sunday morning with the common thread of a thoughtfully prepared sermon message by our Senior Pastor, Dr. David Haney (seeking to faithfully and creatively express God's timeless truths). It is the musical/worship offerings that differentiate each service from the other:

- *The Heritage Service* — This worship experience adheres to a traditional, intimate, hymn-based service and is located in the beautiful Smith Chapel at 8:30AM. It is a much more intimate setting, with 100–150 congregants in attendance on a typical Sunday morning. Prepare to be personally greeted and appreciated!
- *The Celebration Service* — Our second worship service of the morning begins at 9:45AM in the Home for Hope Sanctuary. A more contemporary experience, this service features Riverbend's

amazing (and, as mentioned, growing!) choir that incorporates a variety of worship styles. On any given Sunday the congregation may experience professionals from the Austin Symphony orchestra, a heralded brass ensemble, Grammy Award winning instrumentalists, professional soloists and a wide variety of music genres. This service is geared for true celebration!

- *The Resonate Service* — The final service for the day begins at 11:15AM. This service offers a more participatory, current, band-led expression of worship. A modern approach to worship that combines other creative offerings of lighting, media and narrative expressions, this service is intended to engage and connect the congregation in knowing and worshipping God. Ever-evolving and open to new artistic reaches, this service provides a place for all generations.

Riverbend's Creative Arts Team intentionally seeks out and purposefully affirms local Austin artists and their creative endeavors as a mirror of our Creator. It will always be our hope that these artists would be encouraged and affirmed, and, as a result, come to experience the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Guest artists for 2015 included Grammy Award winners Mike Farris and Ashley Cleveland. Professional artists that continue to find a more comfortable home at Riverbend: Shelley King, Malford Milligan, and locals Susan Arbuckle, Ange Kogutz, Jack Burton, Candy Coburn and D-Soul. God continues to bless Riverbend by bringing incredibly gifted talents to develop and bless such as Nate Hubble, Malia Grace Livolsi, Jordan Whitmore, Megan Stanley and many others.

As another expression of diversity and artistic appreciation, Riverbend's Inspiration Gallery features the collected works of a variety of local artists. Designed to afford professional and budding artists a premiere showcase for their work, the gallery rotates in a new showing every other month providing ample time to observe and appreciate their art and also allow for full appreciation of their gifts. The highlight of the year was an extended summer showing by currently or formerly homeless artists from the Mobile Loaves and Fishes Community. Sales — with all proceeds going to the artists themselves — exceeded \$4,600. Last year also saw showings by Riverbend's own Photography team, Leah Haney and other local artists and groups.

The Creative Arts Team is passionate about creating a worship experience every Sunday that is relevant, respectful, and reverent. At the same time, we strive to create an experience that is attuned to the culture, and one in which the people are engaged, inspired, and encouraged. In 2015, and now into 2016, we will continue to balance intentionality with risk to reach people wherever they are on their spiritual journey.

Adult Community Groups

Community groups at Riverbend are “mid-sized” groups that meet on Sunday mornings. It’s our way of helping the “big Church” become “small.” Many of our adults will attend Riverbend for a second hour on Sunday mornings as they choose to join one of the Community Groups during the hour before or after the Worship service that they attend. Community Groups provide an effective “next step” in both faith and friendship for many. Average community group attendance this past year saw close to 320 adults in weekly participation, with groups ranging in size from 15 – 60 on average.

Community groups are key in forming close relationships which continue outside the walls of the church, with members seeking to bear each other's burdens and support each other whenever needs arise. We see future groups starting organically as opportunity and needs arise. Over time, as groups develop a history together, we see them age up, which creates an opportunity to start new groups.

For 2016, we are excited about working through our community groups to help people find a deeper experience of God’s transforming relationship in their lives. Community groups will be one of the primary areas where we apply our new spiritual formation strategy through one-on-one mentoring and spiritual-formation small groups.

Listed below are updates on Riverbend’s Community Groups. Beyond these groups, there are also classes that continue to support and encourage the community at large.

Young Adults

- **aveNEW** (9:45am Sunday Mornings, Quad 4C/D, Led by Leigh Congdon).
This new young adult group of twenty-somethings has become active in serving, building friendships, study and worship. Many of these young adults serve and volunteer in Riverbend’s music, women’s, children’s and student ministry departments.
- **Untitled** (9:45am Sunday mornings, Building 5B, Led by Jackie Borcharding-Rylander).
This group is designed primarily for singles in the 35-40s age range (although there are some couples, too). They are active in event planning, sharing meals, faith-based study and discussion, while actively serving inside and outside the church walls. They maintain an interactive teaching on Sundays by a capable team of volunteer leaders.

In addition to serving and assisting other ministry departments, Untitled plans regular events and activities for the children at Austin State Hospital. This is a relationship eight years in the

making. Most weekends, you can find them gathering in living rooms, restaurants and hot spots in Austin.

Young Couples & Families

- **Couple Vision** (9:45am Sunday mornings, Building 5A, Led by Jeremy & Molly Sylestine).
This group is comprised of a host of young couples in their 20s & 30s. While some are newly married, several have begun starting families. The beauty of this group is finding the support and encouragement as they enter the new chapter of marriage and/or parenting. Under the capable leadership of several young couples, Sunday mornings feature a relaxed faith-based discussion. They continue to be active in their service and outreach and further the work of the non-profit, *Hopefully Sow*. This ministry offers encouragement and support and plans events and activities in order to meet tangible needs of children in foster care.
- **Family Venture** (9:45am Sunday mornings in Plaza View Room, Led by Jeremy Williford).
This community faced transition this year. Family Venture's Pastoral leader and primary teacher, David Sunde, transitioned into his new role as a church planter, in order to plant Mission Hills Church. In addition, the group lost some members who left to support the church plant, as well as other departures. Finally, they had to welcome a new pastor, Scott Vermillion, (who started the beginning of November 2015) into the ministry. With all these changes it would have been easy for the Community Group to shrink back, but instead they have gained new life. Jeremy Williford stepped up his leadership within the group and recruited others to take ownership of their community. As a result, the group has developed a new sense of purpose and mission together. In November, 22 families attended our annual family camp at Laity Lodge, which has an amazing effect on the depth of community for families, couples, and group as a whole. The community continues to find ways to practice faith as families. Each month, families coordinate a Mobile Loaves run. Family Venture also maintains a relationship with a Teen Moms Program at Del Valle High School. In addition to the group donating children's books, furnishings, clothes and diapers, a group of ten launched an initiative called *Be Our Voice*, which addresses childhood obesity through education. Last year's events included both couples and family outings — Daddy-Daughter Dinner & Dance, Mom-Son fishing day, backyard movie nights, and more. Sunday mornings remain a very interactive time of teaching and learning.

Midlife Adults

Midlife Adults (those in their 40s – 60s) have a variety of community groups to choose from which include:

- **InSight** (9:45am Sunday mornings, Quad 2A, Led by Bill Coletti).

This group is for single individuals in their 40s to early 50s. Peer-led, discussion-based study provides an opportunity to get to know each other, ask questions, and grow in a small group environment. Along with serving in other areas of ministry at Riverbend, the group is active together, sitting together during the Resonate Service, and going to lunch afterward.

- The **Wings** Group (11am Sunday, Fellowship Hall, Led by Mike Robertson).
This group was created for single adults and is primarily made up of people late 50s and up. Each week they gather to hear a creative and inspiring message by Pastor Mike Robertson. This large group promotes a very active social calendar while also seeking ways to minister to others, such as their regular involvement in Mobile Loaves & Fishes.
- The **Links** Group (8:30am Sunday, Plaza View Room, Led by Mike Robertson)
This group is for couples, mostly in the baby boomer generation. Like the Wings class, the Links class is taught by Mike Robertson each Sunday, who draws from a variety of cultural themes to find lessons of faith, grace, love and forgiveness in some refreshingly unlikely places.
- The **Journeys** group is also for boomer couples (11am Sunday, Quad 2B/C, Led by Mike Furman).
Journeys does a variety of Bible and book studies which foster discussion and interaction among the members, hosts a variety of different social events, and continually looks to help support a variety of missions projects from Habitat for Humanity builds to missionary support in El Salvador. This year they formed their own committee to engage in even more missions activity.

Senior Adults

Senior Adult Ministry for active folks in their 70s – 90s is made up of several vibrant and faithful groups, who gather regularly for Bible teaching, discussion, prayer support, and even adventures together, all under the shepherding of Pastor Dean Busboom.

The Senior Adults Tuesday morning group at Riverbend is an active group in study, serving, and fellowship. They study every Tuesday morning at 10:45, followed by lunch, fellowship and games. This past year the group studied the “One Another” passages of the New Testament, with plans to follow with a study of the Gospel of Mark.

In addition to serving Mobile Loaves & Fishes each month, the group hosts monthly day trips and outings. Activities have included a tour of the Governor’s Mansion and the State Capitol; the Palace Theater in Georgetown; a trip to Shiner to tour a Painted Church and Spoetzl’s Brewery; the Duck tour of Austin; the Bob Bullock Museum; and the Gospel Brunch at Stubb’s BBQ. This year planned activities include: *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Palace Theater; Homestead Heritage in Elm Mott; Wimberley Glass Works & Olive Tree/Bella Vista Ranch; and many others.

In addition there are several other groups and classes for senior adults and others that meet on Sunday mornings at various times including:

- **Seekers and Servants** led by Ralph Smucker at 8:30 am in Building 5A
- **The Cowden Class** led by the Rhynes & the Gentrys at 8:30 am in Quad 1B
- **Verity** led by Dr. Terry Eska at 9:45 am in Quad 2A
- **Ordinary Christians** led by Dr. Gordon Smith at 11:00 am in Quad 3A/B

Special Interest and Topical Groups

While many of the groups are defined by life stages: singles, young families, mid-life couples, and senior adults – we also encourage groups to rally around interests and topics. Some of these groups include:

- **Grace Lab** (11am Sunday mornings, Quad 4 A/B, Led by Paulette Schwartz). This community group is based on interest rather than life-stage; some are married, some are single and others are married but only one partner attends the class. Most are in the fifty-and-above age group. The group remains active outside of class, usually having Sunday lunches, museum visits, movie theatre attractions, Gospel Brunches, and more.

Faith-based studies vary from books of the Bible, Christian authors, or subjects of interest such as world religion. This past year we undertook a serious study of spirituality using Richard Rohr's book, *Things Hidden: Scripture as Spirituality*, which features both Old and New Testament scripture verses. Following the study on spirituality, the class focused on the subject of forgiveness using Adam Hamilton's DVD and book study, *Forgiveness: Finding Peace Through Letting Go*.

This is a group who is extremely interested in learning and then taking that knowledge to a practical and helping ministry at Riverbend and serving the Austin community. Many are active in Stephen Ministry, choir, Mobile Loaves and Fishes, Women's Ministry, Inside Riverbend, El Salvador mission trips, etc.

- **People in the Word, and Women in the Word**, led by Lee Ann Penick at 9:45 & 11:00 am, Quad 3C/D. Lee Ann is a gifted Bible teacher with a passion for sharing God's Word with others, and these classes draw people from a myriad of different backgrounds and life stages.
- **Toastmasters at Riverbend**: meets weekly. The intent is to find community around the interest of public speaking. Now entering its fourth year, the group continues to welcome new faces and has won several awards for its activity and education of members.

Women's Ministry

2015 in Review

Women's Ministry continued to serve the women of Riverbend Church and those beyond our campus in 2015. Our ministry continues to unite, encourage and transform the women of Riverbend and Austin. Women are taking steps to further their growth in Christ through weekly Bible Studies and gatherings that encourage service, fellowship and the development of a deeper journey in Faith. We also had a beautiful Good Friday prayer time in the Remembrance Gardens (this was the third year for this amazing time of praise and prayer for our women). We offered weekly bible studies through April and a summer series for six weeks, all of which were very well attended. The *Yada Yada* book club continues to be a strong group of women who love to read and gather together monthly to discuss their reading. Our *Moms Next* and *MOPS* groups hosted a speaker in March with a beautiful brunch enjoyed by all.

We closed a chapter in our *Face-To-Face* group as Sandra Nicholson, the founder of the group, moved away. This led to new leadership and changes from a group of primarily a social focus to one of a bi-monthly Bible study with some social time built in. This group went cruising on Lady Bird Lake in the fall together and began in September with our very own Doug Congdon speaking on the Love of God. New Riverbend women members were greeted with a Women's Ministry welcome and information packet along with a small plant. This transition has brought many new members to the groups that meet in homes and on campus and a stronger emphasis on the scriptures while continuing the social fun.

During our May planning time, the leadership team felt we should direct our efforts to connect our women more closely to the Bible. This led to an *iTAG* fall study called *Seamless* that was an overview of the entire Bible along with connecting threads. What a wonderful time we all had discovering new threads and deepening those we were so familiar with in our Bible journey.

Our *iTAG* ladies also supported *Texas Reach Out Ministries*, a ministry for women leaving prison. They collected clothing appropriate for work and interviews, a Bible study was offered to the women by a few of our ladies and a wonderful Christmas celebration was given to the house (eight women) with stockings, cookies and caroling.

Our annual, *Jingle Bell Market and Lunch (JBML)* turned very pink this year and was exquisite both in eye appeal, shopping and food! *JBML* 2015 was our most successful to date and helped as a fundraiser for our Women's Ministry to support our growth and outreach.

Our support to *Young Lives* in North Austin, a group of teen moms and their children, continued by sending a young mom and child to camp along with food donations for their club night.

The El Salvador Women's Ministry was supported with a spring gathering of their women that we helped to host to help them better understand domestic violence and how to seek help and find value in themselves. Our very own Tracy Barr was the featured speaker. In the fall,

Riverbend's Women's Ministry also assisted the women's leadership of Siloe Church in El Salvador to have a retreat of their own.

English as a Second Language (ESL), continues on campus on Wednesday mornings with a great team of women helping those who are in transition to our country and wanting to connect and learn the language and customs of the United States. A few of these students have now joined some of our bible study groups!

Looking at 2016

We are looking forward to 2016 with great anticipation! Both the *iTAG* and *Face-to-Face* programs have already begun with a bang. Our *Face-to-Face* team brought in speaker and author, Janet Davis, to speak to 65 women with dinner provided by the different small groups. *iTAG* began with the study *What Love Is*, the letters of 1,2,3 John. Wow, what a group and fabulous study. We are excited to say that we have several ladies who come to Wednesday evening and have their husbands in the Men's study at the same time! We will finish spring with a study focusing on the book of Acts and the Holy Spirit, by Lisa Harper. Check the website for dates and sign up.

Our prayer team invited women to join them in the Upper Room for a time of praise, worship and prayer for the new year.

Last, but so exciting, is our Spring Retreat on April 16 at the Renaissance Hotel in North Austin. This year we are lighting our soul fire with *Blaze on!* Dr. Jackie Roesse will be our featured speaker and Melia Grace will be our worship leader. In addition, there will be some give-aways, food, fun and good times! Please join us by registering online at www.riverbend.com/women. Our goal is to have over 100 women join us for this potentially transformational event.

Men's Ministry

Amazing momentum is building in our Men's Ministry, as a larger group of men of Riverbend Church are stepping out in faith, to learn more about God's purpose for their lives, and responding. We're seeing this in our men's groups as men meeting together weekly are challenging and helping each other to grow spiritually. More than that, they are going out across the city, serving the underserved, and helping to bring hope to the hopeless in various areas across the city. It's powerful to see our men in action as they allow God to work in and through them!

It's All About Spiritual Transformation

One of the most effective ways for men to experience the transformational power of God is to meet together with other men in small group environments. To facilitate this, Riverbend currently has six different Men's Groups, that meet on five different days of the week at different places and times, in order to make them accessible to a wider group of men from Riverbend.

The groups of men all have one goal in mind as they meet together – to help each other become the men whom Christ has called them to be by being better husbands, fathers, leaders and/or co-workers in the marketplace, and to help our church and community get better. They spend time in topical studies, learning what the Word has to say about how they live their lives, and encouraging each other to do better. They are learning more about surrendering to God's agenda, and living for Him instead of for their own agendas.

Another entry point for men has been to serve alongside other men missionally, as we find ways to serve the "least of these" across the city and even across borders. Each week men of Riverbend are going out on Mobile Loaves & Fishes truck-runs to feed the homeless across the city. Other men can be found working in MLF's Community First Village constructing micro-homes and a community kitchen to help house and serve the formerly chronically homeless of Austin. Still other men are serving at the food pantries in Rundberg at NACC or down south at the Travis Heights food pantry. Still others travelled last June to El Salvador to help host the first ever Men's Retreat for 40 Salvadorian men from Siloe Church. In all of these cases, men are stepping out of their comfort zones, trusting that somehow, some way, God will use them, as they look to serve the needs of others and, in the process, begin building relationships enabling them to be able to share the message of grace with others, many times bringing hope to the hopeless.

2016 – Bring It On!

The Men's Ministry is turning up the heat for 2016 starting right at the beginning of the year with the following activities that will take place this next year:

- **Kingdom Men.** Over one hundred men have signed up and will be going through a six-week curriculum developed by Tony Evans called *Kingdom Men*. During this study they will be learning what God's design for man is along with His purpose for them to live out their lives as Kingdom Men. It's a potentially transformation strategy, as our men learn Biblical principles for becoming kingdom-minded in all that they do.
- **Men's Master Discipleship Program.** A new program has been developed by a select group of men (Pastor Norm Schoenfeld, Roger Leick, Mike Sculley, and Jim Ford) for the purpose of inviting select men in our congregation to really dive deeper into their faith, learning what it means to fully surrender and live fully for Christ. It's a four and a half month program which 25

men of the church have committed to, calling them to enter deeper into the Word on a regular basis, serving missionally, becoming more aware of God all around us on an everyday basis, and essentially, becoming the next leaders, spiritual shepherds, and spiritual mentors for the Men's Ministry and the church at large.

- **Men's Summit.** Our annual men's retreat will take place February 26-28, with hopes that one hundred men or so will join us for a weekend designed for them to hear from God. Men are encouraged to disconnect from their regular lives, to "unplug", and spend the weekend in teaching, discussions, worship, prayer, and fellowship with other guys, in order to hear from God what He might have to say to them that weekend. From past years it is usually a very powerful weekend for the men, with many experiencing "defining moments" in their lives, where they have left with a determination to pursue life differently going forward based on what God was calling them towards.

This year Riverbend's newest Pastor, Scott Vermillion, will be the featured speaker, along with Casey McPherson and a band he's put together. Together they will attempt to shepherd the men to encounter the Living God during the weekend.

- **Men's Breakfasts.** Each month, usually the first Tuesday morning, we host a Men's Breakfast complete with coffee, juice and freshly-made breakfast tacos. We also feature a different speaker each month. This year we kicked off with a Riverbend member, Jim Piper, an attorney who had lived the first 57 years of his life as an atheist before coming to believe there was a God, and through Riverbend and the Men's Ministry coming into a relationship with Christ. It was a powerful testimony and the men left inspired. In February, Pastor Santiago Dorrance from the Nuevo Amanecer Ministries in the Rundberg neighborhood will share with the men, followed in March by Dan Neal, former UT Football All American and Superbowl Champion Denver Broncos player. As you can see our breakfasts provide a wide variety of different speakers from month to month, and this monthly event provides an easy entry place for men of Riverbend to connect in Fellowship for the first time with other men. We use this breakfast as a platform to promote a wide variety of different opportunities for men from our church to get involved with other men in community, in serving, and in growing together in Christ.

As the men of Riverbend grow stronger in their faith: what they believe, why they believe it, and begin to surrender in increasing numbers to God's agenda for their lives, the resultant benefit will be that marriages will get stronger, families will get healthier, our church will grow deeper, and our community around us and even across borders will benefit as our men live out their Kingdom values and agenda in the workplace, and in serving those in need.

Pastoral Care & Recovery

Pastoral Care & Recovery ministries purpose at Riverbend is to provide assistance, encouragement and hope to people who are hurting physically, spiritually, and emotionally. During the past year (2015) many individuals both from the Riverbend church family and others in the greater Austin community participated in forty plus recovery support groups as well various recovery events held at our campus. Every effort is made to continually evaluate recovery needs so that we are able to offer help as needs arise.

In 2016, we are dedicated to continue support care to individuals in need as well as providing preventative ministry through classes to equip people with needed skills to encourage and facilitate spiritual and emotional growth. Riverbend Pastors and Stephen Ministers are available to help as needs arise through personal contact.

We strive to facilitate beneficial experiences for both those in grief, as well as positive life experiences in personal relationships including weddings and marriage.

We provide hospital visitation as needed.

Counseling sessions are available for evaluation, assessments, recommendations and referrals to professional counselors in the Austin community.

We continue to provide divorce recovery classes, divorce support groups, cancer support, and pre-marital classes. Currently, 12 step-meetings are held on the campus daily.

Stephen Ministers

Stephen Ministry is a national ministry that equips volunteers with 50 hours of training to be able to come alongside those who are hurting or lonely, to listen to them, care for them, and pray for them. The Stephen Ministers meet quarterly for equipping and continuing education.

At Riverbend, we currently have 40 active Stephen Ministers, many of whom were involved in providing one-on-one care for individuals throughout the year. We also enlist our Stephen Ministers to serve church-wide communions several times a year plus our Good Friday services. They also serve communion every Sunday in the Upper Room to those who wish to partake.

Riverbend Stephen Ministers work closely with the Church Involvement team to serve new church members as they become acquainted and involved in our church family life.

For 2015, in addition to continuing these same types of services, we are working to enhance Stephen Ministry by creating additional ways that our Stephen Ministers may come alongside those in need. The Stephen Ministry leadership team (comprised of active Stephen Ministers)

meets regularly to provide guidance for the program as well as other church-wide efforts to be of service in our church and other Austin community efforts.

GPS – Caring for Aging Family Members

On March 7, 2015, Riverbend hosted a very successful and highly-attended workshop *For Parenting Your Parents & Caring for Aging Family Members*. Austin community prominent professionals spoke on the subjects of:

- Alzheimer’s Disease and Dementia
- Families, Caregiving and Senior Living Options
- Financial, Legal and Medicare Issues
- Personality Changes in the Elderly

To continue support efforts, a Caregivers GPS support group was formed and it continues to meet monthly (third Tuesday) to offer support to family caregivers.

The third annual GPS for *Parenting your Parents and Caring for Elderly Family Members* workshop will be held on Saturday, March 12, 2016 at Riverbend.

Children's Ministry

For 2015, we continued to focus on growing relationships with families by creating multiple opportunities for kids and parents to have the time needed to nurture their relationships both as individuals and a family unit.

The most important thing we do is lead children into a relationship with Christ. Teaching them in the most effective ways at their level of understanding is our priority. Going into the 2014-15 school year, we made a decision to move kindergarten into a K-2nd grade format and moved 3rd grade into the pre-teen ministry (now 3rd-5th grades). This change has been a huge blessing and we have seen tremendous growth in the elementary area of our ministry. Because of the success of the Sunday program shift, we made the same adjustments in the VBS program and felt like we truly met children where they were in their development as young followers of Christ. As a teacher in these areas, we are much more effective with leading an age range of three years compared to four. The kids are really learning on their level.

The curriculum that we have used for the past four years has helped us establish a clear spiritual-growth strategy that has been easy for both parents and children to adapt to. We recognized that when the home and the church are speaking the same language — and reinforcing the lessons that are being taught — we began to see children find their identity in Christ. But, we have realized that any curriculum is merely a tool. When we use it to complement the leader's skill set and the child's learning level, amazing things happen. Our childcare staff and volunteer teams did an amazing job coming alongside the children as both coaches and mentors.

We did experience some staff changes in 2015 as Amber Kwarteng moved from an intern role into a full-time Nursery Coordinator position, as well as Assistant Manager over the childcare team. This change also shifted Kate Armstrong to become the Preschool Director as well as overseeing the M.O.P.S. program (Mothers of Preschoolers). Also, after three years of leadership, Megan Stanley stepped down as the leader of the RiverKids Singers program to spend more time with her growing family. Fortunately, we were blessed to have Kate Armstrong take over this program. Mitch Kearney continues his intern position in the pre-teen area while he pursues his college degree. Creating an intern program has been one of the best things we have done. With all of these staff changes, we have now effectively cross-trained the entire staff to cover any area needed in the ministry for vacations and/or future staff transitions.

Since the opening of the new children's center, we have seen the number of children we are serving in our nursery, preschool, and elementary ages on Sunday mornings rise by 23%. In 2014, we baptized 24 children (up from 18 in 2014) who accepted Christ and our congregation stood in support as we dedicated 47 infants (up from 34 in 2014).

Community-Wide Outreach Events

Our large community-wide children's events continue to draw significant numbers of children and their families, as we seek ways to not only serve the families of Riverbend, but also to attract and engage many of the families in the surrounding neighborhoods.

- Our *VBS* program (Vacation Bible School) in June drew nearly seven hundred children plus another four hundred adults and teenage volunteers coming alongside these children for the week.
- Our *Riverfest* program (fall festival) drew over six hundred children and their families to our campus.
- Our *Easter Eggstravaganza* (Saturday morning egg hunt) was huge with 900+ children and adults coming to our campus the Saturday before Easter, many of whom had never been on Riverbend's campus before!
- Back to School *Waterpark Day* continues to be a huge success with hundreds of kids attending.
- Our *Daddy Daughter Dance* is always a big hit. This was our fourth year, and we had a record of 368 in attendance.
- *Friday Night Fun* became a regular event that has been a blessing not only to the kids, but also to the moms and dads who have an opportunity to reconnect on a date night while we have their kids for the evening.
- The *Girls Club* program has continued to be incredibly effective. We have seen the first group of GC girls move into the youth program and because of the relationships built in the GC program and the incredible youth leadership in middle school...it has made the transition into youth ministry very easy.
- The idea behind our *MOPS* (Mothers of Preschoolers) program was to create another connection point with the Riverbend Christian School mothers. The program has been very successful.
- We had our fourth annual *preteen lock-in* with 81 kids in attendance, sleeping overnight at the Church (compared to 60 in 2014).
- The children's ministry assisted with outdoor activities and the Riverkids singers performed at the first ever Riverbend Church *Sing-a-Long*.

Children Serving Others

We have also worked with our leaders and children to create a variety of missional projects, helping to teach the children to care about others and to help make their lives better. These included:

- Participating in the backpack and school supply drive for East Austin.
- Our Preschool to Pre-teen areas have done multiple missions' projects with *Little Pebbles* in an effort to create ways for our children to help or serve others each month.
- At VBS, the children's ministry collected bathroom essentials as well as made art for the homeless in the Austin area.

Heading into 2016

As our children's program heads into 2016, we are extremely optimistic that our programs will continue to reach more and more children and their families. I am most excited about how family ministry will be with the addition of Scott Vermillion as our new Pastor of Family Ministries. Pastor Scott, along with Pastor Doug Congdon (Student Ministries Pastor), and I (Todd Mears, Children's Ministry Pastor), are committed to the families, children and youth of Riverbend church. Our hope is to be a resource for families across the Austin community. We want to help parents become the "spiritual leaders" of their kids, as we come alongside them to educate them, provide them with tools, and encourage them to be the parents that God has called them to be.

Student Ministry

As we look back at 2015, we are thankful to God for the growth that He has given to the student ministry. Our prayer for the year as a staff was that we would abide in Christ, the true vine, and that out of abiding in Him, we would bear spiritual fruit in the lives of our students and leaders. Though our own efforts at abiding in Christ ebbed and flowed, He was faithful to produce fruit in the ministry despite our weakness. We saw a tremendous growth in our leadership team, including the addition of many incredible parents as small group leaders. On top of that, our leadership team set goals to meet together monthly for the purpose of encouragement and fellowship which has led to a feeling of unity in both head and heart amongst the leaders of the student ministry. I am so excited to see where God takes us as leaders in 2016!

As well as growing our leadership team, God was faithful to grow the number of students we reach on a weekly basis. We welcomed the arrival of a large and excited 6th grade class and saw continued growth in our high school groups. We hope and pray expectantly for more of the same in 2016! Probably the most exciting development this past year has been seeing some of our older students start to take ownership of their faith. Through a desire to read the Bible on their own, take leadership in the ministry, and asking the hard questions, we are seeing an awakening among our students that we are praying will continue to grow in the coming years.

2015 also saw the departure of one of our beloved staff members, Jacy Rabold. Jacy had worked as the Director of High School ministry for many years and had been here through many transitions in the staff. She was an amazing staff leader for our students and although she left her staff position, she has continued to be an incredible volunteer for us! Subsequently in August we hired Doug Pittenger who came to us this summer as one of our four summer interns and then applied for the opening. We are excited about what Doug brings to the staff and his passion for connecting with students. We love the team that God has brought together in this ministry and look forward to what He has for us!

Programs in Review

Inside Out

The theme of last year's January weekend event *Inside Out* was "Axis". We spent the weekend talking about what we put at the center of our lives. Our guest speaker, Craig Congdon, challenged the students to begin revolving their lives around Christ and to let all the rest of the pressures and stresses of life fall under the call to pursue Christ and His kingdom first. During that weekend we introduced a worship experience that the students loved – a "prayer room". We created a space where they could interact with God in different ways and explore different

forms of worship and connection. It was such a huge success that we have decided to make it a regular part of our camps and retreats. Once again, we spent a good amount of the weekend in service to others. Our high school students loved going out to MLF's Community First Village and working alongside homeless people to paint, build, clean and prepare for people to move in to that space. Our middle school students did an incredible job gathering clothes and food to be donated to our ministry partners with North Austin Community Church. It was a great weekend of connecting with our ministry partners and getting the students to see a little bit more about what goes on in the community around them and how they can be a part of serving the larger body of Christ in Austin.

Summer Camp at Camp Tejas

We returned to Camp Tejas for summer camp yet again, and once again it did not disappoint. Our kids had an amazing time enjoying all the amenities of the camp – from zip-lines to rope swings to ice cream sundaes and movie night at the pool, it was a fun-filled week. Our theme for camp last year was “Hooked” and we brought in guest speaker, Alex Judd, to talk to the kids about the four key idols of Power, Control, Acceptance, and Comfort and how we get “hooked” on these idols. The topic proved to be a powerful one and small group discussion times ended up being long and fruitful. For camp in 2016 we have decided to switch up our location and try camp on the beach in Port Aransas. We are excited to head down there from June 27-July 1 this summer!

El Salvador Mission Trip

In 2015, we decided that instead of going to El Salvador every other year, we should try to go down there every summer. So for the second year in a row, we took 16 students and six leaders to serve alongside our friends and partners at Siloe church, helping to share the Gospel. As always, it was a life-changing trip for every single one of our students. This year we added a couple of days to the trip so that we could go on a longer retreat with the Siloe youth group and give us a day to see more of the country.

During the week, our team split up into three teams: medical, sports, and construction. The construction team helped with some new projects around the community, most notably the replacing of sections of the roof, a partial fence around the community soccer field, and painting goals and benches around the soccer field. Our sports team organized games and sporting activities for the students at the school connected to the church, as well as teaching American football and basketball to the students. The medical team was a brand new addition to the trip this year! Headed by Kelly Jolet and seven other medical staffers, they traveled around to different places to hold free clinics and do free teeth cleanings. In just a few short days, they were able to see hundreds of patients and help them with basic care and medicine.

We are really looking forward to returning to El Salvador this summer from July 15-23 and having our lives changed once again by the amazing community down in El Salvador.

Middle School Mission Adventure

Last year we added two new retreat experiences for our students. The first of them was a summer missions experience for our middle school students that was based right here in Austin. There was an overwhelming response to the idea and registration far exceeded our expectations. Through partnership with local ministries, we took 40 middle school students to serve with North Austin Christian Church, the Capital Area Food Bank, the Community First Village with Mobile Loaves and Feed My People. The students experienced a wide variety of service opportunities all located right in their backyard, and many talked about how it was one of the highlights of their summer. We look forward to establishing this as an annual event. In 2016, the MSMA will take place from August 2-4.

High School Fall Retreat

The second new retreat experience for our students last year was the Fall Retreat in October that was just for High School students. Our original plan was to go out to Camp Champions, but God (through Hurricane Patricia) had other ideas. It is true that sometimes our last-minute ideas end up leading to our best times. We changed our plans to have our times of worship and sharing at different people's houses, and we had students share testimonies and take leadership for the weekend. It was such a time for sweet fellowship among the group and bonded our students together in ways we had been praying for but had not yet seen. It didn't hurt our cause that we were able to make some crazy memories like running through the crazy lakes at Zilker Park, riding in a party bus, and playing late-night Lazer Tag. We are excited to make this an annual tradition as well, and are currently planning our dates for Fall Retreat 2016 at Camp Champions.

Mobile Loaves and Fishes

In 2015, we continued our bi-monthly truck runs with MLF. Every second Sunday, the Middle School students go out and every fourth Sunday is given to the High School Students. Led by Sam Vaugh and our volunteers, these runs give our students the opportunity to serve more frequently than just at our retreats. We have continued to have great participation on our truck runs and look forward to continuing this amazing program.

New for 2016

We are excited at how God is going to continue to move in the Student Ministry in this upcoming year and we look forward to seeing the leaders he is going to raise up. This year we are planning to raise up a team of high school students who are ready to lead and take ownership of the ministry. We will look to empower them and unleash them to do ministry in their schools, as well as in our youth group. Part of this process will be unveiling a new High School program that will rely on the leadership of the students in order to make it work.

We also look forward to the continued growth of our volunteer leadership team. We want to create a strong bond of partnership in the Gospel and show that picture to our students as an example of what it looks like to be united in Christ and serve Him with joy.

Missions

*Start by doing what's necessary;
Then do what's possible;
And suddenly you are doing the impossible.*
St. Francis of Assisi

Eight years ago we began to dream a dream that one day as a Church we might be serving as many people off campus each week as we serve on our campus. Today we have some weeks where we are serving over 5,000 people on our campus, including our Sunday worship services, our forty different AA and other support and recovery groups, concerts and other performances, children's events, and more. Wouldn't it be incredible in the same week to mobilize the 3,500 folks who consider Riverbend to be their church home to go out and serve "the least of these" across Austin and across borders? Well, step-by-step, our Church continues to move in that direction.

"Missions" at Riverbend Church refers to those ministries that we have designed intentionally to help our congregation serve others outside the walls of our campus, here in Austin and also across borders. We work to create opportunities for people to help make the lives of others better in many different ways. We have opportunities to feed and clothe the homeless, provide Christmas gifts and/or school supplies for children in need, and provide disaster relief in many different ways when nature strikes in the form of tornados, hurricanes, or wildfires. We look for ways to serve the disenfranchised in different areas of Austin, but also have created a relationship with a Church in San Salvador where we help them in their mission to serve and care for the poorest of the poor.

With a church the size of Riverbend, our members are talented and gifted in many different ways, so we are continually trying to create a diversity of ways in which our people can be mobilized to unconditionally love, care for, and serve others just as Christ modeled for us when He walked the earth and continues to do for us through the Holy Spirit.

MLF (Mobile Loaves & Fishes)

Hundreds of Riverbenders, through our MLF program, provided well over 11,000 meals this past year to the homeless and working poor people across Austin. In addition, they provided clothing, Bibles, blankets, and other donated items to men and women in need. MLF is a ministry where our people have the chance to come face-to-face with those they are serving by listening to them, laughing with them, hurting with them, sometimes praying for them, and always trying to serve them. There are also opportunities for folks to make sandwiches and prepare the food to load in the truck separately from those going on the truck-runs. This

ministry continues to be a great entry point for individuals, families and community groups from Riverbend to step in and serve some of the most marginalized people in Austin.

There are so many different ways to help as a volunteer for this ministry. We continue to work to meet the needs in the community and help our congregation learn to put the needs of others first.

In 2015, we began building four micro-homes and a community kitchen for the *Community First* village, which is a 27-acre master-planned community that will provide affordable, sustainable housing and a supportive community for the disabled, chronically homeless in Central Texas. We will complete those projects in February-March of 2016 and begin to turn our attention toward helping the residents who will occupy those homes to assimilate into having their own home, living in community with others, something they haven't experienced in a long time. We also have committed to hosting a gathering for worship with the residents on a monthly basis.

Rundberg Neighborhood

The Rundberg Neighborhood, located in northeast Austin, is one of the more difficult places to live in Austin. Lots of low-income apartments, many subsidized by the government, are filled with refugees who've come to America to escape the persecution in their own countries. Many had been living for years, in some cases decades, in refugee camps in neighboring countries. Others in the community are struggling single mothers with their kids and, in many cases, there are multiple families living in a single apartment. Drug use, alcoholism, gangs, prostitution, and homelessness are all prevalent in this community. Yet this neighborhood is only a 15-minute drive from Riverbend (without traffic).

To date we've been coming alongside North Austin Christian Church (NACC) – a small church located in the heart of this community. We have supplied volunteer and financial support, food, clothing, and other resources needed to support their men's halfway house located at the church. We have also helped with their children's programming, surplus food and clothing distribution, Thanksgiving meals for the community, and other endeavors. Jessica Jimenez, our former intern, was hired part-time to work at NACC as a Riverbend employee to help connect us to the initiatives at NACC.

In a different part of the Rundberg area, we have dug in further by working with a church planter, Pastor Santiago Dorrance and his wife Homelina, who have branched out from NACC into the Galewood street area of Rundberg. This pastor has begun three additional works in Rundberg and, while our primary focus is Galewood, we have supported the others with resources as well. Mike Sculley, our volunteer Rundberg Director, has been key to our efforts in helping them build their ministry using volunteers and support from Riverbend. He and Santiago work closely to coordinate our efforts, and recently in December 2015, Riverbend helped them negotiate and fund a lease for a 1,500 square-foot indoor space with open outdoor space to use as well. Although, still in the planning stages, we expect this space to be

used as a neighborhood development center, for church services at certain times, and all kinds of different ministries at other times throughout the week. Plans are already underway to begin holding an ESL (English as a second language) class out of this space to serve the residents of the community. Our hope is that the ministries that are birthed out of this location will involve an ever-increasing number of Riverbenders' involvement in Rundberg.

Travis Heights Food Pantry

In addition to the work up north in Rundberg, we are also beginning to create new ministry opportunities for Riverbend to serve those in need down south in the Travis Heights section of town. We are coming alongside Pastor Stanley Clark and his wife, Eva, to help them with the new food pantry they opened to the community last fall. Open four days a week during the day, this food pantry is on track to serve over 10,000 people in their first year of operation. They are receiving leftover food from Target, HEB, and other big box retailers, and making it available to those in low-income apartments down the street as well as the homeless.

Riverbend hopes to help Stanley expand this ministry by creating various different ways to connect with the residents in the community around the food pantry, building relationships, and serving their needs, helping to bring the message of hope to those in a dark place. It will be exciting to see how God uses our efforts, as more and more Riverbenders who live south begin to engage in this exciting new ministry opportunity.

ADRN (Austin Disaster Relief Network)

We have continued to build and grow our relationship with the Austin Disaster Relief Network to prepare our congregation and community to be able to respond in times of crisis. We have a core team of volunteers who are being equipped and trained to make sure Riverbend is a church that is always ready to respond in a time of natural or unnatural disasters. Several members have been trained and were deployed to assist with Central Texas flood relief. We have a couple of teams helping shepherd/sponsor families to rebuild in the aftermath of the most recent flooding.

Habitat for Humanity

Riverbend was involved in both spring and fall builds for Habitat for Humanity, with Riverbenders helping to build homes for disadvantaged folks, and others supporting those builds by providing meals for the workers and finances for the projects. Habitat changes lives not just for the people who work on and build their own home, but also the lives of those who are involved in the build each Saturday.

Aquaponics Facility

After operating an aquaponics facility on our campus for the past several years and helping to train many others on it, we decided it was time to close it down. So, we dismantled it and donated the Aquaponics greenhouse and equipment to the Community First Village. They plan to incorporate the system into their efforts at sustainability, which means it will continue to operate by the formerly homeless residents of the village, providing food for those in the village.

Angels Afoot

Each year for the past decade Riverbend has solicited the names and needs for underprivileged children across Austin, with the desire to provide them with a Christmas gift that they might not otherwise ever receive. Over 2,500 underprivileged kids living in foster care, in shelters, or who were simply in families who live way below the poverty line, were blessed with the gifts they asked for this Christmas.

In addition, the 300 children at Siloe Christian School in El Salvador were provided a brand new uniform to wear to school — a huge blessing to the families there. There were also funds available to help with other supplies such as textbooks and food.

This year we also asked for gifts through Angels Afoot to use in a Christmas store for our friends in Galewood/Rundberg. Parents shopped for their kids at extremely low prices (\$2, \$5, and \$10 gifts). We are trying not be the group that hands out gifts to other people's kids, but rather one that gives the dignity and worth for parents to be able to provide for their children in a meaningful but realistic manner. One man shopping for his family early in the day exclaimed, "This is the first time in six years I've been able to provide Christmas gifts for my kids". He was so excited, as normally he would disappear at Christmas time out of humiliation as his kids would get gifts from Brown or Blue Santa, but not from him. A second benefit of this effort was that all proceeds from the store sales that day went to support the ministry of Pastor Santiago's church.

School Supply Drive

Much different from the schools in the Westlake area, there are some AISD schools where student's families cannot afford to buy them school supplies, and the schools themselves are in short supply with limited budgets. In August of 2015, our congregation provided much needed school supplies for several local schools whose families struggle with resources to purchase them. Each year the number of supplies we are providing local Austin area schools-in-need has continued to grow.

We were also able to bless Pastor Santiago's Nuevo Amanecer Church with 125 backpacks and supplies for the children of his congregation. As part of this effort, we also supported Burnet Middle School and Cook Elementary School, both located in the Rundberg neighborhood.

El Salvador Mission

We are entering into our sixth year of a relationship with a small church called Iglesia Bautista Siloe Church in San Salvador, El Salvador along with its sister Christian School referred to as Por Gracia (By Grace).

Through our relationship with Pastor Javier and his other leaders at this church and school, we have worked together to find ways to help them fulfill their mission to "save the kids". Their hope is that by providing a safe environment for the kids that is away from the gangs, plus teaching them about Christ, that there might be hope for their future that would not otherwise be possible in their difficult environment.

- School support continues to grow. The library is fully operational now with a part-time librarian. Riverbend volunteers continue to assist this project through funding the purchase of books, media, and supplies. The children are loving the library and learning to read.
- In November, the second class of Siloe/Riverbend-sponsored students graduated from high school. This was due to the generosity of financial sponsors and Siloe-mentoring of each student. There are also a few students who have been supported to go for a university education, which is simply miraculous — something these kids could never have aspired to without Riverbend's support. What's even more encouraging is that these students, who are being provided this opportunity for greater education than they would typically have received, are giving back by serving the community and church in various ways.
- Riverbend supports local Salvadorian missionaries who work in the La Linea colonia. They immerse themselves in the community, coming alongside people to encourage them and share the Good News of the Gospel and the hope that comes with that. Over the past two years, with Riverbend's support, they've been able to create soccer tournaments for adults that draw 150 men from the colonia every weekend to play in soccer matches. In exchange for organizing these tournaments and providing referees and equipment, the players agree to allow our missionaries to share a devotional before the start of each match. Through this time the players, many of them gang members, are hearing about God on a regular basis.
- In 2013, the missionaries started up a soccer school for boys several days a week when school is out of session. They've found it an effective way to come alongside boys and young teens to not only coach them on the field, but also become life coaches for them off the field. In 2014, they added another team so there is an older and younger group and more boys taking part. By

2015, this had turned into a vibrant soccer school with 150+ kids of all ages involved during after school soccer programs, and several volunteers from the colonia were coming alongside the missionaries to help out as coaches with the kids.

In 2014, we brought on a woman missionary in La Linea to give the team the opportunity to create relationships with the girls and women of the colonia and begin to serve them as we are doing with the boys and men. She began a softball school for girls, which in 2015 has grown substantially and is involving several dozen girls and women from the colonia along with some boys who want to play, too. In addition, the softball coaches are doing home visits with the girls and their families, helping to provide prayer support and bringing the hope of the gospel to their homes.

Through all of this, our hope is to encourage and foster lives that can be less prone to violence, grinding poverty and missed opportunities. All of this is possible as God works to open Riverbenders' hearts to the people of El Salvador.

Looking Forward into 2016

As we look forward, our hope is to continue to encourage Riverbenders to be "others focused", and to respond to Christ's call to serve the least of these. We've had some weeks where we actually got to serve over 1,000 people in El Salvador while, at the same time, serving hundreds here in Austin outside our campus. While we haven't reached our goal to serve 5,000+ in any given week, God continues to work in and through us to march on toward the goal to make a significant difference in the world around us as we look to be the hands and feet of Christ.

In the latter part of September, Dr. Haney will be preaching a series on serving missionally, and our Mission's Committee is working on a plan to engage a large swath of our congregation the last Sunday of his message to go out across the city and "be the church", by serving on any one of 25 different projects that day, to serve those in need. As a way of training and preparing for this effort, smaller versions of this are planned for March 6 (hopefully with the participation of 100+ Riverbenders, and June 5 (with plans for the participation of 200+ Riverbenders that day).

Whether in Austin or across borders, we will continue to pursue the opportunity to bless others as we've been blessed and help make the lives of others better. It's interesting, that in the process of doing this, we discover that God ends up blessing us in so many unique and exciting ways!

Stewardship

The idea that everything we have is from God, and stewardship is simply our management of what He has entrusted to us during our time on earth.

Stewardship is one of the primary themes that can be found throughout the Bible. Yet, it is often minimized in discussions about the Christian life. The Scriptures say a great deal about stewardship because it affects virtually every aspect of our earthly existence. To the extent that we put these biblical principles into practice, we can enjoy the freedom and fulfillment that comes only from being Christ's servants.

Riverbend Church is devoted to developing and presenting programs to help educate, shepherd, encourage, and improve our congregation's understanding and practice of Biblical stewardship. We believe it is one of the most practical ways we can help our people to grow spiritually, as they learn to surrender their agendas, their possessions, and their will to the Lord, trusting that He will work in and through them in powerful ways. We try to help them focus on how God calls each of us to manage our time, our talent and our treasure for Kingdom-building purposes.

We currently have an open position for a Stewardship Pastor. This Pastor will work closely with the Stewardship Committee, as well as the rest of the pastoral staff, to help champion our stewardship development efforts. He or She would also serve as the President and Chair of the Riverbend Church Foundation.

In 2015, the Stewardship Committee of the Church hosted the following classes and workshops designed to offer awareness of practical financial planning techniques to members of our congregation:

- *Financial Peace University*, a nine-week course developed and taught via video by Dave Ramsey, and facilitated by the Stewardship Committee. This course teaches practical and Biblical methods for getting out of debt, saving for emergencies and the future, and helping individuals and couples transition from financial chaos to financial peace as they learn to manage their personal finances God's way.
- *Unlocking Social Security*, a social security workshop to help participants understand the myths and mistakes surrounding social security benefits was also offered in the fall.
- *An Estate Planning Workshop*, an afternoon workshop was conducted in October, for the purpose of helping Riverbenders understand the need for estate planning, along with an offer for a free personal consultation to help them do this.
- *Inside God's Design: Developing My Generosity* — a biblical overview of how and why God challenges us to give back to Him a portion of what He has given to us, and how living our lives

for Him is a form of worship. The Stewardship Committee teaches this four times a year, usually to new members, but it is also open to the anyone in the congregation who wishes to attend.

For 2016, we are praying for God to bring us the next Stewardship Pastor that He is calling to this church. In addition, the Board of Directors of the Riverbend Church Foundation is looking to move forward in helping to create awareness of and begin funding this foundation in a significant way with directed endowments that will help secure the financial future and legacy of Riverbend Church.

Businesses Affiliated with Riverbend Church

There are a variety of business enterprises affiliated with Riverbend Church that operate as either a department within our Church, or are either non-profit or for-profit corporations associated with the church.

These businesses, while diverse and different, all share three things in common:

- They provide not only a service to our members, but in many cases provide that same service to people from our community at large. They serve in many cases to be that “first” connecting point for people and Riverbend. They bring literally tens of thousands of people to our campus who might not otherwise set foot on a church campus and, in the process, become a “side door entrance” for the church as many people coming for secular and/or other activities, end up making their way into our sanctuary on any given Sunday.
- We strive to use our facilities seven days a week, opening them up for use by the community at large, providing both small and large venues to host meetings, concerts, recitals, conferences, recovery and support groups, baccalaureates, birthday parties, weddings and receptions, and many other types of services needed by the community.
- Many of the activities from these various businesses provide a revenue stream directly or indirectly to the church, helping to support the general operating budget of the church, and enable Riverbend to provide even more ministries as a church to further support our members and the community at large.

The enterprises referred to above include:

Church-run Events such as Weddings, Wedding receptions, and the Remembrance Gardens. Some of these serve our members, but the majority of the weddings, as well as interments and memorials in the Remembrance Gardens, are for people outside of Riverbend.

The Riverbend Christian PreSchool is an independent preschool that serves 225 children and their families, Monday through Friday on our campus.

Riverbend Centre, Inc. is a for-profit corporation that rents the church’s facilities out to others in the community.

Riverbend Centre for the Arts is a non-profit corporation whose main purpose is to champion music and the arts in Austin, through performances as well as education.

The Riverbend Church Foundation is a non-profit and integrated auxiliary of Riverbend Church

designed to accept endowments and generate revenue from the investment of the principal amounts of those endowments that helps support the ministry of Riverbend Church.

Remembrance Gardens at Riverbend

The Remembrance Gardens continues to provide interment and memorial services to families throughout Central Texas. We offer a peaceful environment for families who choose cremation and are searching for a permanent resting place for their loved one. The Garden is open to all members of the community, regardless of their religious beliefs or background. Net profits from this enterprise go to support the general fund of Riverbend Church.

For 2015, the Remembrance Gardens generated \$531K in revenues, resulting in a net contribution to the church's general fund of \$385K. Unfortunately, this was below the budgeted contribution to the church by \$45K, due to fall-off of revenues the back half of the year.

In addition, the perpetual care fund, which was implemented a few years ago, helps to insure the future upkeep of Remembrance Gardens, and it increased by \$11K in 2015 to over \$32,000.

In addition to the financial contribution the Remembrance Garden's makes to the church, what's also important is the ministry that is made possible through this business opportunity. It provides significant outreach to the hundreds of visitors who come from outside the church. It gives Riverbend the opportunity to come alongside them as they are grieving the loss of a loved one, extending God's grace to them.

If you haven't visited the Remembrance Gardens, we would encourage you to walk through and experience this incredible place and ministry.

Weddings and Receptions at Riverbend

The Smith Family Chapel is a gorgeous venue for a wedding — one of the finest in Austin. It is available for weddings for both members as well as for the community at large.

In 2015, we held forty-five weddings. Beyond the wedding itself, these weddings also open up a "side door" for people to discover Riverbend for the first time, and some actually end up making it their church home. It's not unusual for guests to have such a great experience attending a wedding at Riverbend that they end up attending church the following morning.

Jill Moore is our Bridal Director, and she works with the brides to book and coordinate all of the details of their weddings. She works with several Bridal Coordinators who help during the day of each wedding.

Plans for 2016 are to host fifty weddings, generating revenues of \$68,500, which contributes approximately \$45,000 to our general-fund income after expenses. These fifty weddings will attract approximately 10,000 people to our Riverbend campus for 2016.

In 2014, we began to make our Fellowship Hall available for wedding receptions, as well. Last year we hosted five receptions. Krista Ross is the Wedding Reception Coordinator. Our plans for 2016 are to host ten wedding receptions that will generate \$38,000 in revenue for the church, contributing approximately \$20,000 to the general fund. It also gives folks additional time and exposure to our campus and people beyond the Wedding Chapel.

In order to increase visibility to the community at large, especially the brides who are looking for wedding and reception venues, Riverbend Church is advertising in *Austin Weddings Guide*, in the early part of 2015, and in the *Knot's Austin Wedding Guide* for the rest of the year.

Riverbend Christian PreSchool

School Facts

The Riverbend Christian Preschool (RBCS) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit school, which operates independently but is affiliated with Riverbend Church. Lori Martin is the Preschool Director, Jill Wilson is the Assistant Director and Alicia Donoghue is the Office Manager. We offer part-time care (9-1:30 daily) for approximately 225 children, ages six months to five years. Our 175 families have flexibility in choosing enrollment days from a variety of options. Our teaching staff of 45 includes a high percentage (about 80%) of degreed and certified teachers. All staff attains yearly continuing education hours (30 hours) and hold CPR and First Aid certification as mandated by Texas Department of Protective and Family Services. We are in the process of getting a new accreditation from the National Accreditation Commission (NAC). This will be a higher level of accreditation than the TRS we have had in the past. We are also professional members of NAEYC (National Association of the Education of Young Children), TBCWEA (Texas Baptist Church Weekday Education Association) and our local Half Day Directors Group.

Classes and Enrichment

For the 2015/2016 school year, we continued to offer two Kinder Bridge classes for those children who are of kindergarten age, but need an extra year of maturity, and/or children who turn five shortly after the September 1 school deadline. We have a few spots in our Kinder Bridge classes. We have an excellent reputation and we are one of the very few preschools

who offer such a program. We continually get referrals from EISD and other area preschools for this program. Enrollment for this school year usually remains steady.

We are currently offering extended care for potty-trained children on four afternoons. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday is the enrichment class *Sportball*. We also offer a Spanish class on Monday and a tumbling class on Wednesday. We had another Spanish class on Tuesday but enrollment was low, so it was cancelled. For the spring we will add Foodie Kids on Tuesday. This is a class where the children learn to cook nutritional foods.

Marketing

We are continually looking for ways to attract more young families to our campus, which serves dual purposes: first, it enables us to maintain and increase our enrollment from year to year. Secondly, our school can also become a side-door entrance pathway for young families to learn about Riverbend Church and find a church home here. Consequently, we'll partner with the Children's Ministry of the Church to create large events that attract families from the area, with hopes to expand our reach.

We keep our website updated. We advertise in the local *Austin Kid's Directory*. We keep a school banner on Capital of Texas Highway as often as the Church will allow us the space. We have postcards going out to the new families moving to the Westlake area from Welcome Wagon. We also advertised in the Westlake Community Impact paper. We have school literature available on campus. The Children's Ministry put out word on Facebook about openings at the preschool. The Church also allows us to promote major events in their Sunday bulletin. We promote our Kinder-Bridge class through area preschools in our Half Day directors Group. We have found our most successful marketing is actually the word-of-mouth promoting by both current, as well as past parents of kids attending RBCS.

Working in Cooperation with Riverbend Church

Lori Martin, the Director of the weekday preschool, and Todd Mears, Children's pastor, continue to find ways to bring teams of parents and staff from both the Children's Ministry and Riverbend Christian School together to help plan large events. For the 2015/2016 school year, some of these events included:

- *Riverfest* — the preschool parents donated drinks and manned the booth for drink sales.
- *Children's Christmas Musical and Fundraising Event for RBCS* — a huge success with horse-drawn carriage rides, photos with Santa, letters to Santa, craft table, Angel pictures of all the children, raffle baskets and a great performance of the RBCS children. Pastor Todd came to the children's performance and said our opening prayer.

- Invitations from the Church's Children's Department for our families to participate in children's events such as *Eggstravaganza*, *VBS* and the *Daddy/Daughter Valentine Dance*.
- A willingness of church and school groups to display posters and promotional information for each other's events (i.e., *MOPS* and *Jingle Bell Lunch*).
- Church Staff Involvement in the Preschool Chapel.
- RBCS Board of Trustees includes representatives from the preschool and the church.
- Problem solving (i.e., campus safety and security; upgraded security by having code locks added to all doors of the preschool and a phone system installed downstairs).
- The church's maintenance staff helped us with fire drills, disaster drills and lockdowns. The maintenance staff also helps us with any problem that comes up and very quickly solves problems that may come to surface. We have also done some remodeling which the maintenance staff works very hard with preparing the areas that are being remodeled.

As part of the agreement with Riverbend Church, the Christian Preschool:

- Pays the church rent of \$13,000 per month for the 2015/2016 school year.
- Will pay \$15,000 per month in the year 2016/2017.

Helping Others outside our Campus

RBCS will again participate in a *Trike-A-Thon* for St. Jude Children's Hospital this spring. This is held during the *Week of the Young Child* and it draws a large percentage of parents to our campus for the two-day event. We also have a sister school (Little Folks) in east Austin that our parents donate used toys and educational items to. The school has also made donations of classroom and playground items. The preschool also collects canned goods at Thanksgiving and toys at Christmas for area charities and clothes for the homeless or needy. We occasionally donate food and candy to MLF.

Fundraising

Fundraisers give the preschool the means to purchase big-ticket items not included in our operating budget. This school year we will raise approximately \$30,000. This money will be used to help remodel the upstairs classroom bathrooms with new countertops, cabinets, flooring and paint. We are getting a new countertop for the reception desk and will update furniture and items for the classrooms. Donations were accepted in a variety of ways including *Write the Check*, *A Wishing Tree*, selling RBCS branded *Spirit Gear* and the Christmas Event auction and our spring event with Kendra Scott and raffle.

Competence

The preschool is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and completely evaluated annually. We will be getting accreditation through the National Accreditation Commission (NAC). The Directors are members of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Texas Baptist Church Weekday Education Association and the Half Day Directors Group.

Looking Forward

Our biggest challenge for the next school year will be in finding ways to continue bringing new families to our school, keeping classes full, and generating revenue to meet our increasing operational expenses. However, at the end of the day, our true worth is measured by the happy faces and excited children who attend our preschool.

Riverbend Centre Inc. (RCI)

Riverbend Centre Inc. is an independent for-profit company, established by and affiliated with Riverbend Church. It was created for the purpose of renting out the Church's facilities to outside groups. The mission of this organization is three-fold:

- To bring to Riverbend's campus thousands of people who might not otherwise set foot on a church campus. Our hope is that as they see our facilities and experience a wonderful secular event here, they might consider returning to Riverbend at a time when they are spiritually searching because they had such a positive experience at Riverbend.
- To serve our community by allowing them to use our facilities for a variety of functions that ranged from large graduations for Concordia University or Le Cordon Bleu Chef's Academy, to smaller meetings for the National Charity League.
- To develop an income stream from the rental of our facilities that can help support the general fund of the church, further enabling Riverbend to pursue the mission and vision that God has called the Church to.

This past year 62 events were hosted at Riverbend including: four large-scale events that utilized the Riverbend Centre building plus other facilities. Concordia University continued to use our facility for their graduations a few times a year, and a big draw was Dr. Brene Brown who used Riverbend Centre for her Book Tour stop in Austin, filling the venue with over 2,000 people. In addition, there were 58 small to medium-size events utilizing a wide variety of our facilities. Lastly, we continue to operate our *Birthday 360* business out of our children's center,

hosting 35 birthday parties bringing nearly 2,000 people (adults and kids) to the church for these large children's birthday events. They have become a great side door for young families to find their way to Riverbend Church on a Sunday morning.

Late in the year, ABC used the exterior facades and our grounds to film segments of their latest crime drama called *American Crime*. One can watch this series on TV currently and see glimpses of the Chapel, Fellowship Hall, and other facilities in the background.

These events generated \$90,000 in income for RCI, who in turn paid \$25,000 in rent and fees to the church. In addition, RCI was able to make a \$10,000 donation to the Church to help toward the upgrading of the video and camera systems in the Riverbend Centre, along with some other improvements.

In total, over 13,000 people attended the variety of events hosted by Riverbend Centre Inc., in 2015 with a vast majority of those folks having never been to Riverbend's campus before.

Riverbend Centre for the Arts (RCArts)

Riverbend Centre for the Arts was founded as an independent 501(c) 3 non-profit corporation, affiliated with Riverbend Church. Its primary purpose is to champion the arts in Austin, both performance arts as well as education of the arts, on both a professional as well as amateur level.

RCArts is able to offer seven different performance venues that it rents from Riverbend Church, including the Riverbend Centre building that seats 2,400, the Fellowship Hall that can seat up to 600, the Smith Chapel that can seat 320, and the four different theatre rooms in the Student & Children's Center that can seat anywhere from 150 – 250, depending on the room. Depending on the venue, these can be used for large and small concerts of all musical genres; community theatre, rehearsal spaces and performance showcases for the School of Music & Arts, which is also operated out of RCArts.

As a non-profit, RCArts is set up to receive tax-deductible charitable donations from individuals or corporations, and is currently pursuing grants made available for artistic performances and education. In 2015, they received donations in the amount of \$45,000 from individuals along with their matching corporate donations.

For 2015, there were a total of 11 events hosted at our campus, including the Texas A&M Singing Cadets, the Gaither Family, Summer Fest Music Finale, Salim Suliaman Music Tour, Westlake Music Concert, along with the launch of the new *Unplugged* Chapel series which featured Casey McPherson in their opening concert. We also continue to allow the BandAid School of Music to operate out of our facilities, bringing music education to 70 children and adults, both through individual lessons as well as coaching and teaching bands how to perform.

These events, plus donations, generated income for RC Arts of \$119,591, of which they paid rent and fees to Riverbend Church of \$26,250 for the use of facilities. In addition, RC Arts made a \$44,000 donation to Riverbend Church for upgrades to the equipment in the Riverbend Centre building.

All in all, there were over 9,000 people who attended the variety of Riverbend Centre for the Arts events in 2015, many of whom were visiting our campus for the very first time.

The Riverbend Church Foundation

Mobilizing Resources by Inspiring Biblical Generosity
National Christian Foundation

The Riverbend Church Endowment Fund was organized in 2004 as an integrated auxiliary of Riverbend Church, a 501(C)3 non-profit corporation, and, as such, shares in common all religious doctrines, principles, disciplines and practices of Riverbend Church.

The fund was established for individuals and families who may wish to designate a portion of their life's blessings through gifts beyond the scope of their regular tithes and offerings, such as large one-time contributions or donations through charitable trusts, testamentary bequests, assignment of financial instruments, insurance contracts and transfers of real and personal property.

The primary purpose for the foundation is to generate, from investments of principal amounts endowed to the foundation, additional revenue for the furtherance of the mission and ministry of Riverbend Church. The principal of the assets donated to this endowment fund may never be disbursed or used for any general purpose of the Church. Only amounts attributed to growth or income in the endowment fund may be disbursed to the Church for general-purpose use. Disbursements may be made only to the Church's general fund, or specific ministries where designated.

In 2008, the name of the Riverbend Church Endowment Fund was changed to the Riverbend Church Foundation with the vision of expanding from one general endowment fund to various designated endowment funds to further the ministries of Riverbend Church by providing the opportunity to members of Riverbend Church, community businesses, individuals, and other foundations within the Austin community to leave a lasting legacy through planned gifts. However, due to the difficult economic environment and other church priorities over the past few years, the expansion plans have purposefully been delayed.

In 2015, an updated Board of Directors was established, and an amended set of Bylaws were

established. Although there were some modifications to the initial board due to personnel leaving the church, in January 2016 the Church Council approved a board of Directors for the Foundation of seven members from Riverbend Church. In addition, the RCF is entering into a relationship with the National Christian Foundation for the purpose of using their expertise to help us in the areas of gift acceptance and investments. Final policies are currently being fine-tuned, and plans are being made for ways to create awareness to our congregation about the RCF, help educate the congregation, and begin to significantly fund the RCF.

Many individuals have the ability to give and may even have an unconscious desire to make a difference, but may simply not know how. For 2016, The Riverbend Foundation will focus on providing potential donors with expert educational resources and the necessary professional guidance to assist in their estate and charitable gifting planning, and to provide a platform for people so that they may truly experience the miracle of leaving an eternal Living Legacy by making Kingdom-significant investments in the ministries of Riverbend Church.

Coordinating Committee Report

The Budget

For our 2016 budget, we've planned revenues at \$5.733 million, up \$58K or 1% to 2015's actual income. It takes into consideration the changes the church has been experiencing, along with a cost of living increase for the staff.

Debt Management

As of the end of 2015, our long-term debt was \$8,253,107, which is down \$416,183 from year-end 2014. By end of 2016, we hope to reduce it further by at least \$200K.

Approximately 15 years ago Bank of America required the church, as a condition of refinancing the building loan, to take out a Key Man Life Insurance policy on Gerald Mann. Over the years the Coordinating Committee has reviewed the viability of the policy and determined that it was in the best interest of the church to continue paying the premiums. In 2015, the church collected \$2.0 million on the policy and the committee will work with the church council and staff leadership to determine the best use of the funds. The plan is to spend the next several months surveying facility and capital needs and consider long-term improvements to our financial strength before allocating the funds to specific usages.

The Committee feels confident in the financial leadership of the church and the management of all funds.

Self-Restricted Reserve Fund

Several years ago the committee decided to implement a financial discipline of setting aside monies to build a cushion for unanticipated expenses that arise and for cash flow management. As of the beginning of 2015, we had \$216,000 in the fund and ended the year at \$216,000 as we did not need to draw from that reserve in 2015.

Building a Blessing Capital Campaign

The three-year campaign was technically finished at the end of 2013 but, due to many economic factors, certain pledges have continued to be fulfilled, with \$230,490 coming in toward this campaign in 2015.

Sale of a gifted property

Several years ago, we were gifted a lot in Morgan's Point Resort, Texas and we were able to complete the sale of this property for a small amount, relieving the church of future tax liability.

Committee Goals for 2016

- **Financial Advice:** The Coordinating committee will continue to provide sound fiscal recommendations throughout the year enabling Riverbend to continue its mission to spread the message of Jesus Christ on campus, throughout Austin, on the airwaves, on the Internet, and across our borders.
- **Sounding board.** The committee will continue to provide a check and balance for the staff leadership's financial decisions, through monthly reviews of income and balance statements, cash flow reports, and healthy discussions about key financial decisions.

Personnel Committee Report

The Personnel Committee is an advisory and oversight committee. The committee members are advocates for the staff. They also provide input and oversight for the church in major hiring decisions, employee benefits, and other employee-related matters.

2015 was a year of opportunity and mixed blessings. The personnel committee helped guide the following staff changes:

- After a national search and a thorough interview process, Riverbend invited Scott Vermillion to become Riverbend's Adult Ministry Pastor. He is authentic and avid about helping folks connect with God. Scott joined our staff in November, 2015 to replace our outgoing pastor, David Sunde (see details below). Scott's family, wife Samantha and daughters Claire and Lydia, moved to Austin just before Christmas and are transitioning to their new life in Austin this next year.
- For the first time ever, Riverbend helped plant another church right here in Austin. With the blessing and support of the church leadership, our former Adult Ministry Pastor, David Sunde, has been sent by Riverbend to start and lead a new church called Mission Hills Church, with a strong emphasis on community, missions and service.
- When the position for our worship leader in the third service (Resonate) opened up, God blessed us with the amazing opportunity to bring Casey McPherson onto Team Riverbend. Casey is a world-class musician with a band called *Alpha Rev*. He also plays with a band called *Flying Colors*. If you haven't seen and heard Casey at SXSW or Riverbend yet, you're in for a treat.
- Leigh Congdon joined Riverbend early in 2015 as our Young Adults Director. Leigh's passion and spirituality shines through each time you see her. If her name sounds familiar, it's because Leigh is the wife of our own Student Pastor, Doug Congdon.
- We welcomed several other members to Team Riverbend: Peter Longno (Video Producer), Dani Powers (Graphic Designer), Sam Guinn (facilities), and others.
- Harry Barnes joined the Personnel Committee in 2015.
- The Personnel committee, with plenty of help from other various committee members, council members, and other loving Riverbend volunteers, hosted a staff appreciation luncheon event for Riverbend's employees in October. We were able to honor and appreciate our staff with our favorite dishes and our words of gratitude. Through donations by many Riverbend members, we were also able to provide Rudy's BBQ or Jack Allen's Kitchen gift cards to all of

the church employees as a symbol of our appreciation for their service to the Riverbend community.

2016 plans for the Personnel Committee

- Continue to be advocates for the Riverbend Church staff.
- Although we have fewer open positions than in years past, we will participate in the hiring process of any new employees.
- Provide counsel in the performance-review process and offer recommendations regarding staff compensation adjustments.
- Host and organize a staff appreciation luncheon event.
- Provide counsel on any other staff-related issues.

Stewardship Committee Report

For 2015, the Stewardship committee continued its efforts to be more proactive in providing education to help improve our congregation's understanding and practice of Biblical stewardship by offering classes, workshops, personal coaching and numerous volunteer opportunities.

Inside God's Design Course Offerings:

Inside God's Design: Developing My Generosity – a biblical overview of how God challenges us to give back to him a portion of what He has given to us, and how we live our lives for Him as a form of worship.

These classes are offered four times per year in conjunction with each Inside Riverbend new member orientation, as new members are encouraged to attend. It is also opened up to anyone in the congregation who would have an interest in attending.

Financial Peace University

This year we brought back the popular Financial Peace University video series taught by Dave Ramsey. FPU is a nine-week course teaching people principles of financial stewardship. The course provides participants with practical application, teaching how to better manage their personal finances by eliminating debt, building an emergency fund and saving and investing for retirement as well as future goals. The course was offered once in 2015 with 48 individuals completing the course. This course is offered not only to the Riverbend community but is open to the public.

Social Security Planning

For the second year, the committee hosted a workshop, entitled "Unlocking Social Security" to help participants understand the common myths and mistakes surrounding Social Security benefits. Participants learned how to maximize Social Security in planning for retirement. The workshop was offered in the fall of 2015 and had 65 participants.

Estate Planning

In 2015, the committee hosted an estate planning workshop, The Five Common Estate Planning Mistakes, which highlighted creative ways to manage one's assets for maximum kingdom impact. The workshop in the fall of 2015 was attended by 56 participants.

Financial Coaching

Three financial coaches provided 50 individuals in financial straits, with a total of 65 hours of one-on-one coaching on topics ranging from developing a balanced monthly spending plan to bankruptcy prevention.

Plans for 2016

As we look forward into 2016, the committee has an agenda to:

- Assimilate a new chairman and two additional new members to the committee, as rotations occur and vacancies are filled. We'll plan to spend time in the first quarter reviewing past programs, and talking about what's next for Riverbend as we look for ways to educate and shepherd our congregation in Biblical stewardship.
- Offer Financial Peace University, a basic financial literacy course, during the first quarter of the year.
- Teach Inside God's Design courses each quarter.
- Offer an Estate Planning course in the fall.
- Host a Social Security planning workshop in the fall.
- The committee will develop ways to increase the visibility within Riverbend of the availability of the Financial Coaching resources.
- Pray for God's provision for the right person to fill the Stewardship Pastor position that is currently vacant with a job search underway.

Mission Committee Report

Our Vision Statement

*Mobilize our congregation to demonstrate God's love by
Embracing, Engaging and Empowering those in need
throughout Austin and the world.*

As we look expectantly forward to 2016 and reflect back on what has been accomplished in 2015, our committee is indeed encouraged by what God is doing in and through Riverbend Church in service near and far. We continue to see interest grow in the many ministries we have established and seek to establish, and we are grateful for the continued support of the congregation in accomplishing what we believe God has called Riverbend to do.

Before we review our active ministries and year in summary, it is worth noting that our primary focus in 2015 has been *mobilization*. We determined that as the first word in our mission statement, it feels right and just to seek to focus on this. It is our sincere belief that Riverbend church has a remarkable depth, richness of experience, education, skill and talent that God is anxiously seeking to use to serve the poor, marginalized and unchurched locally, nationally and internationally.

Our ministries continue to focus on a few core principles that help us define the way we seek to serve:

- People Over Projects — intentionally be very relational, seeking to know more than be known
- Helping Without Hurting — give aid where and when needed, avoiding harm or dependency by those helped
- Joint-Brokenness — recognizing we are all equally in need of a Savior and not superior in any way to those in greater need
- Maximum participation for all ages and stages of age and spiritual development

Local Missions

Be the Church

In an effort to increasingly mobilize the congregation to go outside our walls and serve the needs of others, we are developing a program called “Be the Church.” We hope that it will

expand throughout the year as well as into the future, giving Riverbend many different opportunities to serve our community regularly as they become increasingly called to serve. It is our desire that the congregation would shelve barriers that keep them in their comfort zones and outside the grace they can express as they learn to serve where God is at work. We will be gradually developing these serving opportunities throughout the year, specifically designed to help our people become familiar with and serve in the various ministries below.

Mobile Loaves & Fishes (MLF)

MLF continues to be a cornerstone ministry at Riverbend, offering an entry-point to serving missionally for many of our members. It is also developing into a ministry that offers our members the chance to go deeper in their faith, as they build relationships with those they are serving. There are multiple ways for our people to connect and serve in the MLF ministry, including being a part of the “make ready” teams who prepare the meals and drinks, participating on truck runs to distribute the food, drinks, and clothing, helping to organize the storage shed where all supplies are kept, and participating in serving the formerly homeless out at Community First Village.

We’ve also worked to intentionally schedule truck routes to the Rundberg neighborhood to help us continue to build relationships and gain a deeper understanding of the needs of that community. Our church serves approximately 11,000 homeless, poor and marginalized Austinites annually through all of these efforts.

MLF’s Community First Village — a faith-based master-planned community is being created on the east side of Austin to house the chronically homeless of Austin. Riverbenders have taken a critical role in the development of the community, helping to design the layout of the community, helping to design homes, and are actively building four micro-homes and one community kitchen. We are participating by helping to lead weekly worship services in rotation with other churches in Austin. We look forward to building relationships with the new residents that begin moving in to this community, March 2016.

Rundberg/Galewood

Just a few miles from our beautiful campus is a unique cluster of neighborhoods where struggles vary widely: poverty, unemployment/underemployment, food insecurity, recent refugee relocation status, chronic illness and disability, and inadequate housing to name only a few. We continue to develop relationships with the leaders of the local churches serving this community. These relationships have led to ministries at North Austin Christian Church, Nuevo Amanecer Ministries and their affiliates, and, most recently an extended sister ministry in the Travis Heights area of South Austin.

Sensing that God is truly calling us into deeper relationship with these needy areas of Austin,

we have taken a leap of faith to place a member of our team (Jessica Jimenez, former Congregational Social Work Intern) at the North Austin Christian Church in order to be maximally aware of the needs of the community. She and Mike Sculley, our Director of the Rundberg area, have been instrumental in helping us coordinate our efforts in the Rundberg/Galewood communities with our mission's staff at Riverbend.

Some highlights of our work in the Rundberg/Galewood areas:

- Supporting North Austin Christian Church in securing funding for a walk-in refrigeration system to enlarge the capacity for their food pantry.
- Quarterly community outreach events at Galewood to draw attention to and increase attendance for their ministry
- An innovative approach to Christmas giving: a shopping opportunity for low-income families to purchase gifts for their children at reduced cost, providing them the gifts of choice and dignity, so much richer than a handout
- Intentional survey of the needs of the community and assets of the Riverbend congregation to seek matches to meet those needs

Angels Afoot

We continue to experience good participation in this seasonal project. This year we were able to provide approximately 2500 gifts to children identified by community agencies as vulnerable or underserved. Additionally, we used monetary donations to provide uniforms and school supplies for the 300 students of Siloe Christian School in San Salvador. Some of the donated toys and monetary gifts were utilized in the "Christmas Store" at our sister church at Galewood providing low income families an opportunity to "shop" for their children at reduced cost, rather than simply receive a free handout. This event was extremely well received and plans are underway for expansion next year.

Habitat for Humanity

Riverbend members provide both funds and volunteers for two house "builds" a year in association with a coalition of several Austin churches. Riverbenders are given the opportunity to sign up for a position on the team through a link on the riverbend.com website.

Austin Disaster Relief Network (ADRN)

ADRN is an Austin-based collaborative association of Christian churches seeking to be trained and ready to respond in times of natural or man-made disaster, when needs are acute and opportunity for the ministries of relief and mentoring through crisis are highest. Riverbend continues to provide monthly funds for operation, the campus for training opportunities and volunteers to respond when called. 2015 saw unprecedented needs after the catastrophic floods in Hays and Travis Counties, and ADRN was instrumental in the relief effort as well as providing mentoring to multiple families through their recovery.

ADRN training opportunities include individual home preparedness, preparation to respond in a crisis for physical and spiritual needs, and to provide coaching and mentoring (known as shepherding) a family through the process of rebuilding.

This past year ADRN has opened a thrift store in the Mueller area where donations of clothing, furniture and a variety of household supplies are accepted and sold for ongoing project funding. A unique aspect of this thrift store, however, is that it has the capacity to open its doors for “shoppers” who get precisely what they need after suffering a disaster or crisis. Riverbend has provided ongoing in-kind donations for the ADRN thrift shop, and has several volunteers serving there on a regular basis.

No Need Among You/Texas Christian Community Development Network

Riverbend provided sponsorship funds, as well as active participation, in the *No Need Among You Conference* in October for the second year. This conference draws churches, government agencies and other non-profits together to serve the underserved.

School Supply Drive

In late summer, our congregation sought donations of backpacks, school supplies and monetary donations to provide a good start for the young students in the Rundberg and Galewood communities. Our partner churches identify the families in the greatest need and we are able to provide the supplies as a way to promote the important work of these local churches.

International Missions

El Salvador

We have served with our sister church, Iglesia Bautista Siloe, now for the sixth year. 2015 has been a particularly difficult year for El Salvador with an unfortunate uptick in violence as rival gangs seek to increase their influence to the detriment of the poor and marginalized. This local

church is in an impoverished, violence-plagued community in the most conflict-ridden area of San Salvador. It is literally a lighthouse in a dark place. Siloe is not only a church but also a K-9th grade school that provides a Christian education above the level of local public schools, but also one that seeks to provide their 300 students with stability, structure, Christian role models and nutritional support.

All Riverbend projects and involvement have developed organically from the call of the Holy Spirit manifested through the passions of Riverbenders blended where the local church had need. Projects having included a dynamic, comprehensive library, a science lab, a renovated teacher lounge, a water purification system, and an upgraded sound system in the sanctuary. Additionally and to great impact, we have developed an opportunity for Riverbenders to sponsor students from Pre-K through high school. Pre-K through 9th grade sponsorships are managed through Por Gracia and Christ for the City International. High School scholarships are managed through a partnership of the Siloe school administration and Riverbenders who match deserving students with sponsors. Several students who have been through this entire sponsorship process have been sponsored into university-level programs as well, inspiring younger students to strive to be worthy of academic sponsorship.

Riverbend Church also sponsors a cadre of missionaries into the La Linea community just outside the Siloe church walls. The missionaries are integrally involved with after-school youth soccer and softball ministries, semi-annual soccer tournaments that bring teams together for competition and devotion for spiritual formation and evangelism, and ministering to the spiritual and physical needs of the most at-risk community members.

Multiple teams continue to travel to El Salvador annually; this year we had six group trips including adult trips, a Men's Retreat, a student trip featuring a student retreat and construction projects, and a medical/dental team providing care in more remote regions of El Salvador. Several trips are planned for 2016 including several adult groups, a second Men's Retreat, another medical/dental team and our fifth student ministry team.

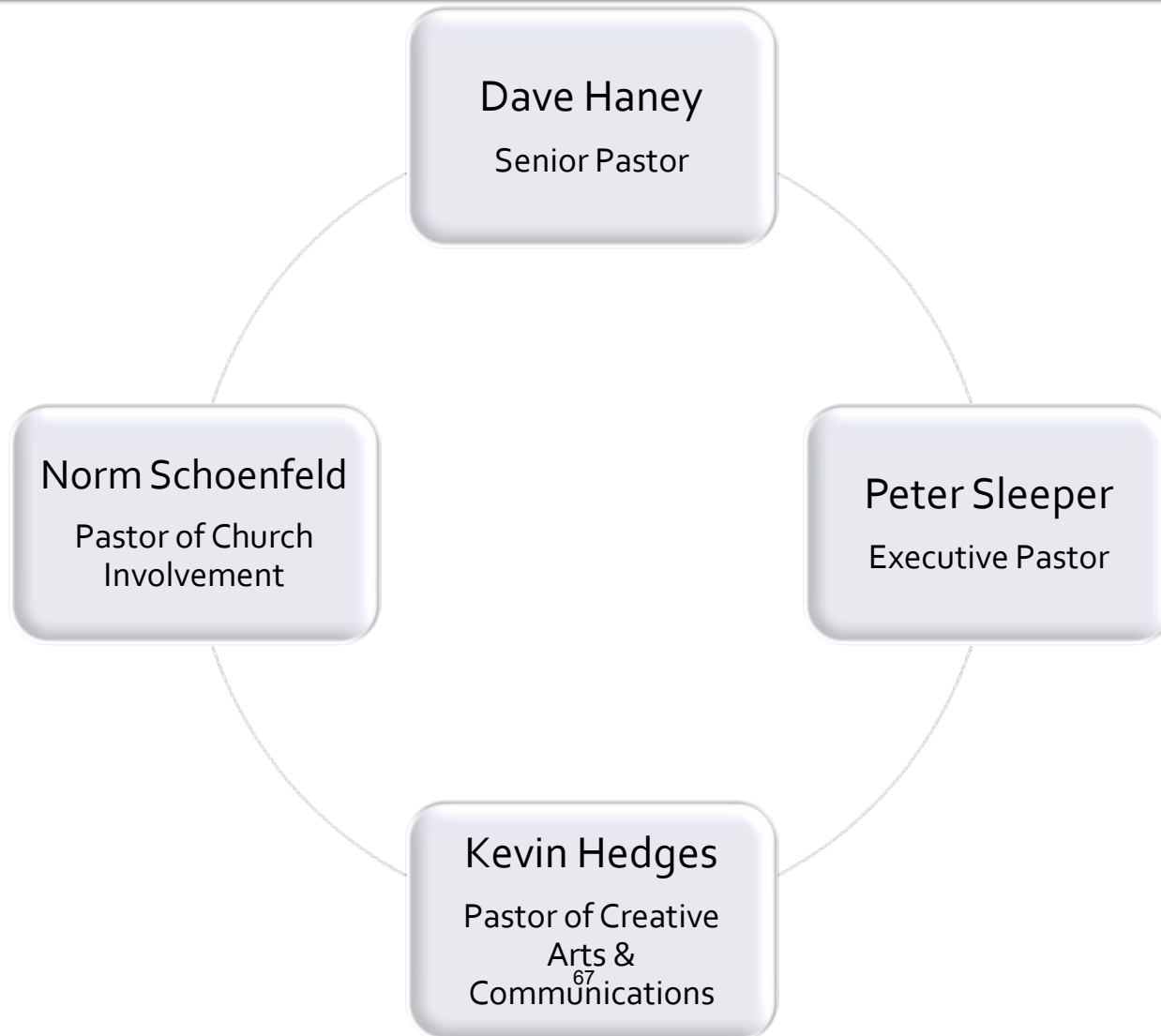
As the relationship with Siloe has deepened over time, a rich and committed community group has formed out of Riverbenders who have traveled to or who have supported this ministry. A subcommittee has also formed to direct the ongoing efforts of Riverbend on Siloe's behalf.

Future International Missions

We continue to seek ways for God to open opportunities for us to serve at a second international site, and look forward to seeing God's plans unfold and Riverbender's passions ignite.

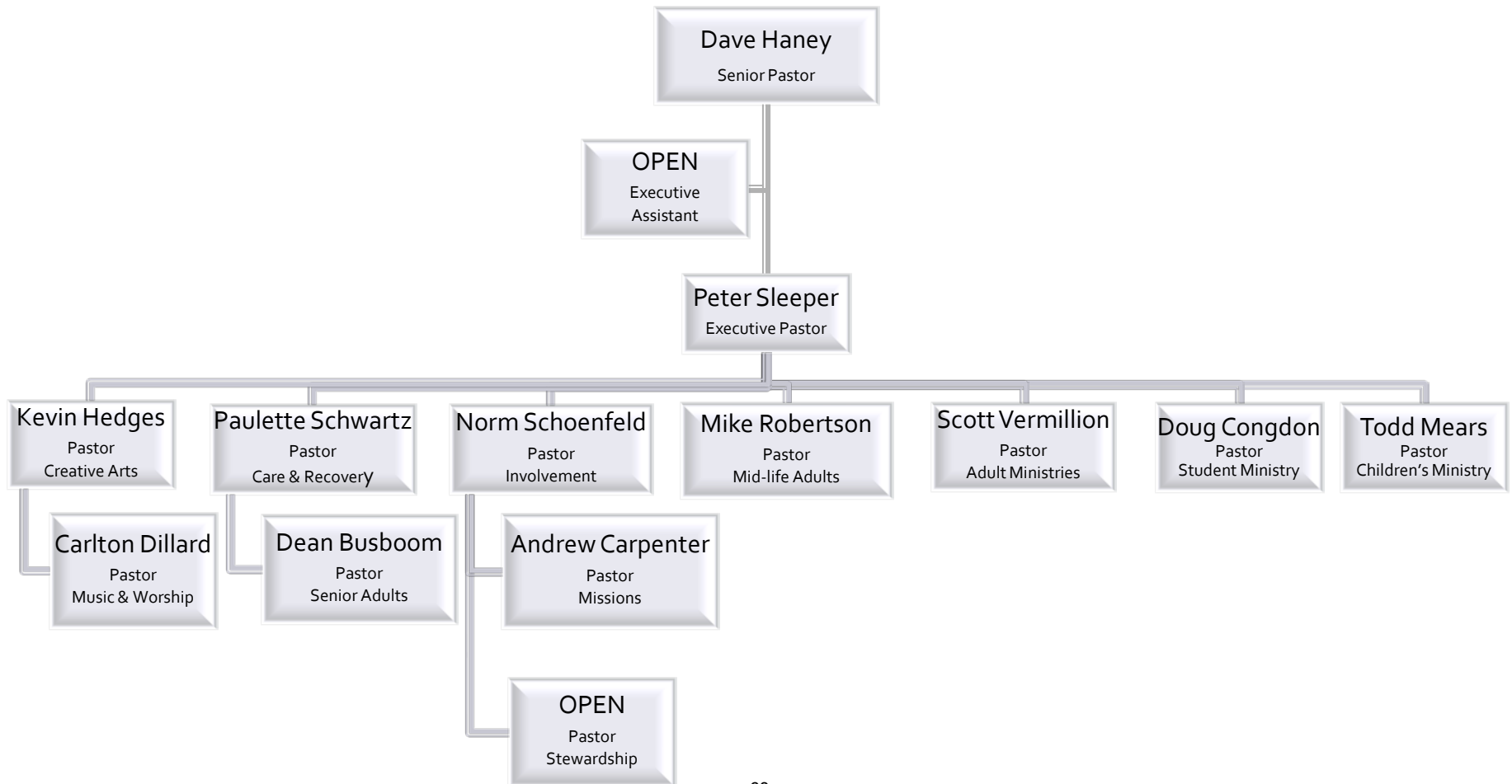
Riverbend Org Chart

Staff Leadership Team



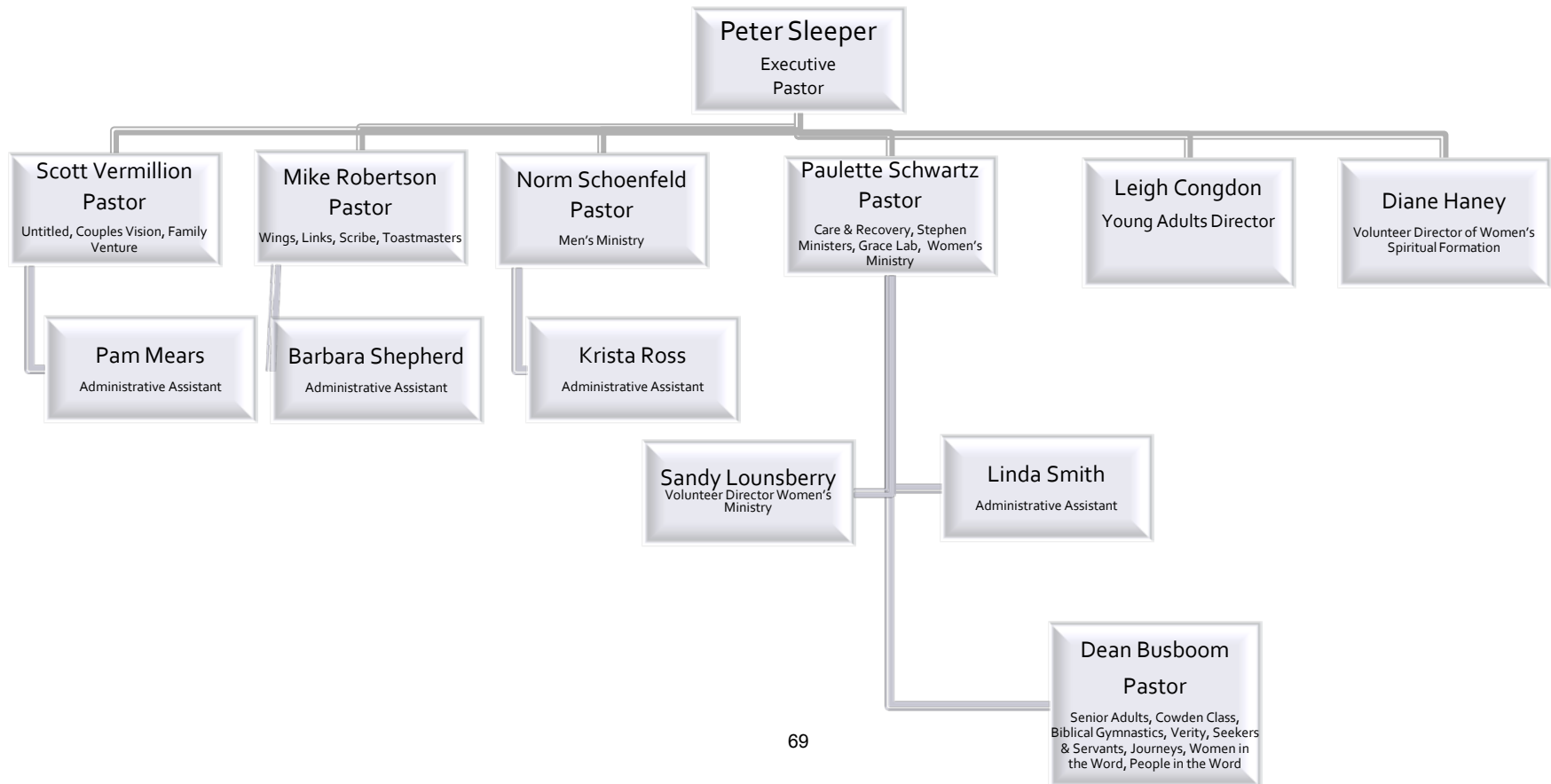
Riverbend Org Chart

Pastoral Staff



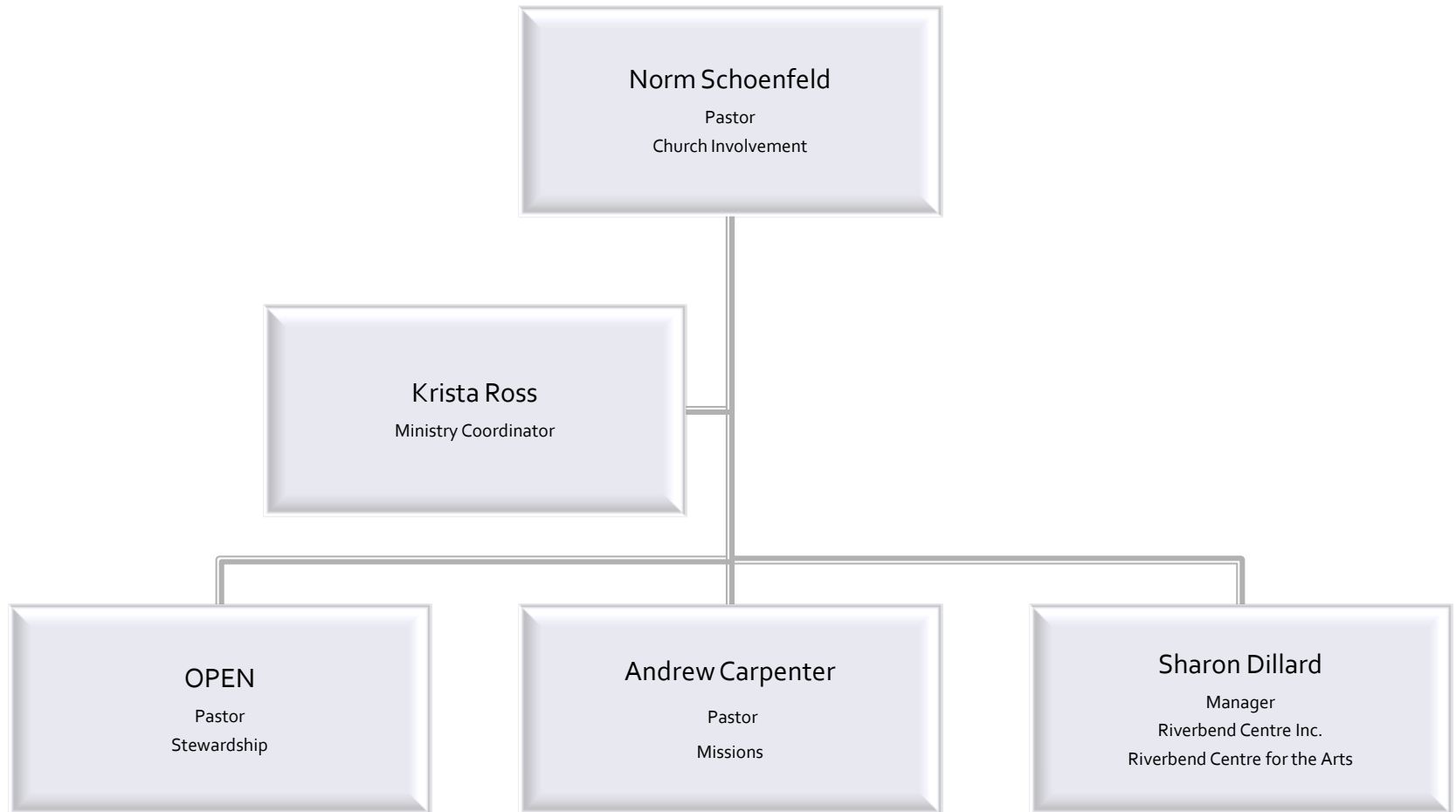
Riverbend Org Chart

Community Groups/ Adult Education

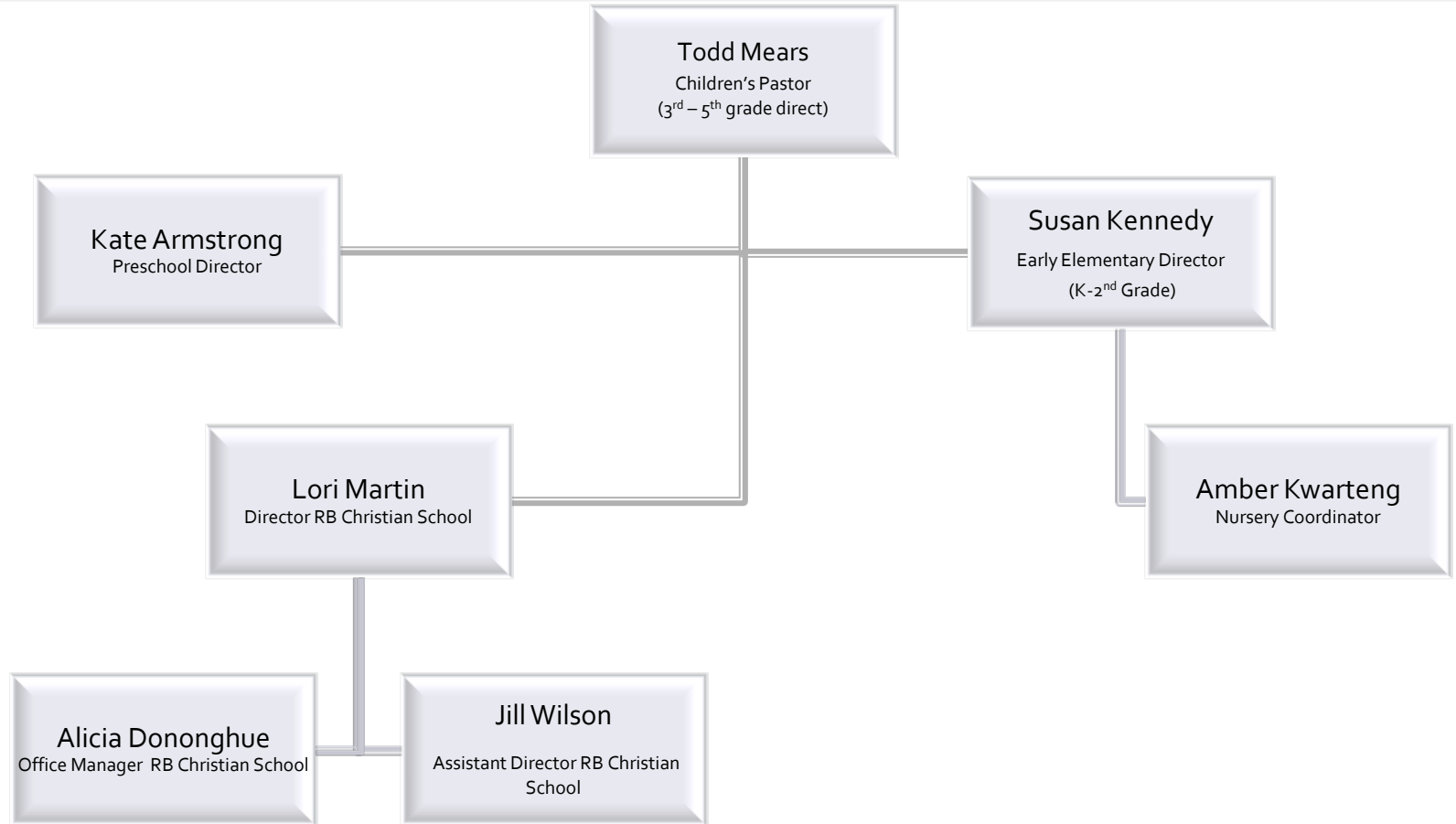


Riverbend Org Chart

Church Involvement

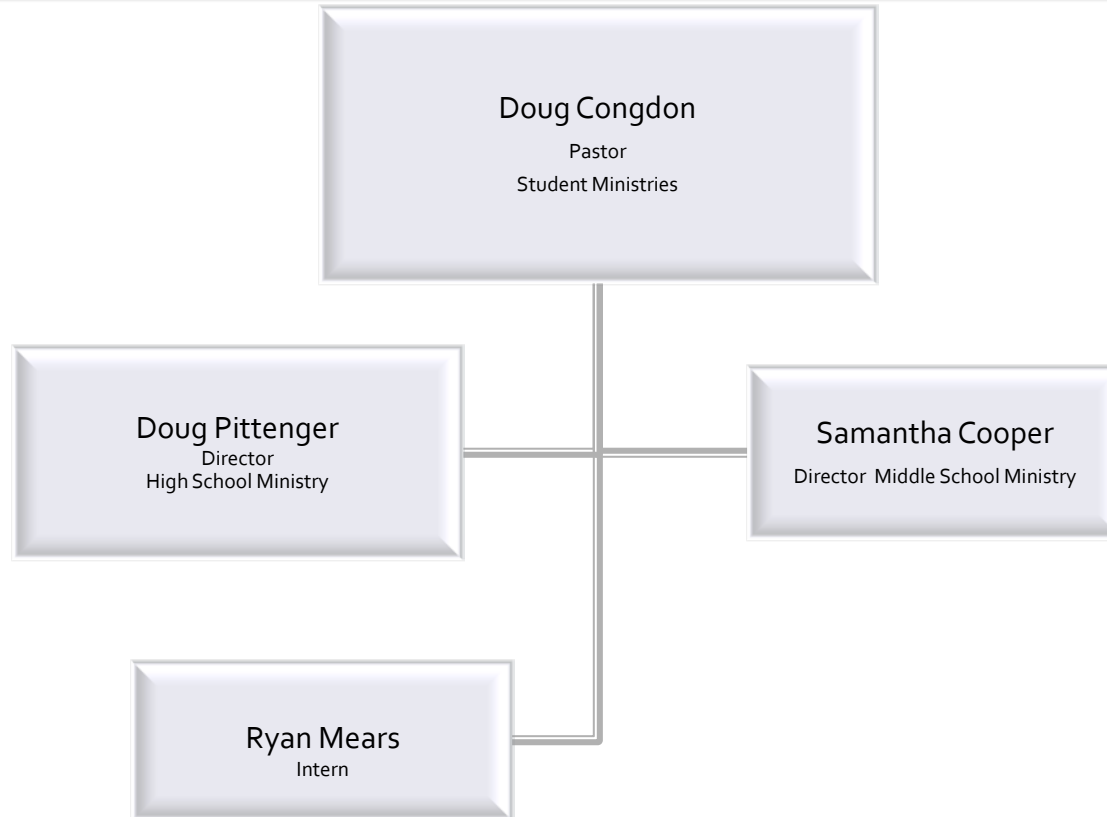


Riverbend Org Chart Children's Ministry & Preschool



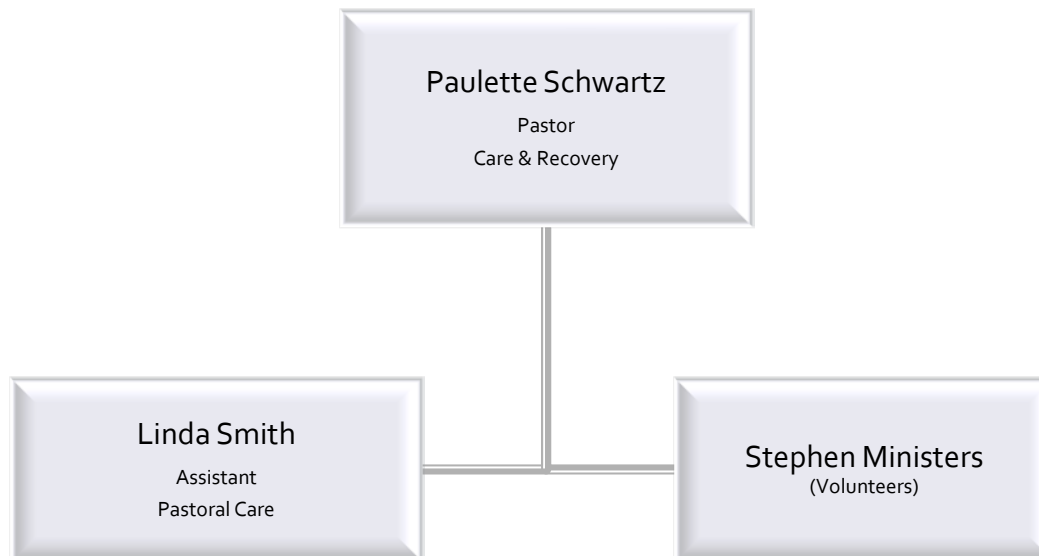
Riverbend Org Chart

Student Ministry



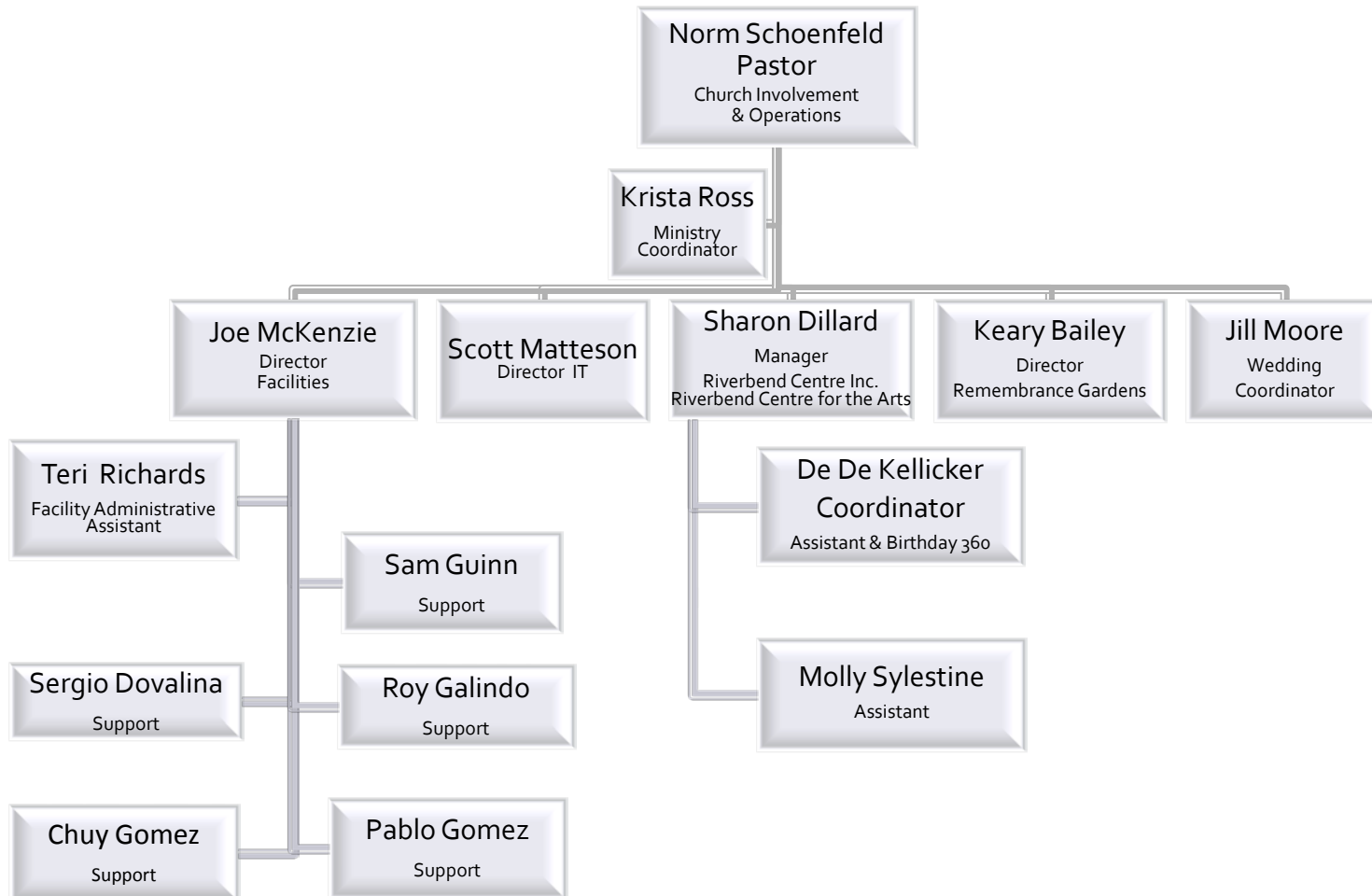
Riverbend Org Chart

Pastoral Care & Recovery



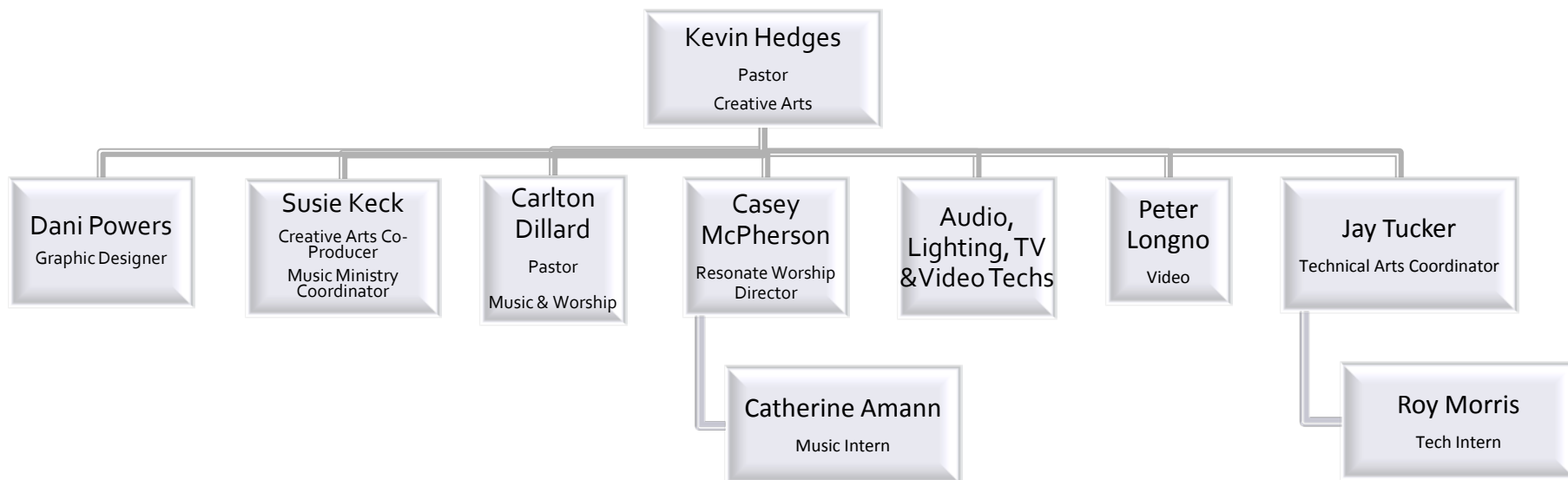
Riverbend Org Chart

Operations & Support



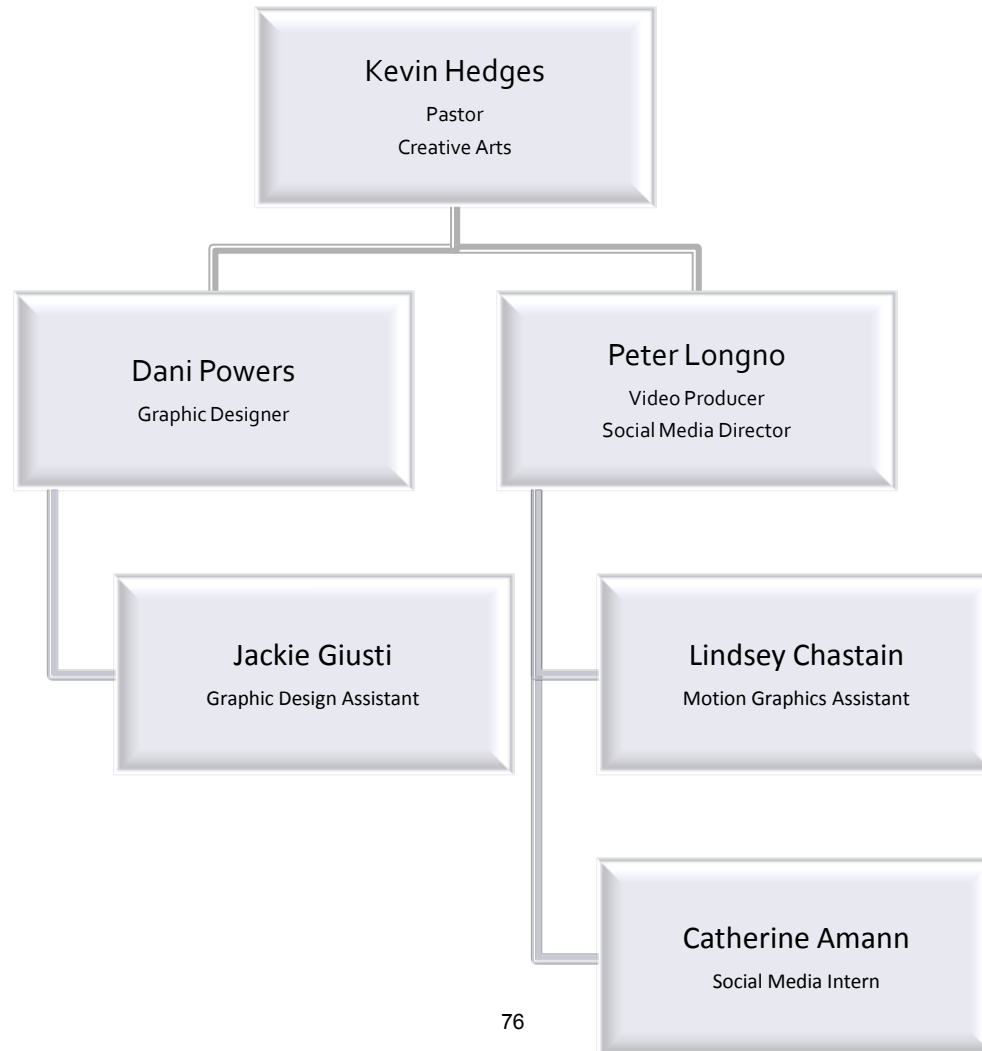
Riverbend Org Chart

Music & Creative Arts



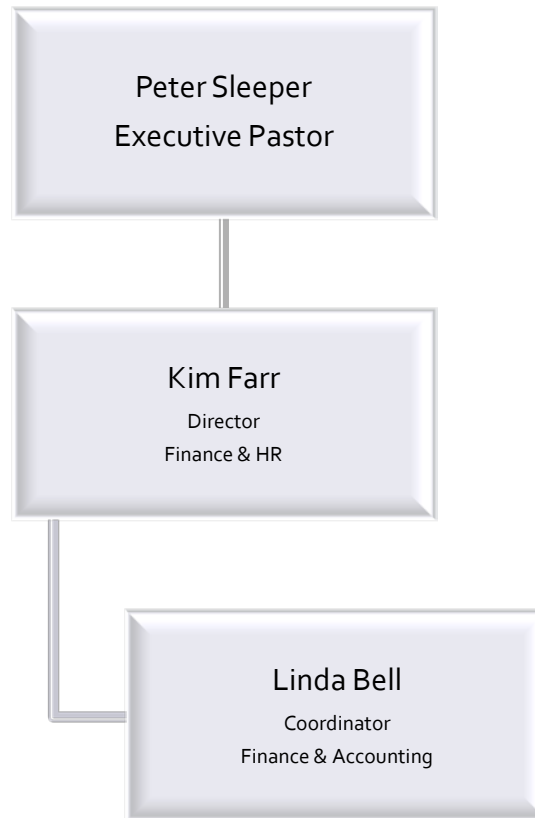
Riverbend Org Chart

Communications

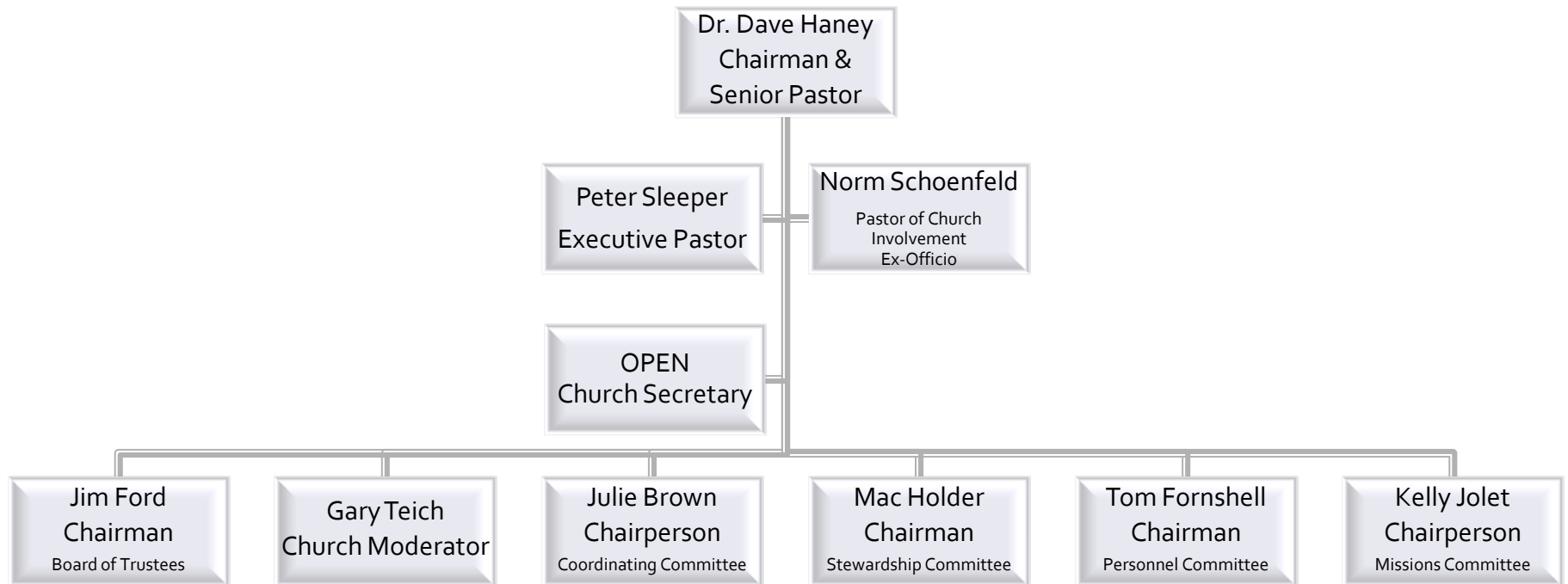


Riverbend Org Chart

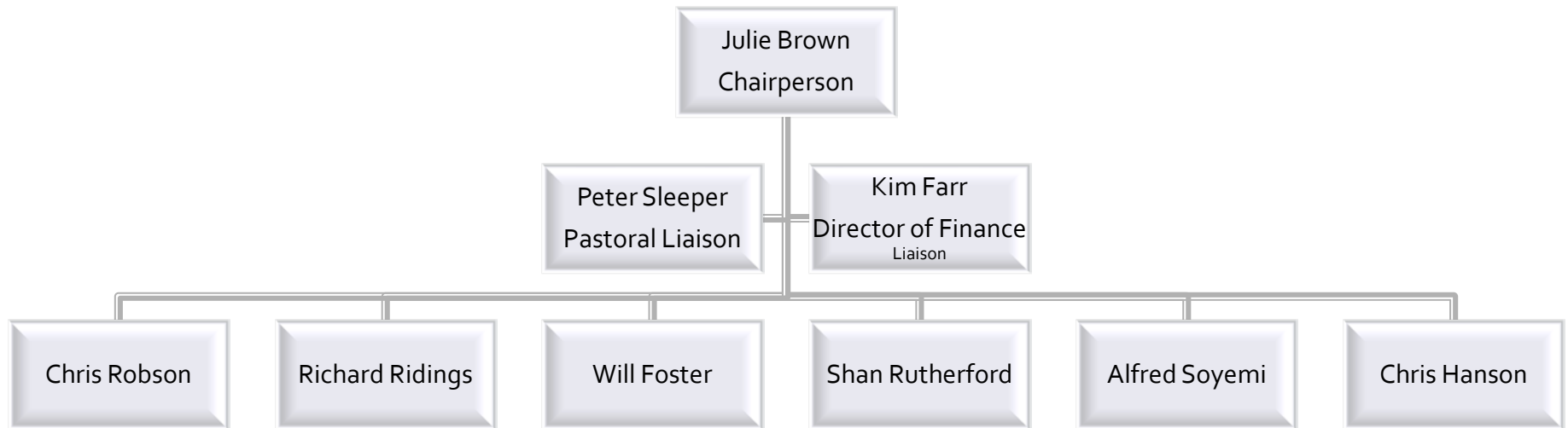
Finance & HR



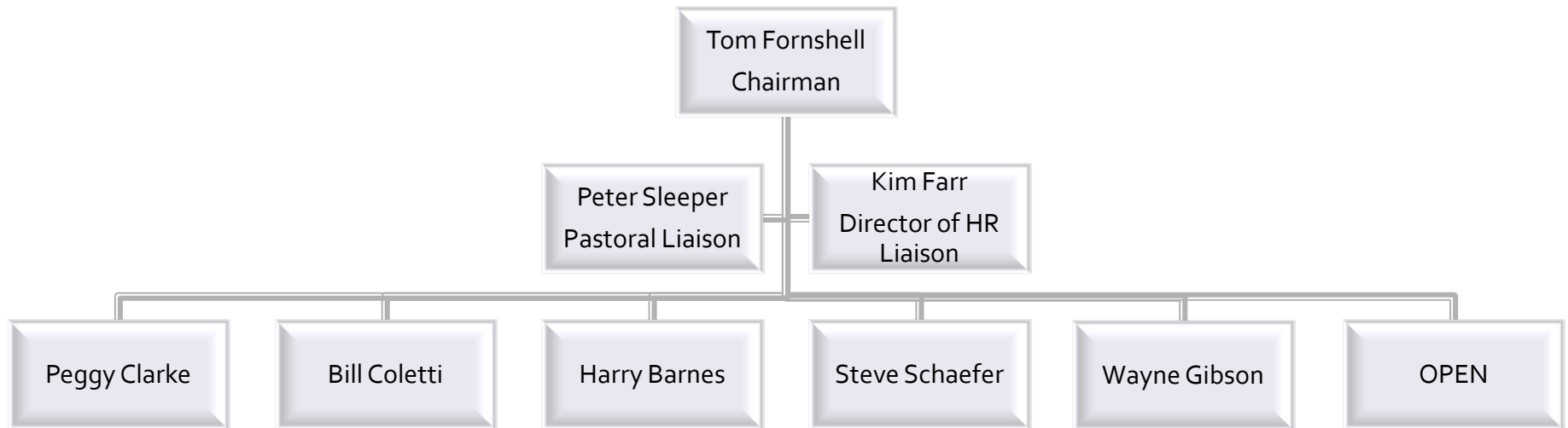
Riverbend Church Council



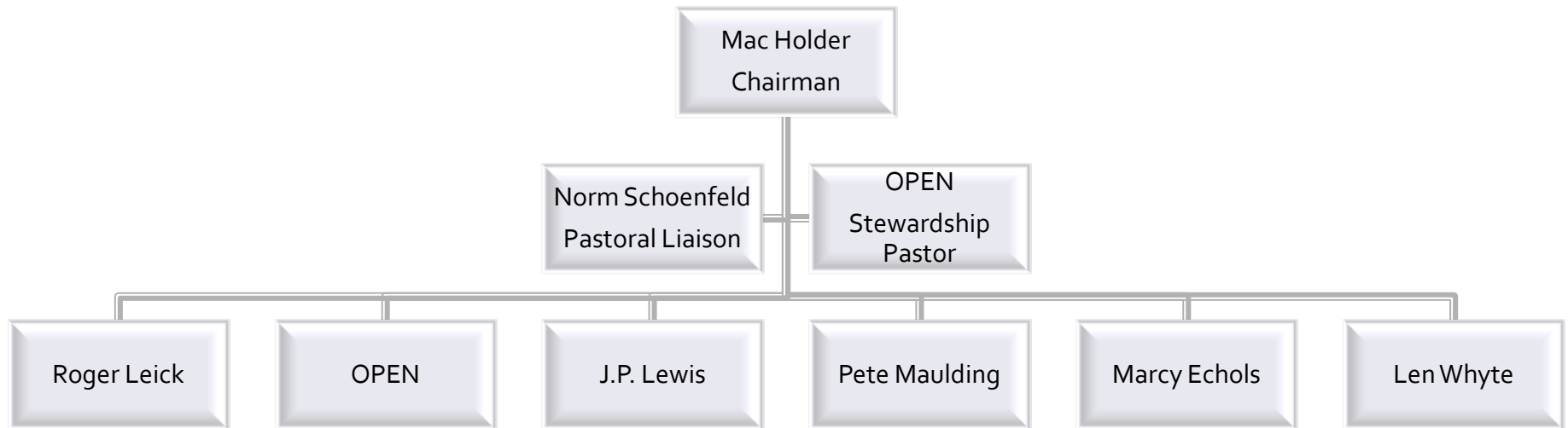
Riverbend Coordinating Committee



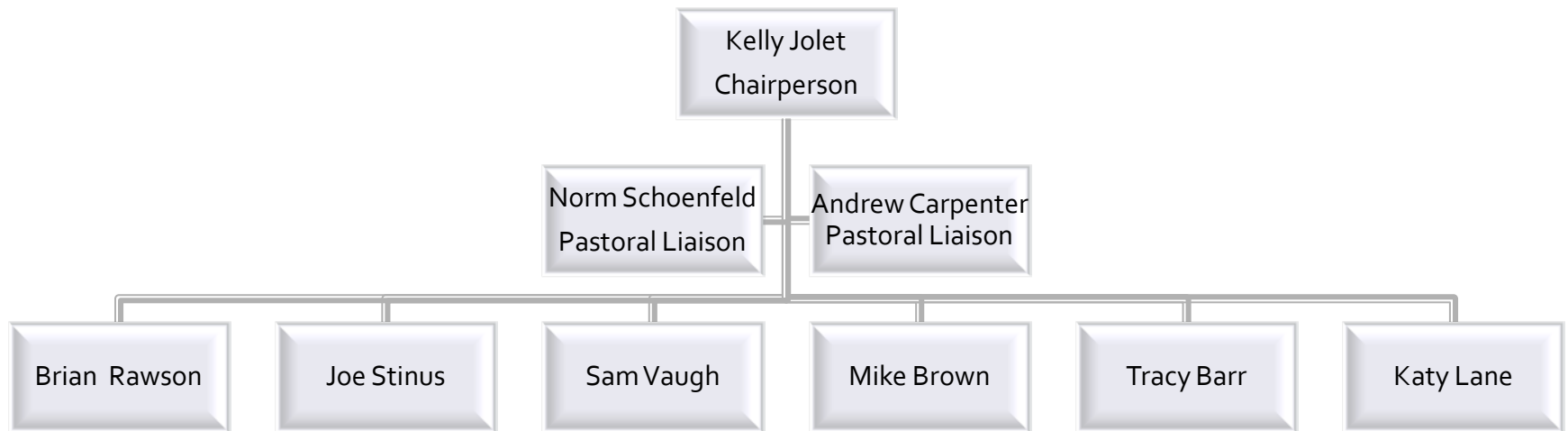
Riverbend Personnel Committee



Riverbend Stewardship Committee



Riverbend Missions Committee



2016 Budget

Financial Highlights & Assumptions

Budgeted Income

Our income comes from a variety of sources including the weekly offering as well as contributions from related businesses including: Remembrance Gardens, Riverbend Centre, Inc., Riverbend Centre for the Arts, Riverbend Christian School, Weddings, and various event fees (VBS, Student Camps, Men's Summit, Mission Trips, etc.). It should be noted that much of the other income has associated costs, so do not assume the numbers are "net" of expense numbers. For example, there may be income shown under outreach event fees of \$20,000 for a Men's Summit, but it has \$20,000 in associated expenses, so there is a net zero income after expenses for this particular item.

For 2016, total revenue is planned at \$5,733,233, which is down \$120,090 or -2% to last year's budget, and up \$58,341 or 1% to last year's actual revenue. Key elements of the variances between this year and last year's budget are:

Giving Income	(\$95,000)	
Designated offering income	+\$14,366	
Remembrance Gardens	(\$48,000)	(The portion of the sales considered donations)
Total Fees & Other Revenue	+\$10,884	(Retreats, Mission Trips, VBS, RCS, and other items, many of these are events that have offsetting expenses)

Budgeted Expenses

Our total expenses excluding principal for 2016 are planned at \$6,821,916, which are \$127,620 less than last year's budget. 2015 actual expenses were \$43,266 less than the 2015 budget anticipated.

Adding principal payments and capital expenditures and backing out depreciation, we end up

with our planned cash expenditures of \$5,730,931, which is \$2,302 less than planned revenues.

Key Variances between the 2016 and the 2015 budgets include:

Salary related expenses decreased by \$98,801 due to staff, overtime, and benefits adjustments.

Program, supplies & travel increased by \$46,828 due primarily to an increase in Missions expense, sound maintenance and materials, and the Global Leadership Conference planned.

Service and Professional fees decreased 18% due mainly to a more realistic budget for savings on electricity, and less professional fees involved with that.

Office & occupancy expenses decrease by \$37,100 due mainly to no longer paying into the key man insurance policy.

Capital Expenditures

The church is currently in the process of installing a new roof to the Home for Hope at a cost of \$270K, being funded of cash plus reserve funds. There are no other capital expenditures planned for 2016. Any unanticipated expenditures will be discussed and agreed upon by the coordinating committee and funded out of the church's reserve fund.

Riverbend Church

Trial Balance - Unrestricted Departments

REVENUE	Budget 2016	Actual 2015	2016 B vs 2015 A	% change 16 vs. 15	Budget 2015	difference B16 vs B15	% change B16 vs B15
Contributions							
Debt retirement	\$30,000	\$26,164	\$3,836	15%	\$30,000	\$0	0%
Home for hope	\$10,800	\$10,520	\$280	3%	\$10,800	\$0	0%
Offering income	\$4,165,000	\$4,110,819	\$54,181	1%	\$4,260,000	-\$95,000	-2%
Offering income-designated	\$288,718	\$393,300	-\$104,582	-27%	\$274,352	\$14,366	5%
Offering income-Remembrance Garden	\$456,000	\$457,840	-\$1,840	0%	\$504,000	-\$48,000	-10%
Vacation bible school	\$6,300	\$6,631	-\$331	-5%	\$6,300	\$0	0%
Total	\$4,956,818	\$5,005,274	-\$48,456	-1%	\$5,085,452	-\$128,634	-3%
Fees and Other Revenue							
Building use fee	\$334,978	\$144,322	\$190,656	132%	\$191,402	\$143,576	75%
Child care fees	\$8,953	\$7,785	\$1,168	15%	\$8,953	\$0	0%
Fundraising event revenue	\$6,000		\$6,000	*	\$6,000	\$0	0%
Outreach event fees	\$222,690	\$195,403	\$27,287	14%	\$222,140	\$550	0%
Remembrance Garden Sales	\$96,000	\$73,180	\$22,820	31%	\$96,000	\$0	0%
Other fee income -	\$104,434	\$244,057	-\$139,623	-57%	\$237,676	-\$133,242	-56%
Total	\$773,055	\$664,747	\$108,308	16%	\$762,171	\$10,884	1%
Bookstore revenue							
Bibles	\$120	\$125	-\$5	-4%	\$360	-\$240	-67%
Children's books	\$60	\$50	\$10	20%	\$180	-\$120	-67%
General books	\$1,980	\$927	\$1,053	114%	\$2,400	-\$420	-18%
Gift items	\$1,140	\$1,160	-\$20	-2%	\$2,400	-\$1,260	-53%
Tapes	\$60	\$35	\$25	71%	\$360	-\$300	-83%
Total	\$3,360	\$2,297	\$1,063	46%	\$5,700	-\$2,340	-41%
Interest income and dividends							
Interest income		\$1,011	-\$1,011	-100%		\$0	
Gain/loss of sale of assets		\$1,563	-\$1,563	-100%		\$0	
Total	\$0	\$2,575	-\$2,575	-100%	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$5,733,233	\$5,674,892	\$58,341	1%	\$5,853,323	-\$120,090	-2%
EXPENSES							
Fundraising							
Fundraising expenses	\$2,400	\$1,897	\$503	26%	\$2,400	\$0	0%
Total	\$2,400	\$1,897	\$503	26%	\$2,400	\$0	0%
Cost of goods sold - bookstore							
Bibles	\$120	\$771	-\$651	-84%	\$180	-\$60	-33%
Children's books	\$60	\$341	-\$281	-82%	\$60	\$0	0%
General books	\$1,980	\$1,060	\$920	87%	\$1,200	\$780	65%
Gift items	\$1,140	\$771	\$369	48%	\$900	\$240	27%
Tapes	\$60	\$27	\$33	0%	\$0	\$60	0%
Other inventory	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%	\$0	\$0	0%
Freight on merchandise	\$0	\$36	-\$36	-100%	\$120	-\$120	-100%
Total	\$3,360	\$3,007	\$353	12%	\$2,460	\$900	37%
Salaries, wages, and benefits							
Allowance - housing	\$586,854	\$759,536	-\$172,682	-23%	\$793,402	-\$206,548	-26%
Employee appreciation	\$4,500	\$20,175	-\$15,675	-78%	\$5,216	-\$716	-14%
FICA	\$101,139	\$93,948	\$7,191	8%	\$96,342	\$4,797	5%
Insurance, medical	\$217,296	\$173,703	\$43,593	25%	\$181,849	\$35,447	19%
Overtime	\$36,860	\$38,471	-\$1,611	-4%	\$59,000	-\$22,140	-38%
Retirement	\$108,638	\$108,567	\$71	0%	\$111,061	-\$2,423	-2%
Salaries	\$1,774,440	\$1,681,835	\$92,605	6%	\$1,737,481	\$36,959	2%
Temporary help	\$52,700	\$70,949	-\$18,249	-26%	\$51,050	\$1,650	3%
Training, employee	\$4,785	\$0	\$4,785		\$785	\$4,000	510%
Wages, hourly	\$173,525	\$160,458	\$13,067	8%	\$117,619	\$55,906	48%
Worker's comp	\$20,739	\$12,655	\$8,084	64%	\$26,472	-\$5,733	-22%
Other Staff Costs	\$50,000	\$15,797	\$34,203	217%	\$50,000	\$0	0%
Total	\$3,131,476	\$3,136,094	-\$4,618	0%	\$3,230,277	-\$98,801	-3%
Grants to other organizations							
Grants to other organizations	\$203,084	\$173,936	\$29,148	17%	\$190,884	\$12,200	6%

EXPENSES Continued	Budget 2016	Actual 2015	2015 B vs 2014 A	% change 15 vs. 14	Budget 2015	difference B15 vsB14	% change B15 vsB14
Programs, supplies, and travel							
Decorations	\$300		\$300	*	\$900	-\$600	-67%
Education materials	\$26,538	\$24,743	\$1,795	7%	\$24,302	\$2,236	9%
Guest speakers/performers	\$13,000	\$15,615	-\$2,615	-17%	\$15,000	-\$2,000	-13%
Meals & snacks for programs	\$31,790	\$39,644	-\$7,854	-20%	\$27,080	\$4,710	17%
Missions	\$83,992	\$160,245	-\$76,253	-48%	\$95,775	-\$11,783	-12%
Musicians and arrangements	\$216,725	\$209,818	\$6,907	3%	\$195,425	\$21,300	11%
New member events	\$3,200	\$2,800	\$400	14%	\$3,200	\$0	0%
Order of worship production	\$10,260	\$10,148	\$112	1%	\$10,260	\$0	0%
Outreach events	\$138,886	\$160,448	-\$21,562	-13%	\$146,490	-\$7,604	-5%
Production expenses	\$10,200	\$11,758	-\$1,558	-13%	\$10,200	\$0	0%
Seminars and conferences	\$4,580	\$2,981	\$1,599	54%	\$2,980	\$1,600	54%
Sound maintenance and materials	\$58,990	\$17,558	\$41,432	236%	\$20,120	\$38,870	193%
Supplies, other	\$34,400	\$39,053	-\$4,653	-12%	\$33,626	\$774	2%
Travel, lodging	\$2,100	\$3,036	-\$936	-31%	\$1,100	\$1,000	91%
Travel, meals	\$760	\$465	\$295	64%	\$100	\$660	660%
Travel, transportation	\$7,181	\$5,870	\$1,311	22%	\$5,366	\$1,815	34%
TV ministry	\$73,024	\$71,825	\$1,199	2%	\$74,224	-\$1,200	-2%
Vacation Bible School supplies	\$18,588	\$20,219	-\$1,631	-8%	\$18,588	\$0	0%
Volunteer appreciation	\$6,400	\$6,657	-\$257	-4%	\$5,600	\$800	14%
Youth camp	\$29,750	\$29,831	-\$81	0%	\$33,300	-\$3,550	-11%
Other programs, supplies, & travel	\$9,800	\$14,608	-\$4,808	-33%	\$10,000	-\$200	-2%
Total	\$780,464	\$847,322	-\$66,858	-8%	\$733,636	\$46,828	6%
Services and professional fees							
Advertising, media	\$74,534	\$62,913	\$11,621	18%	\$81,309	-\$6,775	-8%
Audit	\$10,450	\$10,450	\$0	0%	\$10,450	\$0	0%
Bank charges	\$45,280	\$41,418	\$3,862	9%	\$30,040	\$15,240	51%
Baptist convention dues	\$4,200	\$4,200	\$0	0%	\$4,200	\$0	0%
Legal	\$1,200	\$1,010	\$190	19%	\$1,200	\$0	0%
Traffic control	\$2,200	\$2,080	\$120	6%	\$2,200	\$0	0%
Other services and prof fees	\$75,455	\$70,841	\$4,614	7%	\$130,339	-\$54,884	-42%
Total	\$213,319	\$192,912	\$20,407	11%	\$259,738	-\$46,419	-18%
Office and occupancy							
Ad valorem taxes	\$12,720	\$12,150	\$570	5%	\$10,920	\$1,800	16%
Cleaning service	\$52,495	\$57,413	-\$4,918	-9%	\$52,495	\$0	0%
Computer and network expense	\$28,032	\$22,918	\$5,114	22%	\$27,600	\$432	2%
Copier lease expense	\$34,798	\$33,793	\$1,005	3%	\$34,798	\$0	0%
Disposal	\$6,432	\$5,451	\$981	18%	\$4,344	\$2,088	48%
Drinking water	\$5,832	\$5,823	\$9	0%	\$5,832	\$0	0%
Dues and subscriptions	\$25,477	\$20,327	\$5,150	25%	\$19,246	\$6,231	32%
Insurance, property and liability	\$80,123	\$78,375	\$1,748	2%	\$87,562	-\$7,439	-8%
Insurance, key man life		\$64,450	-\$64,450	-100%	\$77,340	-\$77,340	-100%
Landscaping service	\$38,500	\$38,840	-\$340	-1%	\$42,944	-\$4,444	-10%
Landscaping supplies	\$8,400	\$4,361	\$4,039	93%	\$8,400	\$0	0%
Maintenance supplies	\$62,002	\$57,260	\$4,742	8%	\$62,002	\$0	0%
Maintenance and repairs, bldg.	\$52,800	\$57,221	-\$4,421	-8%	\$40,800	\$12,000	29%
Maintenance equipment	\$12,366	\$12,717	-\$351	-3%	\$12,366	\$0	0%
Office equipment repair and maint	\$780	\$150	\$630	*	\$780	\$0	0%
Office supplies	\$11,490	\$11,236	\$254	2%	\$11,490	\$0	0%
Postage and delivery	\$7,104	\$6,563	\$541	8%	\$7,104	\$0	0%
Printing and copying	\$3,002	\$2,711	\$291	11%	\$3,002	\$0	0%
Rent, music studio space	\$6,000	\$1,500	\$4,500	300%		\$6,000	
Security	\$8,100	\$7,667	\$433	6%	\$10,836	-\$2,736	-25%
Sympathy gifts	\$1,488	\$1,319	\$169	13%	\$1,728	-\$240	-14%
Telephone, mobile	\$5,589	\$4,777	\$812	17%	\$5,589	\$0	0%
Telephone, office	\$15,720	\$15,229	\$491	3%	\$15,720	\$0	0%
Utilities - electricity	\$219,230	\$235,332	-\$16,102	-7%	\$192,682	\$26,548	14%
Utilities - natural gas	\$5,000	\$5,456	-\$456	-8%	\$5,000	\$0	0%
Utilities - water and wastewater	\$83,988	\$75,991	\$7,997	11%	\$83,988	\$0	0%
Other office and occupancy	\$17,700	\$18,830	-\$1,130	-6%	\$17,700	\$0	0%
Total	\$805,168	\$857,859	-\$52,691	-6%	\$842,268	-\$37,100	-4%
Depreciation							
Amortization		\$0	\$0		\$5,228	-\$5,228	-100%
Depreciation	\$1,284,000	\$1,294,511	-\$10,511	-1%	\$1,284,000	\$0	0%
Gain/loss of sale of assets							
Total	\$1,284,000	\$1,294,511	-\$10,511	-1%	\$1,289,228	-\$5,228	0%
Interest expense and loan fees							
Buildings - Frost Bank	\$398,645	\$398,731	-\$86	0%	\$398,645	\$0	0%
Total	\$398,645	\$398,731	-\$86	0%	\$398,645	\$0	0%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$6,821,916	\$6,906,270	-\$84,354	-1%	\$6,949,536	-\$127,620	-2%

	Budget 2016	Actual 2015	2015 B vs 2014 A	% change 15 vs. 14	Budget 2015	difference B15 vsB14	% change B15 vsB14
Excess of revenue over expense	-\$1,088,683	-\$1,231,378	\$142,695	-12%	-\$1,096,213	\$7,530	-1%
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES							
Improvements	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	
Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	
Construction in progress	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	
Total	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	

Reconciliation of Income to Expenses

<i>Add Principal</i>	\$193,015	\$193,015	\$0		\$193,015	\$0	
<i>Add Capital expenditures</i>	\$0	\$0	\$0		\$0	\$0	
<i>Less deprec/amort</i>	-\$1,284,000	-\$1,294,511	\$10,511		-\$1,289,228	\$5,228	
Total Cash Expenditures	\$5,730,931	\$5,804,774	-\$73,843	-1%	\$5,853,323	-\$122,392	-2.1%

Riverbend Church 2016 Budget By Ministry Area

Ministry Areas	2016 Annual Expense Budget	2015 Annual Expense Actual	2016B vs. 2015A Change	% Change	2015 Budget	2016B vs. 2015 B Change	% Change
Worship	\$375,687	\$444,411	-\$68,724	-15%	\$484,901	-\$109,214	-23%
Remembrance Garden	\$214,322	\$190,603	\$23,719	12%	\$214,651	-\$329	0%
Community Groups/Adult Education	\$329,572	\$326,343	\$3,229	1%	\$347,590	-\$18,018	-5%
Children	\$336,161	\$326,918	\$9,243	3%	\$323,978	\$12,183	4%
Student	\$294,900	\$277,900	\$17,000	6%	\$292,449	\$2,451	1%
Church Involvement	\$565,664	\$544,454	\$21,210	4%	\$549,060	\$16,604	3%
Pastoral Care	\$136,163	\$133,353	\$2,810	2%	\$137,216	-\$1,053	-1%
Creative Arts	\$682,999	\$692,296	-\$9,297	-1%	\$647,155	\$35,844	6%
Bookstore	\$3,360	\$3,234	\$126	4%	\$4,914	-\$1,554	-32%
Administration	\$463,460	\$436,132	\$27,328	6%	\$447,849	\$15,611	3%
Maintenance / Facilities	\$994,389	\$997,315	-\$2,926	0%	\$1,002,599	-\$8,210	-1%
Events/ Tech Support	\$130,163	\$89,875	\$40,288	45%	\$96,079	\$34,084	35%
Principal & Interest (w/o Depreciation)	\$591,660	\$656,196	-\$64,536	-10%	\$669,001	-\$77,341	-12%
Missions	\$305,864	\$393,114	-\$87,251	-22%	\$330,671	-\$24,808	-8%
Communications	\$306,568	\$292,630	\$13,938	5%	\$305,226	\$1,342	0%
Total Expense	\$5,730,932	\$5,804,774	-\$73,842	-1%	\$5,853,339	-\$122,407	-2%
Capital Expenditure	\$0	\$0			\$0		
Total Expenses with Capital Expenditure	\$5,730,932	\$5,804,774			\$5,853,339		

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the process for developing the budget? What is the approval process?

It is a comprehensive process that involves the Coordinating Committee, the Pastoral and Operational Support staff, as well as the Church Council as follows:

- In early Fall the Coordinating Committee reviews income trends and recommends budget parameters to staff leadership.
- The Church Council also discusses church strategic priorities with staff leadership.
- With the guidance of these budget parameters and strategic priorities, the staff department heads then develop department budget proposals and submit them to the finance department. Each year the various department heads sit with coordinating committee members prior to submitting their requests.
- The finance department compiles the budget proposals and reviews them with staff leadership. Adjustments are made based on the year's strategic priorities and updated income trends and a proposed budget draft is submitted to the Coordinating Committee for their review.
- In January, the Coordinating Committee reviews the proposed budget once again, taking into account income through the end of the year, and requests additional adjustments if necessary.
- Once adjustments are made and agreed to by the staff and Coordinating Committee, the Coordinating Committee then votes to recommend the budget proposal to the Church Council.
- The Church Council reviews it and then votes to present it to the Congregation for a majority vote at the February annual church business meeting.

How did the year end financially for the church, and what does this mean for the 2016 budget?

Giving/Offering income was \$4.111 million, which was \$149K less than the 2015 budget, but was up 1%, or \$33K over 2014's actual giving of \$4.078 million. Total Revenues for the church

(including revenue sources from the Remembrance Gardens, Christian Pre-school, Riverbend Centre Inc., Riverbend Centre for the Arts, and other designated donations & fees, came in at \$5.675 million vs. a budget of \$5.853 million (-3%), and against the 2014 actual revenue of \$5.691 million (-0.3%).

It should be noted that neither number above includes the *Building a Blessing* donations, which totaled \$231K for the year. Since the campaign began five years ago, we have received in \$7.0 million to date and some contributions continue to come in even though the campaign officially ended two years ago. Any contributions received toward this campaign are used to help pay down our debt, as the physical improvements and new building have already been paid in full.

What percentage of the people who attend Riverbend contribute up to \$1000 per year? Between \$1000 and \$5000 per year? Over \$5,000 per year?

57% contribute up to \$1000 per year. 18% contribute between \$1000 and \$5000 per year. 7% contribute over \$5000 per year. 18% make no contributions.

How have our staffing levels changed compared to the past several years? How do our staffing levels compare to similar type churches?

At the beginning of the year (2016), our FTEs were at 39 versus the 2015 budget of 41 FTEs. For 2016 we are budgeting 42 FTEs.

In a survey of 17 large churches in Austin, Dallas and San Antonio, which includes Riverbend, the average percent of budget planned for salary related expense is 55%. In our 2016 proposed budget, 55% is planned for salary-related expense.

Does the 2016 Budget include raises for the staff? Did the staff receive raises for last year? How does the church determine pay ranges for church employees?

The 2016 budget includes a raise pool for the staff of 3%. The church was able to give raises last year out of a 3% raise pool.

The raise pool will be recommended by staff leadership, the Personnel Committee and the Coordinating Committee and affirmed by the Church Council for 2016.

Each year a subcommittee of the Personnel Committee reviews all staff salaries and compares them to salary surveys of similar churches. It then makes recommendations to staff leadership for any needed changes.

How much does Riverbend give to outside missions and is this included in the budget?

The Missions Committee operates on a policy that it does not give funds to outside organizations that the church does not also support with the involvement of our people. Consequently, today the organizations we support are the ones we have our volunteers very involved in. These include Mobile Loaves & Fishes, Community First, Neighborhood Development in Rundberg and Travis Heights, Habitat for Humanity, Angels Afoot, The Right Stuff school supply drive, an El Salvador community, ADRN, and a few smaller ventures.

The 2016 mission's budget is \$305,864, which includes having a full-time dedicated Missions Pastor. This compares to \$393,080 in 2015 actual expenditures. Please note that 2015's number included nearly \$80K toward the cost of building micro-houses and an outdoor kitchen at the Community First village, which are a one-time expense and are not repeated in the 2016 budget.

The mission's committee of the church monitors our mission income and expenses on a monthly basis, and should designated income increase, our expenses toward those ministries would increase and vice versa. Essentially our missional efforts have the opportunity to grow as large as the passions of those serving are growing and contributing. For 2015, there was a total of \$302K in donations and fees contributed toward missions versus the prior year (2014) donations and fees of \$162K, so it is very possible to receive and spend more than the current budget.

Beyond designated donations to missions, there was approximately \$150,000 of goods, services and gifts that were given to outside causes through our various programs such as food drives, school supply drives and our Angels Afoot toy drive this past Christmas.

Further, Riverbend families are currently sponsoring 36 high school children, four college students, and 45 grade school children as part of our mission to El Salvador, at a cost of approximately \$45,000.

In summary, last year our Riverbend community spent nearly \$600K toward our missional efforts across our city and across our borders.

What is Riverbend's level of debt and how much debt was retired last year? What are the plans to reduce the debt?

As of year-end 2015, the remaining principal balance on our long-term debt note was \$8,253,107. Last year we retired \$413,815 of the principal.

What happens to my giving when I designate it for a certain purpose like the building project or missions? Does the church ever use those funds for anything else?

All donations that are given with a designation like the building project or missions are directed to the appropriate fund to be used only for that designated purpose. The church does not mix funds nor does it use designated donations for other purposes. If it is not possible for the church to fulfill the designation request, the donor will be contacted and asked what should be done with their donation.

What do we spend repairing our facilities and what is the plan for the future if major repairs are required?

Over the years we have spent anywhere from \$25,000 per year to \$250,000 per year repairing air conditioners, heaters, boilers, roofs, walkways, and all the other things that wear out in facilities this size. In 2011, with all of the improvements made to the campus with the renovations as well as the new building, we made over \$6.5 million worth of capital improvements. We not only made cosmetic improvements, but we also made major improvements to our air conditioning systems, our irrigation systems, both our interior and exterior lighting, our signage, our drainage systems, our walkways and plaza areas, and more. The end result is a much more energy-efficient, as well as attractive campus.

For 2016 we have planned \$270,000 for the installation of a new roof on the Home for Hope Sanctuary, which is funded through a combination of cash plus our reserve fund. Should any emergencies arise, they will be reviewed and approved by the Coordinating Committee, with funds from our emergency/reserve fund used to pay for them.

With the Vision for the Church, are there any plans for additions to facilities that are projected in the Budget?

With the recent new building and renovations project completed, most of our short-term needs have been met. However, as our facilities and equipment continue to age, we regularly monitor and assess our current needs, and work with the Coordinating Committee and Church Council to project what might be needed for the future.

In 2011 we were successful in petitioning the city to get a 25-year extension to our current site plan, which will enable us as demand calls for it, to build out our campus according to the master plan that was put in place in 1991. This site plan extension is very significant, as it will greatly facilitate the process with the city of Austin should Riverbend Church need to expand in the future.

I don't have the ability to make monetary donations currently but I would like to contribute my time to help offset costs at the church. Who do I contact to make my availability known?

Go to www.riverbend.com/involvement, or contact Norm Schoenfeld, Pastor of Church Involvement, at the church office by calling 512-327-3540, or by email at nschoenfeld@riverbend.com. Let him know that you would like to volunteer your time, skills and talents, and he will put you in contact with someone.