



# 2023 Annual Report

 GROWPOINT

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Will we always find ourselves in awe? Will we remain enamored and marvel at God's faithfulness throughout the years? I hope so!

As we bid farewell to 2023, our hearts are filled with amazement and gratitude. The year began with a focus on Endurance and Maturity and concluded with a fierce dedication to Peace. The details in between are too numerous to capture in words, and I may inadvertently miss something. Nevertheless, the unwavering truth of God's faithfulness persists.

Oftentimes, God's faithfulness is expressed in broad terms, such as the common phrase, "God is good," which can be uttered without supplying specifics. Our intention in **celebrating** 2023 is to break away from generalizations and be specific about God's faithfulness. We witness His compassion, grace, and mercy when we pause to reflect and remember. This act of looking back and acknowledging His deeds is a form of communion. Such communion not only fills our hearts with gratitude but also imparts hope and strength to our souls for the days that lie ahead. Reflecting becomes a practice, a meaningful exercise in appreciating the journey.

Remember the words from David in Psalm 27:

*The one thing I ask of the Lord -  
the one thing I seek most -  
is to live in the house of the Lord all the  
days of my life,  
delighting in the Lord's perfections  
and meditating in His Temple.  
For He will conceal me there when  
troubles come;  
He will hide me in His sanctuary.*

Today is about delighting, meditating, reflecting, and **celebrating** the goodness and faithfulness of God!

**Pastor Josh Smith**  
Lead Pastor



We don't only measure growth in numbers...  
but we love to **celebrate** these ones!

first-time salvations  
**77**

water baptisms  
**45**

Holy Spirit baptisms  
**62**

healings  
**34**

new members  
**31**

recommitments  
**20**

baby dedications  
**24**

compassion fund families  
**57**

sunday attendance averages **449** weekly

adults  
**364**

kids  
**63**

youth  
**40**



Discipleship is one of those familiar words in the church that is broadly defined and even more broadly measured. We define discipleship as simply following Jesus. Now, what about the next part? How do we measure discipleship? If we pay close attention to the Bible, the metrics are spelled out for us. Galatians 5:22-23 lists out the Fruit of the Spirit — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness & self-control. Colossians 2:6-7 highlights gratitude as an indication of discipleship. We could use these two verses for the rest of our lives to measure our connectedness to Jesus.

Here's the fun part! Right now, we get to look back over the course of 2023 to acknowledge and **celebrate** the way those who call GrowPoint home have become more connected to Jesus!

Here are some of the ways we **celebrate** discipleship in 2023.

We had 432 people participating in groups! More than ever before! We witnessed God breathe life, hope, and healing in families! We saw the importance of community when individuals navigated difficulties ranging from job challenges, loss of loved ones, homes impacted during the flash floods in August, and support for those facing health challenges. We saw families grow in their faith and trust in God's promises as they gave tithes and offerings for the first time making giving part of their personal finances. We are becoming a confessing community. (I read recently that "a maturing community is a confessing community - not a church without sin, but a church without secrets.") We are heading there! We are praying more. We are internationally being with each other and getting into the Word of God through GrowGroups, GrowPoint Ladies and Guys events, Moms and Family Groups, special gatherings and many more. We are becoming more generous, as evidenced by tithes and offerings, giving to the roof project, volunteers giving their time at Stevan Dohanos, sponsoring kids and youth to summer camp and the nearly 300 gifts purchased for students, staff, and faculty!

These are all healthy signs of discipleship! We **celebrate** each of these because they tell the story of connectedness to Jesus! Discipleship is a continuum, so let's remain connected to Jesus so that we continue to be His expression of love to one another AND to this region we call home!

**Pastor Sumer Smith**  
*Lead Pastor*



**a community compelled by grace to grow**



## 2023 | GrowKids

GrowKids is dedicated to serving children from infancy to 5th grade and partnering with families to foster committed followers of Jesus. Our commitment spans all ages, offering a multifaceted approach to building young disciples through Sunday morning programming, special events and intentional family discipleship resources.

In the Nursery and Walkers rooms, volunteers welcomed children up to 3 years old, creating a loving and safe atmosphere. The Walkers class introduced a new structure with hands-on activities aligned with weekly Bible lessons and created memorable moments as children remembered stories and sang worship songs. Our Preschool & Kindergarten class thrived in 2023 with new families and a thankful influx of volunteer team members focusing on Bible stories, crafts, and foundational truths. Sunday morning gatherings in The Point engaged 1st - 5th graders in age-specific small groups, sparking wonder and discovery of God's Word through experiential learning.

Alongside Sunday gatherings, our emphasis on family discipleship provided us with more opportunities to engage families and **celebrate** spiritual milestones. GrowKids had 38 first time salvations and 8 water baptisms in 2023! In our Parent Commissioning courses, over 28 individuals committed themselves to Christ-centered parenting and dedicated over 22 children to the Lord in response!

Once school let out, our GrowKids embarked on a journey to "Camp Petros" for the summer, culminating in our first onsite GrowKids Summer Camp - an unforgettable deep dive into Peter's life with 68 kids and over 40 volunteers. Community-building took center-stage with Parties in the Park as GrowPoint gathered together to laugh, play games, and enjoy spontaneous dance parties.

As we step into 2024, our commitment to families continues with a Discipleship Pathway guiding parents through their children's life stages to a vibrant, growing and personal relationship with Jesus. This year, The Biggest Story takes center stage—a chronological study of the Bible highlighting God's amazing love. Alongside, we'll teach spiritual milestones, including communion, water baptism, and personal gifts. Celebrating the growth of the past year, anticipation is building for upcoming events and a continuation of the exciting journey in GrowKids!

**Pastor Lesli Klingenmeier**  
**Pastor Gabby Jenkins**  
**Rose Curtis**  
*GrowKids Team*



This year brought GrowStudents, grades 6th-12th, an abundance of joy and laughter with a focus on building stronger attachments within our small groups and fixing our gaze on our Heavenly Father. During our Sunday night gatherings, we dedicated valuable time to equip students with the Armor of God and encouraged them to lean into the Holy Spirit, with the ultimate goal of strengthening their bond with Jesus and positively impacting their schools and families.

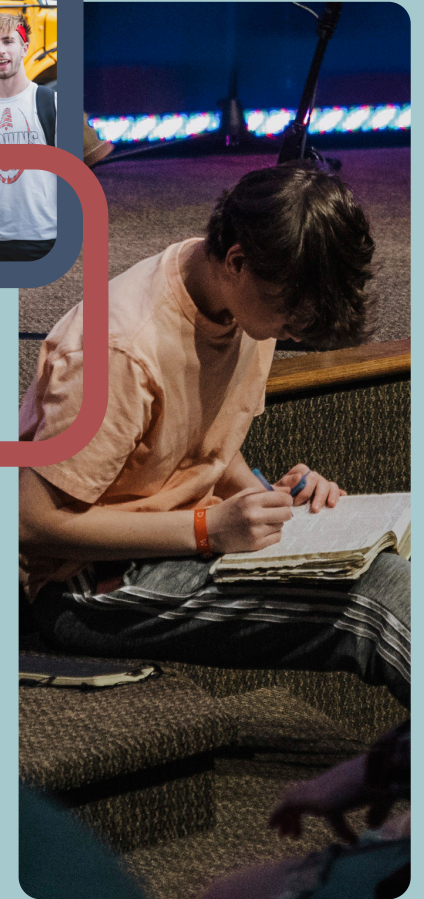
Our joy stems from connecting with students and creating lasting memories through various events like small group gatherings, after school devos, parties, and Rally Nights. One of our favorite moments included witnessing students host small groups in their homes during 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays which provided valuable opportunities for discipleship among our leaders and allowing students to take leadership roles among their peers. Summer brought delightful moments with “Late Nights” for post-youth hangouts and the unforgettable Back-to-School Lock-In at the Lake Erie Crushers Stadium, attended by 80 students.

A highlight of 2023 was our first Unified Youth Conference, drawing 88 students and leaders! This weekend aimed to meet students where they are and guide them in fully embracing life with Jesus. For Summer Camp, our return to Miracle Camp with 89 attendees breathed renewed life into our youth ministry, creating life-changing memories.

These foundational years are crucial for our students, and we **celebrate** and express sincere gratitude for your partnership in prayer and financial support. As we eagerly anticipate 2024, we are filled with excitement about the incredible things God has in store for GrowStudents.

**Bailee Reitz**

*GrowStudents Director*



## 2023 | Outreach & Neighborhood Fund

At GrowPoint, our driving principles of outreach and missions revolve around Intentional Presence, Genuine Moments, and Strategic Partnerships. Inspired by Jesus' emphasis on love and value in personal interactions, we aim to echo the same sentiment of "speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15). We **celebrate** all God did through our church in 2023!

Our primary outreach focus is on our adopted school, Stevan Dohanos Elementary School in Lorain, with additional support for other schools in the area. We expressed gratitude to teachers and staff through volunteering, appreciation breakfasts, lunches, and gifts, extending our outreach to schools across the Lorain, Amherst and Firelands School Districts.

In July, a team of seven GrowPoint members traveled to Nicaragua, Central America, collaborating with Pastors Randhus & Sylvia Carrion and the Foursquare Church. The mission included distributing 1,000 Bibles, providing medical care to 394 individuals, ministering to children, and witnessing numerous salvations, rededications, and healings. Our involvement also extended to building a new church, with plans for GrowPoint to return in 2024.

Locally, we sponsored the Firelands FFA program, as well as collected items for Path & Green in their efforts to help high school girls with personal care products. Additionally, we sponsored Amherst Athletic Association's baseball and softball teams and offered our property for team practices. Collaborating with organizations like Mercy Chefs and Foursquare Disaster Relief, we assisted victims of natural disasters and the Ukraine War.

Throughout the year, we made donations to various causes, including Mother's Day support for a single mothers group and Father's Day support for a dads mentoring program. A Veterans Day contribution was made to the Lorain Valor Home, and we participated in events like Amherst's Miracle on Main Street Christmas Parade.

Our monthly financial support reached ministry partners globally through Mobile Outreach Solutions, Cornerstone Pregnancy Services, Life Pacific University Virginia, Mercy Chefs, Overland Missions Middle East, Burundi, Africa Missionaries Greg & Caysey Reph, Foursquare Missions International, Foursquare's Adopt-A-Pastor in Africa & Asia, and Foursquare Press which sends free Bibles, resources and Gospel literature around the world.

We made donations in honor of each new guests at GrowPoint contributing to a Lorain County nonprofit of their choice — Path & Green, Lorain Boys & Girls Club, Cornerstone Pregnancy Services, Blessing House, Genesis House, Love INC, Second Harvest Food Bank, Lorain Valor Home, Salvation Army, and the America Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Our commitment to Intentional Presence was evident through personal outreach efforts by GrowPoint members. Senior adults provided meals to the needy on the westside of Lorain and the Haven Center, students worked with Second Harvest Food Bank, and adults volunteered as little league coaches. GrowPoint's MicroGrant Program supported members in personal outreach initiatives, such as: Christmas Shoeboxes, hosting neighborhood outreach parties and prayer initiatives, delivering meals with prayer to healthcare workers, and collecting and distributing winter coats. GrowPoint encourages members to prayerfully consider ways to reach out with the love of Jesus, and the MicroGrant program is here to help.

stevan dohanos christmas



nicaragua missions trip



miracle on main street christmas parade



# \$260,408

to reach, teach & disciple people  
with the gospel of Jesus in 2023!



four square

**\$67,892**

kids & youth

**\$56,098**

foreign missions

**\$31,610**

local & stateside missions

**\$7,698**

compassion

**\$13,346**

discipleship & church ministries

**\$64,824**

neighborhood outreach

**\$18,937**



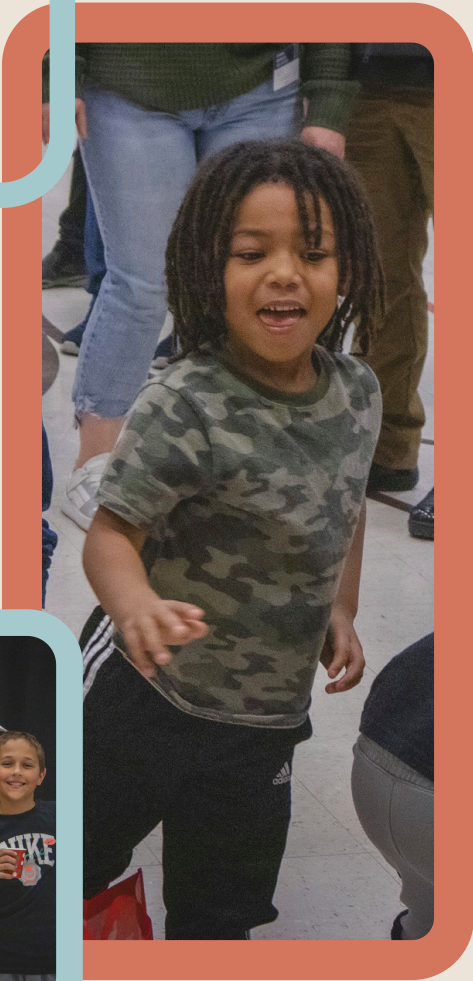
Growth and gratitude. These two words most accurately describe this past year at Stevan Dohanos Elementary School. In the Spring of 2022, GrowPoint adopted Stevan Dohanos with the purpose of serving the school and loving like Jesus. This public school in South Lorain has now become part of our family, and we are **celebrating** together what God has done in 2023!

With over 50 weekly volunteers from January to December, the relationships between our GrowPoint family and our Stevan Dohanos family have grown exponentially. Personal connections have been made with the teachers and volunteers, even beyond school hours! Students recognize that GrowPoint is here for them, and they regularly ask about our volunteers — to the point of keeping them accountable when they miss a week!

Our biggest event of the year is the massive Christmas Party we hosted for each grade level. We took over the gym with festive decorations and games, and gave personalized gifts to each student. Each of the 300 Christmas gifts were shopped for and donated by our GrowPoint Family! We also included gifts for the teachers too. This is arguably the most fun day of the year, but it would not be possible without the 1,800+ hours of consistency from our weekly volunteers throughout the entire school year. By devoting time to serve at the school, offering prayers for both students and teachers, and organizing activities, the commitment and sacrifices made have left a lasting positive influence on the students and teachers at Stevan Dohanos.

We **celebrate** and are grateful to God for the opportunity to serve Stevan Dohanos and to have a growing relationship with this school. As doors continue to open, we look forward with excitement for what is to come, knowing what God has already done! Pray with us and consider joining our team — it's only volunteering one hour a week!

**Pastor Gabby Jenkins**  
*Adopt-A-School Coordinator*



Giving at GrowPoint is less about the amounts and more about our hearts. When financially giving, the Bible talks about our ever-growing trust and confidence in God's grace and provision. It talks about our joy and gratefulness to Jesus for receiving His salvation and presence in our lives. It talks about living free, not bound and burdened by worries and fear. It talks about sowing seeds of faith to build God's Kingdom here on earth. It talks about blessing others and in the process being blessed. We get to give and experience the blessings promised by Jesus through His loving kindness.

Because of God's goodness and through the faithful giving of our GrowPoint Family, GrowPoint ended 2023 financially in the BLACK! Praise God! We **celebrate** that all our 2023 expenses were completely covered, which allowed us to apply the surplus toward paying off the Roof Replacement Project. Thank you for giving to the Lord so generously, faithfully and sacrificially!

The Church Advisory Council meets each month to review and oversee the finances and operational budget, and they work with the Building & Grounds Team to ensure our facilities are safe, functional and up-to-date for the honor of God.

There's something we've learned here at GrowPoint, we can't out give God. He always provides "more than we ask... pressed-down, shaken and overflowing." Let's **celebrate** what God did through our giving in 2023 – all for His glory and for Jesus to be known!

**Pastor Todd Rainey**  
*Executive Pastor*

### Facility Projects Completed in 2023

\$22,720.46 paid in full. Praise God!

- Made some Winter Roof Leak Repairs
- HVAC Repairs to The Point & Sanctuary
- Plumbing Repairs to the Restrooms
- Updated some Sanctuary Lighting
- New Gas Line for the Office HVAC
- Updates to Security System
- Repairs to the Boilers
- Replaced all the Exterior Door Sweeps

### Flat Roof Replacement Project Completed in 2023

Total cost of \$292,000.00 paid in full. Praise God!

### **2023 Building & Grounds Team**

Christina Coughlin, Dave Haff, Jeff Ondraka, Kim Smith, Tom Szychowicz, Laura Waun, Todd Rainey

## Needed Facilities Projects

- Balcony/Foyer/Lobby HVAC – \$40,000
- Replace the Rear Parking Lot with new Drainage – \$45,000
- New Carpet in the Point (Youth & Kids) – \$20,000
- Replace drop ceilings in the Women's & Men's Restrooms - \$3,000
- Drainage for the Front and Back Yards - \$5,000 for every sixty feet

### **What happens when you give?**

- **Tithes** go to our annual operating budget approved and overseen by the Church Advisory Council and enables GrowPoint to provide for weekly items such as GrowKids and GrowStudents, local ministry partnerships throughout Lorain County, Discipleship at GrowPoint, utilities, cleaning, staffing, and other operational items.
- The **Neighborhood Fund** goes to loving, reaching out and sharing Jesus with Lorain County.
- The **Missions Fund** goes to sharing Jesus around the world through Foursquare Missions International.
- The **Envelope Challenge** goes to providing for GrowPoint's Kids & Youth Summer Camps.
- The **Compassion Fund** goes to helping the physical needs of our GrowPoint Family.
- The **Building Fund** goes to maintaining this facility that God has strategically provided for us to gather and worship Him and from which to launch out into our county with His light and love.



Online at  
[growpoint.church/give](https://growpoint.church/give)



Mail to  
PO Box 146, Amherst



Text amount  
to 84321



Giving Stations  
at back of sanctuary



## God's Word

John 1:1 lays it out plainly for us, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* The Word is eternal. The Word is life. Transformation comes when the Word is embraced. This explains why God's Word is our first value!

## Intentional Presence

This value confronts the cultural norm of passivity. When you are in public, intentional presence is being aware of the people around you, and understanding that you can interrupt their day with peace, love, joy, and kindness. When you come to church, intentional presence is demonstrated through an eagerness to let God speak to your heart and through serving your church family.

## Humble Confidence

God detests arrogance; and He is also grieved when insecurity diminishes our life. Humble confidence is the framework we should live from. Humility acknowledges that God is God, that He is sovereign, that He is all-powerful, that we are nothing without Him. When we see who He is, and then who we are in Him, then we live in confidence; humble confidence to be more accurate.

## Goodness & Kindness

With a world full of movements, we believe that a movement of goodness and kindness will bring about the greatest change. A life that is lived for Jesus should emanate these virtues.

## Joy & Laughter

Nehemiah 8:10 gives us the reminder that *"...the joy of the Lord is your strength."* We also gain some joyful wisdom from Proverbs 17:22, where we read that *"A joyful (laughing) heart is good medicine..."* When our heart is filled with the presence of Jesus, we are literally filled with joy and laughter.

## Unending Pursuit

This means that we never stop craving Jesus. When we pursue Him, we are changed, and we grow. Ephesians 4:15 explains this virtue with incredible precision: *"Speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into Christ."* When you say yes to Jesus, you say yes to a life of pursuing Him. (It is worth explaining that He is always pursuing you.)



Pastor  
**Josh Smith**  
Lead Pastor



Pastor  
**Sumer Smith**  
Lead Pastor



Pastor  
**Todd Rainey**  
Executive Pastor



**Sam Kamnikar**  
Creative Director



**Nico Curtis**  
Worship Director



**Bailee Reitz**  
GrowStudents Director



Pastor  
**Lesli Klingemeier**  
GrowKids Pastor



Pastor  
**Gabby Jenkins**  
GrowKids Coordinator



**Rose Curtis**  
Nursery & Walkers  
Coordinator



**Tammi Rainey**  
Ministry Coordinator



**Nancy Schuster**  
Administrative Assistant



Pastor  
**Bev Beidleman**  
Assisting Pastor

## 2023 Church Advisory Council

Rick Block, Jen Anderson, Cal Kody, Kurt Mellen, Tari Reph, Kaleb Snizek

## What is church membership and why should I be interested?

### 1. Membership reflects what the church is.

Church is not meant to be a pile of dismembered body parts, but rather a body knit together... working and growing together. (Romans 12:5)

### 2. The Bible teaches covenant community.

There is no such thing in the New Testament as a church without some recognition of belonging — of membership in community, partnering together with Holy Spirit to grow and serve others.

### 3. People need church membership.

People need membership commitment because they need to be connected to a Christian community. This is not just for the sake of the faith community, but also for the sake of the individual. Followers of Jesus need a place to serve fellow believers and the community.

### 4. Church Voting

According to the Foursquare Bi-laws, you are eligible to vote once you are recognized as an official and active member of GrowPoint.. Members vote to ratify Advisory Council Members, agree upon larger building projects, etc.

## How do I become a member at GrowPoint?

We would love to talk more about membership with you at **Let's Talk GrowPoint**, a course that will go through everything you need to know about GrowPoint before making that commitment.

Let's Talk GrowPoint is required for anyone pursuing church membership but is also open to those who would like to simply learn about GrowPoint more in-depth.

Session dates and registration for Let's Talk GrowPoint can be found online at [growpoint.church/events](http://growpoint.church/events).

## Membership Commitment

In becoming an official member of GrowPoint, each individual is asked to agree and sign this commitment. Visit [growpoint.church/membership](http://growpoint.church/membership) for the full membership commitment.

### 1. I will protect the unity of my church

- By acting in ever-increasing love, profound kindness, peace and unity towards the other members and attenders.
- By refusing to gossip.
- By not being easily offended and following the Word of God to resolve all conflicts and disputes.
- By confessing to God and to trusted fellow-believers when I sin and cause hurt and seeking Jesus' victory in the areas of my life where I struggle.
- By following and submitting to the pastors and church leadership.

### 2. I will share the responsibility of my church

- By praying for its growth, impact and spiritual maturity.
- By inviting others to attend (the broken, the un-churched, those who don't know Jesus).
- By warmly welcoming all those who attend or visit and actively engaging them in conversation and activities.

### 3. I will serve the ministry of my church

- By personally pursuing the Lord Jesus Christ through daily Bible reading, prayer, Christian fellowship and spiritual disciplines.
- By discovering my gifts and talents to actively serve in the church as well as in the community.
- By being equipped through discipleship and training by my pastors, church teachers and leadership, etc.
- By developing a loving servant's heart.

### 4. I will support the testimony of my church

- By submitting to the Bible as the final authority on all issues and daily living it out.
- By being present and faithfully attending in-person gatherings. I will attend way more than I am absent... missing no more than two Sundays each month, actively participating in a Group, and caring for those within and outside of this church.
- By living a Godly life through the power of Holy Spirit and not abusing the freedom of God's grace.
- By stewarding the resources God gives me, including time, talents, spiritual gifts and finances including regular financial tithing and additional offerings to this church that are sacrificial, cheerful and voluntary.



[growpoint.church](https://growpoint.church)

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