



LIVING THE STORY EVERY DAY





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From our pastor



Dear Cliff Temple Family,

Each year, the staff and Leadership Council set goals to help our congregation live into the mission of building everyday people into everyday missionaries for Jesus Christ. Over time, our hope is that this statement moves from our heads into our hearts.

The heart is the seat of our emotions. There are more neurological pathways from the heart than from the head. That's why the scripture says, *"Above all else, guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life"* (Proverbs 4:23), why Jesus says, *"Blessed are the pure of heart"* (Matthew 5:8), and *"Out of the abundance of our heart the mouth speaks"* (Matthew 12:34).

The Cliff Temple story is shaped by the language of the heart. The stories of Virginia Goslin, Mary Rutledge, and Weston Ware are among many stories shared during our 125th anniversary celebration and the 75th anniversary celebration of Mission Oak Cliff. Regardless of whether or not we ever met them, their stories shape the way we live our lives every day.

The stories we tell shape our values and show us our calling as individuals and corporately as the body of Christ. If we say we value something but do not tell stories that show how we put those values into practice, we need to reevaluate what we claim to value.

The festivities of 2023 helped us do that. In 2024, we will learn how those stories define our mission and help us get in on the everyday, Spirit-filled life of following Jesus as we discern our calling and those to whom we are being sent.

I am grateful for the gift of being sent to you and for the story that shapes our common heart every day.

Jesus Only,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gannon Sims'.

Gannon Sims
Senior Pastor | Lead Missionary

2023 HIGHLIGHTS JANUARY



Sharing God's gifts everyday, we started the year talking about *oikonomics*: a creative way to get our houses in order through stewardship of our whole lives, spiritually, relationally, physically, intellectually, and financially.

The first (annual) Jan Term: From mentorship to theology, this four-week experiment offered opportunities for Sunday School participants to learn alongside a new group of individuals and gave a connection point for those who do not typically participate in Sunday School.

Blessed are the pure of heart. This 10-week preaching series unpacked Jesus' teaching in the **Sermon on the Mount** (Matthew 5-7). The more we focus on the words of Jesus, the more we will be like Jesus.

The stories we tell shape our values and how we live as everyday missionaries. In January, staff and Leadership Council hosted storytelling dinners as a way to better understand our values as a church. Check out the values gleaned from those stories on page 20.

On the **Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service**, we picked up trash in our neighborhood and wrote letters to our friends at Methodist Hospital, The Well, Mission Oak Cliff, and the Villages of Dallas.



This year for MLK day, my family didn't just read about my hero, Dr. King, we did something together on the MLK day of service. Even though I cut my finger picking up broken glass, the kids and I had such a great time that we can't wait to come back next year. Bring your kids and bring work gloves.

Jonathan Hunnicutt, regular attendee since 2021

MARCH

The Lenten Prayer Retreat was inspired by the Spanish word for 'Lent' which is *cuaresmo* meaning forty. We considered Jesus' temptation in the desert that established the law of the Spirit.

The Child Development Center again received the highest rating for Texas early childhood programs (4-star) and is advancing in the process of achieving accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children.



FEBRUARY

Spiritual Gifts. Cliff Temple Sunday School focused on the Spiritual Gifts as we further invested in our individual giftings as a church. As we seek to become everyday missionaries, we want to investigate the callings on each person's life and the particular ways God has given each person gifts to contribute to the church.

Oak Cliff Mardi Gras Parade was a fun fellowship for our church and a great way to connect with our neighbors in North Oak Cliff.



During the **Ash Wednesday** service, we were reminded that we were made of good dust and that to dust we will return. We then asked forgiveness for anything we have done knowingly or unknowingly.



Souper Bowl of Caring brought together all segments of the church to celebrate the impact Mission Oak Cliff has on our community. Families in the church and the Cliff Temple Child Development Center brought over 400 pounds of food and raised over \$4,000 for Mission Oak Cliff. On "Souper Bowl Sunday of Caring," the youth served a soup lunch complete with bowls made by our art community and desserts made by numerous people from inside and outside of our church.

We hosted Daniel Trusiewicz, a leader in the European Baptist Federation and the Baptist Union of Poland, to discuss humanitarian aid to churches in **Poland and Ukraine.**



The **Swing for the Cliff** Golf Tournament raised \$25,000 for our youth mission trip to Corpus Christi and included the most sponsors, golfers, and donors to date.

We interviewed people in our community, many of whom do not go to church, to get their perspectives on the needs and pain points in our community. We found out that many are lonely and lacking connection, so we have begun designing small missional experiments to help create better points of connection in our community.



The Swing for the Cliff golf tournament gives me the opportunity to give back to the youth of our church. I remember my youth events at Cliff Temple and how special they were in so many ways. Being a small part of paying it forward for our youth to experience these mission trips is a gift, but the reward is hearing the youth express their experiences when they return to the church. Knowing that they have grown in their faith and ministered to others will remain with them for the rest of their life.

Mary Ashworth Phillips, member since 1958

Mary Phillips (L) pictured here with Judy Pollock and Phil Berry.



At **Easter Egg Palooza**, families from Cliff Temple and the Child Development Center enjoyed a beautiful evening of egg hunts, games, face painting, and BBQ. Kenny Cheshier and the youth group made this event possible by their help in every aspect of the palooza.



About 50 people came for breakfast and worship at **Easter Sunrise** in Lake Cliff Park. The gathering was hosted by Cliff Temple en Español and drew in several who might not otherwise participate in worship at Cliff Temple.

APRIL

On **Good Friday** we had three noonday worship gatherings where we reflected on the sacrifice our Savior made for us. Gatherings were at Kiest Park, Club Parc, and Cliff Temple. By gathering outside in public spaces we connected with more people than we would have otherwise.



The **New Life Symphony Orchestra**, a group of local instrumentalists who spread the Gospel and encourage believers throughout the world, launched our summer concert series.

Acts of the Spirit through the Acts of the Apostles, the sermon series from May to November, brought to life the formation of the church by early believers. In the Jesus-shaped way of life, heaven and earth are closer than we think, and his resurrection opens up the gifts of God for the whole world.

MAY

The **Mission Oak Cliff summer kick-off** served hotdogs and hygiene kits to bless our neighbors.

Amon was a bad, bad king, but Josiah, who was only eight when he became king, was a great king! He led his people to worship the one true God. Through the **Children's Musical**, *Good 'Kings' Come In Small Packages*, our children learned about following God, even when times are tough and that when temptation comes... *count to ten!*





The **Youth Spring Retreat** focused on how God created each of us in God's own image and how God is the master artist. Seeing God as creator taught our teenagers to creatively work together as a team.



Practicing Resurrection: The Sermon Series during Eastertide challenged us to move from slavery to freedom by listening for the voice of the Shepherd and allowing his voice to speak to our hearts.

Easter Sunday in the Temple of Worship.

JUNE

Our Summer Concert Series continued with the Dallas Symphony Chamber Orchestra On the Go!



We welcomed **Emilie Flaherty** as Associate Minister for Children and Families and **Marlon Iván Ríos** as Director of Mission Oak Cliff and Minister for Missions and Spanish Language Ministries.

Summer Suppers in homes and area restaurants gathered another cross-section of the church community for delicious food and deep conversation.





24/7 Youth On Mission, 42 teenagers went to Corpus Christi in late June to help El Mesias and Segunda Iglesia Bautista with their Vacation Bible Schools. We also helped the Baptist Student Ministry at Texas A&M Corpus Christi with landscaping and prayer walked multiple neighborhoods. God had prepared in advance divine encounters, and two of our students were baptized in the ocean.

Preteen Camp at Mount Lebanon introduced our kids to a new life. "This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life has gone, a new life has begun!" (2 Corinthians 2:15)



Stan Granberry, Greg Evetts, and Scott Coleman scooped up some fun at our summer church business meeting.

JULY

The July summer concert featured Waco-based folk-pop artists **We are the Monks!**

Cliff Temple kids teamed up with Brother Bill's Helping Hand for a four-day **VBS On the Go** where we learned that following Jesus changes everything. We had an average of 40 kids each day. The event was primarily run by incredible work of the Cliff Temple youth.

On Friday of VBS week we formed a small missional experiment engaging kids from Mission Oak Cliff and the Child Development Center (CDC) while also inviting our Brother Bill's participants to join us back at Cliff Temple for a two-hour VBS Blitz. Quite a few families from Brother Bill's came, and one family has continued to come to Cliff Temple ever since. The CDC students had a blast getting to visit our upstairs children's area with their teachers, and we finished the day off with one big pizza picnic in Fellowship Hall.



What prevents me from being baptized?



During the summer of 2023, forty-two from our youth group at Cliff Temple Baptist Church journeyed to Corpus Christi, Texas, for a mission training trip. These trips serve as training grounds for us to learn how to be everyday missionaries where we live, work, and play. Before we left for the trip, God revealed himself to me, through his Holy Spirit, that we were going to baptize someone in the ocean during our adventure. Personally, I felt we would baptize someone from the community of Corpus.

As our group was riding in the bus early in the week, one of the students passed a note to me saying, "KENNY ONLY" on the front. The content was simple. It read, "Can you baptize us at the beach on Friday? We want to let God into our lives." I was amazed! God had revealed the "who" that was supposed to be baptized, and it was two, not just one. What a humbling experience it was to baptize Elsie and Joi at Whitecap Beach in Corpus on that Friday morning.

In that moment, God impressed upon the story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, "And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?'"

Like the eunuch, they saw some water and felt led to be baptized. We stopped the bus, went down to the water, and experienced the Holy moment of baptism. Along with these two, we were able to baptize seven others into a new life in Christ this year. Like those in the story, in every case, we went on our way rejoicing for what the Lord had done.

Kenny Cheshier, Associate Pastor; Minister for Youth, Senior Adults, and Hospitality

AUGUST

Our **summer concert** featured local musical artist Graham Jones who stirred our hearts with his lyrics and stories.

To kick off the new school year we held a **Wednesday Night Rally** where we offered a free dinner, games, and entertainment to the community. There was great participation from the Child Development Center and some new faces as well.

At the **Mission Oak Cliff Back-to-School Bash**, we collected school supplies for 450 students. During the event, five people gave their lives to Christ, and two families came to Cliff Temple en Español!

Living the Word. During the Wednesday night youth and adult discipleship time, we created space to learn some basics of Biblical theology and practiced telling Bible stories.



SEPTEMBER

Adult Sunday School studied the book *The Divine Conspiracy* by Dallas Willard. Groups engaged with content that challenged the worldly binaries between faith and reason, social sin and personal sin, and even heaven and earth. Willard presents the gospel which says, "We must develop a straightforward presentation, in word and life, of the reality of life now under God's rule, through reliance upon the word and person of Jesus. In this way we can naturally become his students or apprentices. We can learn from him how to live our lives as he would live them if he were we. We can enter his eternal kind of life now."



We launched **Cliff Temple Dads**, a group designed to build friendships among dads by offering monthly social outings, service opportunities, and ways to support local Oak Cliff businesses.

We took our prayer retreats to a new level with a **Prayer Practicum**. Our emerging prayer teams discussed how to live and pray from our identity as children of God. This looks like allowing oneself to be more child-like in one's relationship with God by not being afraid of our sense of holy imagination, practicing awe, and wonder. These habits make room for dependence on God, the source of our help.



Over 70 business, non-profit, and ministry leaders from across the nation gathered for the **5Q Leadership Summit** led by Alan Hirsch and the 5Q Team. Cliff Temple has been selected to host this event again September 22-24, 2024.

Photo of Alan Hirsch

PRAYER THROUGH LISTENING

We are creating space to practice listening together on a more regular basis. In John 10:27 Jesus says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." There is a growing group of people who desire to deepen their ability to communicate with God through prayer. They meet on Sunday mornings before Sunday School. For more information, contact Carey Sims careywsims@gmail.com.

OCTOBER

Trunk or Treat was moved indoors, and it resulted in a wonderful turn of events. Laughter echoed down every hallway as church members, teachers from the CDC, and friends from the local community turned our second floor into a kids' trick or treating adventure.



Through a live Scripture performance, **Piercing Word**, a drama group from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, told the story of the Bible in one hour.



In a perfect world my hope for the Cliff Temple Dads is to build more friendships and connections with families at the Child Development Center, while also plugging the love of Jesus through Cliff Temple.

Matthew Flaherty, member since 2022

Matthew is pictured right with his dad, and dads Michael Hanson and William Zimmerman at Swing for the Cliff.

Night of Worship. Led by Talye Gwinn, the September Night of Worship was an intergenerational and bilingual worship experience. Youth and adults prayed for one another while singing praises to God in English and Spanish.



Tangible Kingdom. Tangible Kingdom was a Wednesday night discipleship offering where participants looked at tangible ways to missionally serve and love their neighbors. Each week, participants shared practical needs of neighbors and investigated ways in which we can emulate the tangibility of Jesus' ministry in the New Testament.

It was a Last-Minute Pivot...

Trunk or Treat makes space for community connections

It was a last-minute pivot, but we felt immeasurable peace from the very beginning. The weather called us to move our annual Trunk or Treat event indoors, but we felt all along that this was God's original plan. We were being set up with a new way to best reach our community and we needed a little rain to get there! Volunteers took the time to turn our entire second floor into an exciting maze of doorways where over 400 people would wind their way through, laughing and making memories inside the walls of our church. Parents shared that the surprise

of turning each corner kept children engaged and excitedly anticipating what would come next. The upstairs path gave families the time to linger and have meaningful conversation along the way. Downstairs, the Cliff Temple Dads prepared hundreds of hot dogs and hamburgers as we shared a picnic style meal in Fellowship Hall. The joy was undeniable, and the night was unforgettable.

Emilie Flaherty, Associate Minister for Children and Families



We celebrated our **125th Anniversary** as a church and our 100th as Cliff Temple. Hallways were decked with ornate displays of historical artifacts. Fellowship Hall was stuffed full of food, tables, recipes of members from our history, and Cliff Temple members past and present. The anniversary was a festive affair that featured the very best of who we are: members pulling together to create ceramic ornaments, form a reunion choir, and write a new compilation of our history. The anniversary was an opportunity to reflect on the variety of ways in which God has used this church in a variety of lives.

125TH ANNIVERSARY

brings the best from the past to the present

On Sunday, October 29, 2023, Cliff Temple Baptist Church celebrated her 125th Anniversary. As I began to pray and plan for all the different elements, I often remarked to anyone who would listen, "**125 years... like 125 YEARS!**" Months of planning and countless hours of work would culminate into one of those very special days in the life of Cliff Temple. I'm not sure any of us knew what to expect, but I knew God was going to use that day for His purpose. I knew we had accomplished that goal when at the end of the service, there was silence. The speechless kind of silence. Many were moved to tears as worship concluded in the place that has meant so much to so many through the years.





In the months leading up to the anniversary, we took time to revisit and remember our history through a series of videos featuring 125 years of church ministry, changes within our community, and world events. Our living former pastors recorded messages reflecting on their time of ministry at CT. The story of Cliff Temple was written and printed. Beautiful hand-crafted ornaments were created by our Art Team as a gift of celebration. Displays and pictures around the church brought the stories of our past to life. A commemorative program told our story from the beginning and ended with our present day and future. The Reunion Temple Choir led in worship, singing our most beloved hymns and anthems. A rainy and chilly fall day meant every space we had available was used for brunch for the over 400 former and current members in attendance. Smiles, hugs, stories, memories, and even tears filled the hallways and Temple,

re-connecting families and friends. Every age group, Sunday School class, and ministry team served or was represented in some capacity that day. I smiled, knowing we were paying it forward for the next generation and honoring all those who had come before us, the ones who taught us how to be everyday missionaries in our community. My heart was comforted, thinking they were surely smiling down on us. Mae Schuster, our oldest living member, summed up the day perfectly: "I love my church." October 29 was a day filled with honor, tribute, and gratitude. More than anything, I pray it reminds all of us of the power of faith, being faithful, serving our community, and tradition. I am grateful to have been a part of such a special day.

Debbie Webb, Cliff Temple member since 1984



NOVEMBER

At the 75th Anniversary Gala for **Mission Oak Cliff**, we celebrated the legacy of Virginia Goslin and raised \$78,000 for our work with community stakeholders to ensure a thriving Oak Cliff for all.



Marlon Ríos shares the vision for Mission Oak Cliff.

We hosted and participated in an event on **Mental Health and the Future Church** in partnership with Truett Seminary at Baylor University's Program for the Future Church.

DECEMBER

A New Life. The pastoral staff developed a six-hour interactive and intergenerational course for new or almost new Christians and their parents or guardians. One of the parents quickly remarked, "Everyone should take this course!" We plan to offer this course multiple times throughout the year.



Parents, their children and their pastors practice giving and receiving forgiveness.

Bearing Witness to A New Life

A New Life is our new Christian class at Cliff Temple. Rather than describing what participants learn, here is what one might witness: participants watching videos from The Bible Project, interactive group discussions, adults and kids acting out Bible passages together, and space to integrate Christian theology and practices into every area of life. In the first week of the course, participants learned the story of scripture, the basics of the gospel, and the practice of forgiveness. At multiple points, tears were shed as the group watched a video of Botham Jean's brother forgiving Amber Guyger, a former Dallas Police Officer. More tears were shed when mothers and fathers held the hands of their own children to offer and receive forgiveness during the forgiveness circle. Participants learn the theological points necessary for a new life in Christ, but the greatest success of this course lies in the participants' experience of the gospel's power of forgiveness as they live as everyday missionaries of Jesus' love and forgiveness in the world.

Trevor Jamieson, Minister for Discipleship, Spiritual Formation, and Young Adults



Loving our Neighborhood...

Mission Oak Cliff Celebrates 75th Anniversary

It was my pleasure to co-chair the 75th Anniversary Gala celebration of Mission Oak Cliff. The Mason graciously allowed us to use their beautiful facility. We enjoyed a delicious meal, a successful silent auction, a great speaker, and we were able to raise \$78,000 for the ongoing work of Mission Oak Cliff. I am grateful for all those who helped with this wonderful event. Virginia Goslin would have been so proud.

Pat Packard, Cliff Temple member since 1975

Mission Oak Cliff served 100 families with a full Thanksgiving meal.

Volunteers from Cliff Temple and Comunidad, Cultura y Cambio (C3), a young Latino professional organization, served the meals and provided the families with useful housing and immigration information. During the process, we took time to have empathetic conversations and to pray with each family.

The Night of Worship was led by a team of youth and members of Cliff Temple of both language services. Together, we reflected on Christ as King as we prayed for Christ to reign in the various pain points of our world and our community.

Minister of Music and Worship Tom Tillman, along with a team of choir members, youth, children, and families came together for a beautiful service featuring orchestra, choir, congregational singing, and the **Hanging of the Green**, a public time of worship and preparation for Christmas.



Cliff Temple en Español presented **Cantata Navideña**, an evening of music, worship and testimony in preparation for Christmas.

On **Christmas Eve**, we gathered for a service of Carols and Candlelight, and at **Christmas Day Lunches** we continued our legacy of hospitality by opening Fellowship Hall for worship, lunch, and lunch deliveries.



2023 GOALS RECAP

In 2023, WITH A SPIRIT OF PRAYER, Cliff Temple Baptist Church connected in tangible and meaningful ways with our community. We did this by learning what we value as a people and the special gifts we have to share in three ways: up, in, and out.

UP | As a church, we moved closer to making prayer and worship a priority as we seek to live the Word together.

- We developed our **prayer ministry** by creating quarterly retreats and additional training for prayer ministry teams.
- We provided opportunities for **Bible engagement** through a Bible Basics class and a Wednesday night series that engaged our imaginations around telling Bible stories.
- We invested in leaders through recruiting and training teachers and ministry leaders through the development of the **January Term**. We are also developing a series of short-term elective courses to expand and deepen our spiritual practices.
- We offered monthly **nights of prayer and worship** led by Cliff Temple musicians and guest artists from around the Metroplex.

IN | As a church, we focused on whole-life stewardship and were given opportunities to create healthy rhythms of rest and work in the way of Jesus.

- Each individual and family was given an opportunity to share their faith story and spiritual practices using a link to cliff temple.org/share. We are building additional opportunities to further engage the congregation to share their faith stories.
- We led a discipleship series and produced podcast episodes on the **healthy stewardship** of our lives by looking at the right use of our spiritual capital, relationships, intellect, physical assets, and financial capacity.
- We showcased testimonies about spiritual gifts during worship and on the **Cliff Temple Podcast**.
- We made progress toward becoming **reflective practitioners** who celebrate what we are learning in ministry together.
- We hosted **Storytelling Dinners** and **Summer Suppers** to facilitate deeper community and relationships.
- Staff and Leadership Council evaluated our actual values, needs, and priorities through a process of **Adaptive Leadership** facilitated by Fresh Expressions and Fuller Theological Seminary.

OUT | With a spirit of adventure and experimentation we helped one another become everyday missionaries in the places we live, work, and play.

- We are becoming more accustomed to the practice of prayer walking and how to regularly pray for friends and neighbors.
- We took a closer look at the mission field inside our building. At **Mission Oak Cliff**, we created additional educational programs including computer classes, life skills classes, and ESL classes. Staff and Sunday School Classes continued serving at **The Well** on Thursday nights, and we gained new relationships through the **Child Development Center**, which led to the launch of *Cliff Temple Dads*.
- We hosted monthly artist openings, art nights, and **summer concerts** to help better connect with the community.
- We began discussions to retool the **Neighborhood Network** to better help us explore home-based gatherings with friends and neighbors who are not yet part of a church family. Some of those we engage will bridge back to Cliff Temple on Sunday; others will help us envision new missional experiments to further expand the reach of Cliff Temple in the community.

Mission Oak Cliff Highlights

Mission Oak Cliff is Cliff Temple's community ministry hub, operating under the church's 501(c)(3). It's the first point of contact or piece of information many people receive from our church. Our weekday drop-in center provides emergency food, clothing, counseling and advocacy services, and educational opportunities for 90-100 people a day.

Mission Oak Cliff allows an opportunity for church members and community stakeholders to serve alongside one another for the good of the neighborhood. We regularly see groups of volunteers from area corporations such as Southwest Airlines, I Am Lifted, and community service organizations like the Lions Club and the Junior League of Dallas. Students from UNT-Dallas and Adamson High School got in on the action, volunteering and collecting supplies for as many as 22 families a month.



MISSION OAK CLIFF BY THE NUMBERS

An average of 431 homeless per month served with a hot meal

530 families per month provided with food assistance

1900 people assisted through our clothing closet

Food 2 Families - deliveries to 32 households twice per month with help from Cliff Temple drivers

Back to School Bash, 450 backpacks with school supplies to kids in need

Inhabiting Sacred Space

Roberts Studio and 10th Street Gallery

The gift of having a fully stocked arts studio -the Roberts Studio- continues to be an important tool for reaching the Oak Cliff community. Jennifer Barclay hosts Open Art on Thursday mornings where participants fellowship over pottery. Our night team is led by Siera Jamieson, Ana Duncan-Garza, and Kat Malone. Together, this team creates space for people to encounter God through the arts and creativity. We are overwhelmed by the response to many of the events that were sold out months in advance. Over 200, many of whom have no affiliation with Cliff Temple, registered for our art classes, and many more participated in our Open Art time.

Throughout this year, we've hosted various local visual artists from Cliff Temple and around the Metroplex. Cliff Temple members Kat Malone, Ana Duncan-Garza, Ann Tabony, and Ricardo Torres (facilities staff) showcased their work in the Gallery. In August, we featured the work of the late Charlotte Ware.

Our church initiated this ministry to demonstrate love and support for the arts and local artists. We were truly moved by the overwhelming expression of gratitude from many individuals. While some artists have participated in numerous exhibitions, one artist tearfully conveyed to our discipleship minister, Trevor Jamieson, that this event "marked the highlight of her year." Your gracious support and simply attending to engage with artists have played a crucial role in our arts ministry, connecting and showing love to creators in our community.



Works by Cliff Temple Artist Kat Malone



Cliff Temple artist Ana Duncan-Garza (R) discusses her work

GIVING THANKS!

Thank Offerings: \$79,436.24 raised for mission and ministry, over and above our regular budget offering!

The Spring Thank Offering dates back to the 10th anniversary of Wallace Bassett's pastorate. For many years, the offering was used to pay off building debt. In 1939, we started a Fall Thank Offering to finish the Temple of Worship, and we've been collecting these two offerings almost every year since as an 'over and above' act of worship and gratitude to God who is more than we can ask or imagine.

- Thanks to your generosity, in the Spring of 2023, we collected \$25,889.20, exceeding our goal of \$24,000.
- In honor of our 125th anniversary, we set a Fall Thank Offering goal of \$50,000 and raised \$53,547.04

Thank Offering Highlights

- \$6,000 to provide support for students in need at **Hector Garcia Middle School**
- \$6,000 to support **Baptist Student Ministries** at UNT-Dallas and Dallas College, Mountain View
- \$6,000 to support a stipend for an **artist-in-residence** at Cliff Temple. The artist-in-residence will help teach classes and will create a permanent art installation for Cliff Temple.
- \$6,000 is earmarked to support the rebuilding efforts led by Baptist churches in **Ukraine**.
- \$10,000 will go to refurbish the **Berry-Roberts Organ**. In honor of our 125th anniversary, this magnificent instrument is getting some tender loving care that is long overdue!
- \$25,000 for **mission innovation** is to support the development of relationships with additional mission partners and to help fund the dreams of those in the church, especially youth and young adults, who want to start a small business or social enterprise for kingdom impact in our city.
- \$10,000 to help members of our congregation in need through the Cliff Temple **Benevolence** Fund
- \$5,000 in honor of our 125th anniversary to support the refurbishment of our **archives** and the preservation of our historic documents.

College Scholarships

Preparing the next generation for ministry

Caleb Miller, a Master of Divinity student from West Monroe, Louisiana, is the current recipient of the Cliff Temple Baptist Church Scholarship at Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary.



In 2023, we awarded college scholarships to **Carlos Granados** at Dallas College, Mountain View
Grace Pulis at The University of Texas at Austin
Hannah Mercado at Austin College in Sherman



Ministry Partners

As a congregation in the Baptist tradition, Cliff Temple voluntarily partners with several church networks and agencies: **The Dallas Baptist Association (DBA)**, the **Baptist General Convention of Texas (BGCT)**, the **Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas (Convención)**, and the **Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF)**. This gives us a greater ministry impact and provides us with a stronger network of relationships and support.

In 2023, Cliff Temple contributed \$66,000 evenly split between these organizations and contributed \$5,000 to the work of Convención's outreach among Hispanic Baptist congregations in Texas.



I am currently attending the Childhood Ministry Certification offered through the Baptist General Convention of Texas led by Children's Ministry Specialist Jennifer Howington. This course could not have been more intentionally and prayerfully compiled. We are reading valuable texts that carry impactful information on child development and how we can use what we know about the formation of children to reach them spiritually. Through our training sessions, I have developed a strong network of children's ministry colleagues. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of such an impactful experience through Texas Baptists.

Emilie Flaherty, Associate Minister for Children and Families

Mission Partner Fund

In 2023, we created the Mission Partner Fund to help us build better relationships with partners and enable our church to respond quickly to needs around the world. Potential partners make applications through the church, and each one is reviewed by the missions committee. In 2023, we partnered with former Cliff Temple member Jeanette Moser who's serving in Southeast Asia with Pioneer Bible Translators, and Dallas Christian Women's Job Corps, an organization led by Cliff Temple member Jana Jackson.



Cliff Temple en Español

A new season has begun

A new chapter at Cliff Temple en Español started with the prayers of six people who stayed faithful through the pandemic. These six precious members never lost hope. When God called pastor Marlon Ríos and his family to Cliff Temple, there was mutual confirmation that this was the right place with the right people. In the second half of 2023, God formed a full praise and worship team with guitar, bass, drums, and vocalists with a diversity of age and language. We started a Wednesday night class and a new Sunday School class focused on discipleship. The record of people attending on Sunday morning in 2023 was 79 people.

God is using our church's members to reach new people from first-, second-, and third-generation Hispanics. God is also helping us reach the growing numbers of young Latino professionals who are moving to Oak Cliff. God has placed in the heart of the CTE leadership a desire to reach our backyard—Bishop Arts and Oak Cliff. However, as with many at Cliff Temple, some commute from Grand Prairie, North Dallas, and East Dallas too. CTE believes that being an everyday missionary is about more than a building; it is about reaching our neighbors. God is doing amazing things at CTE as our whole church, whether we worship and pray primarily in English or Spanish, is moving forward together.

Wednesday Night Kids

Wednesday nights provide some of the most fun-filled moments for children at Cliff Temple. Children ages 4 and up have the opportunity to join their own choir and missions class. There, they learn about using music as a way to worship God as well as about missionaries all over the world and the different cultures they experience. If you go to the children's area, you will hear singing about Jesus, you will smell a meal from another culture, and you will see the joy that children experience learning about God. Last fall, parents were provided the opportunity to gather for a conversational group called Finding Peace in Parenting, a space to share the joys and trials of parenting. It is an opportunity to discover that through the often chaotic journey of parenting, we are never alone.



Wednesday Game Day

Wednesday Game Day brings together senior adults and a few not-so-senior adults too! Each week, a group gathers to hear a short message, pray for their neighbors, and make memories.

Cliff Temple Child Development Center

Nurturing children and building community

The Cliff Temple Child Development Center (CDC), directed by Lauren Vandillon, engages 115 children from families, most of whom live less than five miles from the church, by providing a quality faith-based curriculum from a dedicated staff of 29 teachers for infants through pre-kindergarten, 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Monday - Friday.

The CDC has consistently earned the highest (4-star) rating for Texas early childhood programs and is advancing in the process of achieving accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children. In 2023, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of two of our teachers, Roshanda White and Aurelia Hernandez, and Lauren Vandillon's 10th anniversary. These are just three examples that demonstrate the stability and longevity of our staff.



Children at the CDC have weekly chapel and Bible story time led by Michelle Collins, a weekly story time led by Emilie Flaherty, and a weekly music class led by Cliff Temple member Amelia Shanks. The annual CDC Celebration of Christmas music was attended by more than 300 guests. These children and their families are part of the weekday ministry of Cliff Temple, where we're forming relationships and building community, one child and family at a time.



In 2023, Lauren Vandillon, Emilie Flaherty, and Carey Sims were invited to develop a strategy for collaboration between the objectives of the Child Development Center and our Ministry with Children and Families as part of Truett Seminary's program for the Future Church.

Adult Sunday School: Engaging Scripture and Transforming Lives

Cliff Temple Sunday Schools engaged in a new structure for 2023, where the groups engaged in a January Term slate of new classes and shared in a common curriculum. While we are proud of the depth of learning to be gleaned from our Sunday School classes, the most commonly expressed appreciation for these classes by participants is the opportunity for community. Historically, our Sunday Schools have always been a place where class members support one another and love one another through difficult moments. Some classes even banded together to support



college students and formed work groups to repair homes of members in need.

Young Adult Ministry Reaches International Students and Young Professionals in Bishop Arts

The college group meets on Sunday nights in homes of church members. We've had some weeks when 25 students crammed into a living room, and other weeks where we've developed deeper relations with just a few. This year, God brought several students from around the world to our college group. Two Chinese students joined Cliff Temple and are telling their friends about us. On one occasion, we hosted several Hindu students from Dallas Baptist University and had the chance to investigate the Bible with them. We're excited about the possibility of increased growth among international students and opportunities

to share the gospel and be a light in the lives of students who desperately need family away from home.

In the Spring, a new group of young adults in their 20s formed and started by meeting in community spaces around the city. The group quickly grew and transformed into a bi-weekly Neighborhood Network group meeting on Wednesday nights in Bishop Arts. This group has opened greater opportunities for younger adults to gather, fellowship, and grow as disciples of Jesus together.



Trevor Jamieson, Minister for Young Adults, facilitates a Bible Study for students at the El Centro campus of the **Dallas College** system. This ministry has reached and supported more than 20 students on a weekly basis to give encouragement and connect them with Cliff Temple. Cliff Temple also supports the ongoing ministry efforts at the **UNT Dallas Baptist Student Ministry and the Mountain View Dallas College campus.**

Clarifying Our Call: The Cliff Temple Values

The stories we shared in 2023 show us what we value as a church. What we value helps guide our missionary life with Jesus. Here's what we've learned about our values:

We are real people welcoming real people to meet the real Jesus. The true meaning of hospitality is the welcome of the stranger, and at Cliff Temple, no one's a stranger for very long. We value honest and transparent friendships, recognizing the universal need for grace. We do our best to invite everybody into a deeper relationship with Jesus together, and we try not to underestimate the power 10 seconds can have. **We value AUTHENTICITY, (Romans 3:23).**

We are a multigenerational family pointing one another toward our true home in God. No matter our age or experience, we're always learning from each other. Families are messy. We may not all like the same foods or have

the same hobbies, the same strengths, or the same gifts but we're all created in the image of God, are united in our distinctives, and share the same heart, and that is Jesus only. **We value FAMILY-COMMUNITY-BELONGING, (Genesis 1:27, 1 Corinthians 12:12).**

We are resilient people who are faithfully (and sometimes stubbornly) present. We are committed to one another and to the places God calls us because of the strength God gives us. During the 1970s and 1980s when lots of people, businesses, and churches were leaving our neighborhood, we stayed, and we have been learning how to love whoever God brings us ever since. We are not perfect, and it is not always easy, but our resilience gives us a creative spark for what's possible in the now and the not yet. **We value RESILIENCE, (Isaiah 41:10).**

We are servants at heart. Whether it is taking time to listen to a co-worker, loving the homeless through Mission Oak Cliff, mowing grass for a neighbor, or being present with a child who's having a bad day, because following Jesus leads to self-giving love in every area of our life, our lives are a gift we get to share with the world. **We value GENEROUS SERVICE, (Matthew 10:8).**

Oak Cliff Community Pain Points

Through a series of conversations with people who are not part of our church, we learned about the pain points in our community. These are the needs that were most often expressed.

- Loneliness/isolation
- Homelessness/cost of living
- Racism
- A need for home/family/belonging
- Need for self care/healthy rhythms

Vocation is the place where our deep gladness meets the world's deep need.

Frederick Buechner

2024 CLIFF TEMPLE GOALS

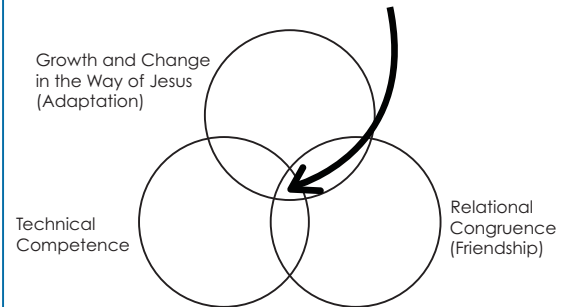
In 2024, WITH A SPIRIT OF PRAYER, Cliff Temple Baptist Church will continue discerning how to come alongside the needs in our community by helping everyone find their calling in the mission we've been given.

We want everyone to get in on the everyday Spirit-filled life of following Jesus... but how?

- By learning to hear God's voice and experience God's love
- Through healthy rhythms of rest and work
- Through listening, observing, reflecting; planning, acting, accounting.
- By being willing to experiment, asking not 'Did it work?' but 'What are we learning?'
- From being a family-oriented church to a *family offering* church.



Transformation

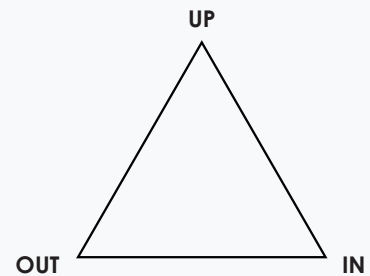


We'll continue developing the technical competence and deep relational congruence necessary to grow and change in the way of Jesus. This is where the transformation comes.

In 2024, we'll take these steps together:

We will develop a posture of listening to God (up), to each other (in), and to the community around us (out).

- We will create space in Leadership Council, Committees, and Sunday School Leadership Meetings to practice listening prayer to better hear God's voice.
- We will do this in our homes and neighborhoods, too.



Through our intergenerational 'A New Life' course, we will help new believers have the tools needed for the journey ahead.

- We offered the first iteration in December 2023 with a new course forming in March 2024.

We will continue hosting monthly nights of prayer and worship.

- These gatherings generally take place on the last Wednesday of the month in Fellowship Hall and on 2nd and 4th Fridays in the Chapel.

We will offer January Term courses for those interested in learning to hear God's voice and will offer it at another time during the year.

To magnify the way we live the story every day, we will incorporate video storytelling across our media platforms.

We will further develop our prayer teams and training.

- On Sunday mornings, a team of intercessors will be praying during the worship service.
- Prayer teams are available to pray with worshippers at the time of response and after the service.
- We will grow the prayer ministry to ensure that every ministry area has prayer support.



SPECIAL FOCUS

As we develop a healthy rhythm of life together, we've booked Mount Lebanon for an all-church **Day of Delight in April 2024**. The morning session will be devoted to listening prayer. After lunch, we'll have an old-fashioned field day and bake-off. After dinner, we'll have stars, s'mores, stories, and songs around the fire. www.cliff temple.org/delight

We believe that everyone has a calling... but how do we know what it is?

- Ephesians 4:11-13 is a helpful starting point:
...The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the Saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.
- The five gifts outlined in these verses are part of an inventory called '5Q.' It is not a skills assessment; it is a tool we can use to discover and nurture our calling.

In 2024, we'll take these steps together:



We aim to have at least 12 people actively engaged in living out their calling in each area for a total of 60 people, or approximately 16% of the active membership.

In 2024, all Leadership Council, Committees, Deacons, and Sunday School Leaders will have the opportunity to take the '5Q' inventory to help uncover and articulate their calling.



On September 23-24, 2024, we'll again host the 5Q team for a national conference to help develop these callings in the life of the church.



The Stewardship Committee will take the lead on forming an experience to help all of us know the ways we can use our gifts in service through Cliff Temple.



We will facilitate 5 opportunities that highlight each of the five gifts:

- **Apostles:** Through our newly created Mission Partner and Innovation Fund, we will work with local business owners and church members to host a 1.5 day social impact business startup competition that uses 5Q and engages our youth and adults for the flourishing of our city.
- **Prophets:** We will focus the morning session at the Day of Delight (April 20) on learning to hear God's voice.
- **Evangelists:** We will host a two-hour evangelism practicum in a way that makes it normal and less intimidating.
- **Shepherds:** We will host a service day for homebound church members.
- **Teachers:** We will host a workshop with Sunday School teachers and others with the teaching gift.

We believe all disciples are sent to a neighborhood or network of people to make disciples... but how do we know where and to whom?

- In church life, we were not always trained to make disciples. We were trained to 'go to church.' We make disciples at church but how do our activities at church help us be the church in our normal everyday lives?
- Part of the special calling at Cliff Temple is that when many 'left' the neighborhood, we stayed.
- Staying in the place where we were sent gives us a bit of clarity about our sent-ness. At the same time, it causes us to press out into new places.
- To better understand our calling as families and individuals, we want to create space to tell the stories that shape us at home, in our neighborhoods and in our workplaces.
- Stories unlock shared values and practices. These values show us how and where we're sent.

GET STARTED

What can you pledge to Cliff Temple each month?

We can also help you with estate planning or with the donation of stocks. How might you include the mission of Cliff Temple in your long-term financial planning?

Are there special items/emphases to which you would be willing to contribute? Scholarships for youth? Mission trips? Internships? Sound upgrades? Building updates?

What other kingdom causes are you supporting with your financial gifts? Are there potential partnerships between these causes and Cliff Temple?

Start giving to Cliff Temple every month:

Go to cliff temple.org/give to set up monthly online giving.

In 2024, we'll take these steps together:

Every family, Sunday School Class, and group in the Neighborhood Network will be given the opportunity to tell stories to help identify their unique gifting or calling and how that fits with Cliff Temple.



Everyone will be challenged to interview 2-3 people who are not part of church about the pain points and needs in our community.

We will offer an event to unpack these pain points and how we might go about making disciples where we live, work, go to school, and play.

We will keep looking at the mission field all around us and right inside our doors as we continue connecting with local artists, guests at Mission Oak Cliff, the Well, and the Child Development Center.

- We will host a Summer or Fall visual art show including many already and not-yet connected artists at Cliff Temple
- We will further assist with programming at Mission Oak Cliff to help break the cycle of poverty including evening ESL classes and entrepreneurship classes.
- Adult Sunday School classes will help host appreciation dinners for the Child Development Center staff.
- We will host listening dinners with small groups of CDC families.
- We will expand on the Cliff Temple Dads to include more service and community gatherings.
- We will offer a weekly storytelling session to preschoolers at the Child Development Center.

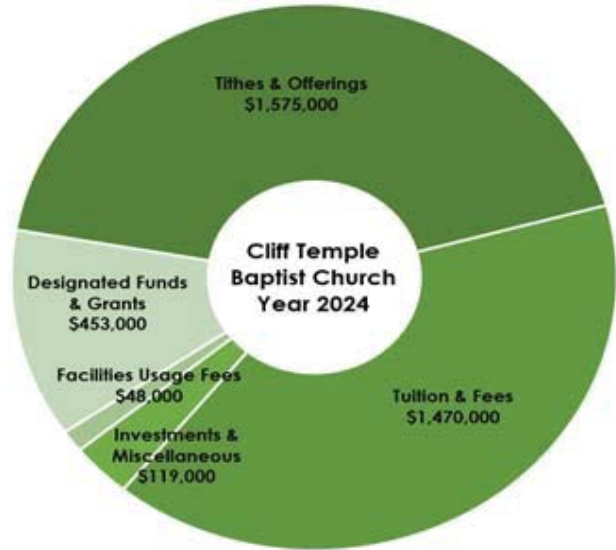
Aligning Money and Mission

In 2024, we have a tremendous opportunity to grow our church in new ways. We are a congregation blessed with a number of faithful givers, and we want to elevate the level of cheerful participation across the board, involving everybody, every day!

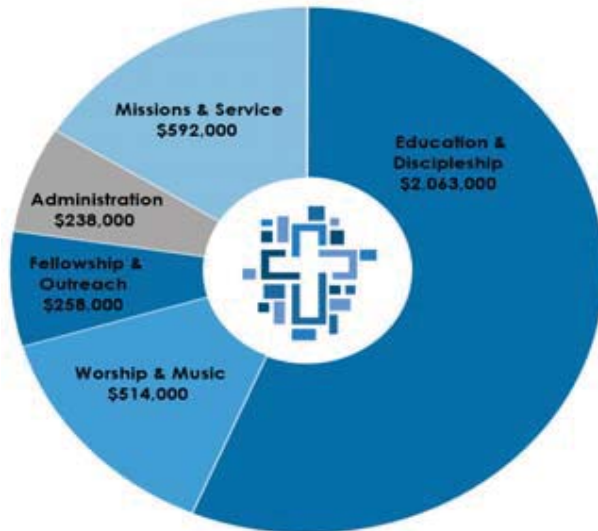
Year 2024 Budget

Planned Income:

Tithes & Offerings	\$ 1,575,000
Tuition & Fees	\$ 1,470,000
Investments & Miscellaneous	\$ 119,000
Facilities Usage Fees	48,000
Designated Funds & Grants primarily Mission Oak Cliff	453,000
Total Planned Income	\$ 3,665,000



Planned Expenses:



Missions & Service		\$ 592,000
Mission Oak Cliff	472,000	
Mission Partnerships	120,000	
Education & Discipleship		2,063,000
Child Development Center	1,488,000	
Children	174,000	
Youth	155,000	
Adults	246,000	
Worship & Music		514,000
Sunday morning services; Wednesday worship nights; choirs for all ages; organ, pianos & AV maintenance		
Fellowship & Outreach		258,000
community events & concerts; churchwide lunches & picnics; Sr. Adults prayer & game		
Administration		238,000
support staff & services; staff development & conferences; office equipment & supplies		
Total Planned Expenses		\$ 3,665,000

Share the gift of finance. Financial giving is an act of worship. How are you contributing financially to kingdom causes? A biblical tithe is 10% of your gross income. Even if 10% is out of reach for you at this time, how might you share even a little of what you have?

Renovations

In 2024, we're planning a thorough renovation of the Child Development Center and Rose Garden. The details including the scope of the renovations, anticipated timeline, and the expected impact on the church community are in development.

CLIFF TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH



Cliff Temple Baptist Church Staff



Gannon Sims
Senior Pastor



Kenny Cheshier
Associate Pastor, Minister for Youth, Senior Adults and Hospitality



Michelle Collins
Minister for Children and Families



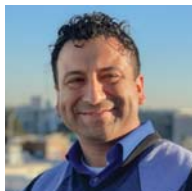
Emilie Flaherty
Associate Minister for Children and Families



Trevor Jamieson
Minister for Adult Discipleship, Spiritual Formation and Young Adults



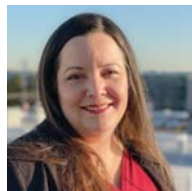
Tom Tillman
Minister for Music and Worship



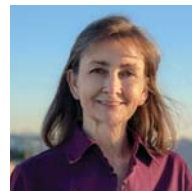
Marlon Iván Ríos
Director, Mission Oak Cliff and Minister for Missions and Spanish Language Ministries



Mark Blaker
Production Manager, Mission Oak Cliff



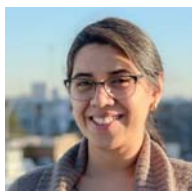
Amy Britton
Director of Development



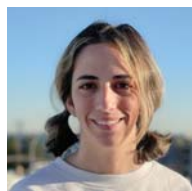
Barbara Evetts
Church Administrator



Flora Guard
Homeless Services Manager, Mission Oak Cliff



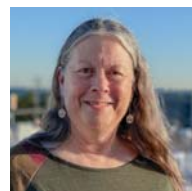
Talye Gwinn
Ministry Assistant



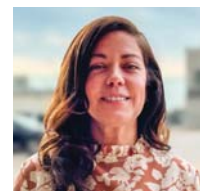
Ashley Luong
Coordinator of Volunteer Recruitment and Community Development, Mission Oak Cliff



Patty Quintana
Associate Director, Mission Oak Cliff



Susan Shanks
Ministry Coordinator



Lauren Vandillon
Director of the Cliff Temple Child Development Center



CLIFF TEMPLE
BAPTIST CHURCH

Building everyday
people into everyday
missionaries for
Jesus Christ.

clifftemple.org