

IMPACT REPORT

2016-17



FUN NUMBERS

5,667

clicks on the sermon page on the church website



205

sneakers bought and donated to Love INC for children in need



588

diapers changed by nursery volunteers



43

Hershey Free missionary units in 18 countries with ministries extending beyond



4,500

views on Facebook video of Hershey Free kids telling the Christmas Story



23,400

cups of coffee consumed



52

people traveled to Haiti as part of 8 different Global Ministry Teams

LETTER

As we look back to 2016, this has been quite a year. Culturally, we have gone through a contentious election cycle, with lots of conversation, debate, and change. Closer to home, many of us have gone through changes in our work, our families, and our personal circumstances. Yet, in the midst of all of these situations, there is a constant truth—God is faithful.

The psalmist tells us that we are to “[r]emember the wonders he has done” (Psalm 105:5); we are to remember and celebrate God’s faithfulness. As you read the stories in these pages, join me in thanking God that he is faithful to his promises. Likewise, as we prepare for the next year, these stories should encourage us to engage the future with anticipation and hope.

Thank you for being part of our church family and for being a part of what God is doing.

George Davis
Senior Pastor

VALUES



MAKE A DIFFERENCE

LIVE WITH JESUS

Living with Jesus is not merely practicing habits of Bible study and prayer out of duty. Rather it is taking the time to be with Jesus through reflecting on his Word to us and creating space to hear the Spirit speaking to us. It is intentionally developing habits that help us know Jesus better and become more like him.

This year we launched 33 Live/Love/Lead Groups.

As individuals have intentionally developed their personal relationships with God, many have also joined together in a small group to encourage and pray for one another and overflow into the lives of others.



As a church, we were challenged to choose a specific spiritual rhythm and build that into our routine for 40 Days leading up to Palm Sunday. These 40 Days were an opportunity to be intentional in our relationship with Jesus as we continue to build a strong foundation in our lives. "For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things" (1 Timothy 4:8).



Tammy Stauffer took the 40-Day challenge as an opportunity to encourage others through whom she sees God working. She said, "I'm committed to write one Thank You note each week to those in my life I am thankful for because I see God working through them. We need to be encouraged, believing that God is using each of us to build his kingdom."



Baptism represents a believer's public confession and celebration of faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and symbolizes new life in Christ. Baptism is an opportunity to celebrate the work of Christ in your life, and our church family gets to celebrate with you. The work of God is powerful, and there is joy in hearing how someone's life has been changed because of Christ.

Shayna Castaldi sums up her reason for being baptized this way: "I am choosing to get baptized today because grace changed everything when I surrendered. The things that I was holding onto—the heaviness, all of my sins—rather than counting them, I started counting God's grace and forgiveness." Her story was viewed over 1,000 times on Facebook and led to several meaningful conversations.

The Journey: A Sacred Easter Experience had over 500 participants who read Scripture, reflected, prayed, and did activities in 7 rooms including Celebration, Denial, and Restoration. There were many testimonials about how this experience changed the way individuals think and feel about Easter. In many ways Easter was no longer a season of the year but an experience that brought about a richer understanding of redemption. Here are 2 quotes from participants.

"I was able to reflect on my burdens and the deep love of Jesus. A weight is off my shoulders now."

"Incredible. Thanks for including tissues."



KIDSTEP

"I can feel God with me when I spend time with him." -KidStep child

We have over **300 children in Kid-Step** who are exploring what it means to live with Jesus. Here are reflections from a few of our children.

"It's kind of like I can tell God everything. Like I can tell him what goes on in my brain and even though he already knows, he still wants me to tell him."

"Sometimes I pray in color at my house like we do at church. It helps me know what to talk to Jesus about. And I think it makes us better friends."

LOVE LIKE JESUS

Loving like Jesus flows naturally from being with him. As we receive his gift of love, we give it out of the overflow of what we have received from him. As we become more and more aware of his great love to us, we intentionally look for opportunities to give that love away.



Hershey Free went into our communities on October 23 to be the church, beyond the walls. As a church we are committed to loving like Jesus; and through this corporate shared experience, we were able to demonstrate the love of Christ and build bridges to ongoing missional ministry.



Mission Partners

We desire to participate in the Great Commission of Christ to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). We do this though equipping our local congregation and through sending out global, cross-cultural servants (missionaries), that they may represent Christ, share the good news, and make disciples in their contexts. **Hershey Free has 43 missionary units in 18 countries; however, their ministries expand beyond just those countries.**

Denise Love is a missionary from Hershey Free who, along with her husband David, teaches and works at Rio Grande Bible Institute, a Spanish language Bible school that trains leaders from Latin America. Part of Denise’s ministry is counseling young women who come to the school, many from very broken backgrounds. During her counseling, she noticed that these young women would hold on to a stuffed pillow as they opened their hearts. This inspired Denise to let each girl pick out a stuffed “Love Bear” when she first comes for counseling. When Denise was running out of bears, Hershey Free Church provided a contribution which allowed her to restock her “Love Bear” cupboard. Please **pray for Denise as she continues this counseling ministry** with the young women at Rio Grande Bible Institute.

GlobalFingerprints partners with churches in Haiti to care for kids’ physical, spiritual, and emotional needs. When the program expanded to include a second location in Haiti, Hershey Free was asked to help with the launch by sponsoring an initial group of children. We are happy to report that every child in the new location’s original group has been sponsored.



“Living beyond ourselves is really what sponsorship gives us an opportunity to do. So much of life is focused on us and what makes us comfortable. To do a small thing like sponsoring a child helps us to live beyond ourselves. That’s a good thing.” **-Brenda Hollenbach**

Safe Families helps parents in crisis by providing a loving Christian family with whom their children may stay until the crisis has passed. Host families can have a powerful and positive impact by extending the love of Christ.

Hershey Free has **5 approved host families** with several new families about to be added. Hershey Free families have done **4 hostings** since July 2016, hosting a total of **7 children.**

Safe Families for Children



Global Ministry Teams serve alongside our partners and missionaries to accomplish meaningful gospel ministry, deepen relationships, and see lasting spiritual growth in team members’ lives. There are times when God uses something radical to shake us out of our everyday routine. **We had 8 teams with a total of 52 people go to Haiti in 2016-17.**

“Being able to bond with the community in Haiti is an experience like no other.” **-Zach Som**

“You go and you spend one week; and hopefully, prayerfully you come back and are changed for the 51 weeks that you are here and dealing with your spheres of influence.” **-Becky Chocklette**

“Even in something as simple as carrying a bucket, you can sense that you’re taking part in something much bigger.” **-Jordan Hoffsmith**

Leading others to do the same is a result of the joy we experience in our relationship with Jesus. Out of that relationship, we intentionally engage others in our spheres of influence to take next steps in living with Jesus and loving like Jesus.

Volunteers

During any given week, we have approximately **290 volunteers** serving in areas such as KidStep, Guest Services, and CORE Student Ministries.



Student Leaders

This year we have 16 students and 3 adults involved in guiding the **CORE Middle School Serve (student leadership) Team**. The purpose of the CORE Serve Team is "to create a God-centered, irresistible, disciple-multiplying environment where students can connect." Students on the CORE Serve Team discover their spiritual gifts, leadership wiring, and leadership style as part of their monthly meetings.

Students are environment setters (thermostats vs. thermometers). There are specific tasks associated with being on the CORE Serve Team, but the main "job" is people: to help people feel welcomed and connected, and then go deeper together into the principles of the Bible.

"I get to be involved in making a difference in our church. I get to put my gifts into action and actually serve."
-Student Leader

New Ministry Partnerships

This year we added 2 ministry partners to our family. Both are passionate about seeing life change in others and creating opportunities for people to engage with Jesus and in turn lead others.



David and Shawna Boerma are members of Hershey Free Church and re-

cently joined our mission family. For 20 years they have served in local church student ministry, including as Pastor for Student Ministries at Hershey Free Church. They are passionate about helping students take the next steps in their walk with Jesus. They serve with EFCA, leading APEX short-term mission experiences for student groups. David also directs student ministries for the EFCA Eastern District.



F grew up here at Hershey Free Church and went on her first missions trip to Mexico with the youth group in 2005. She joined our global ministry family in January 2017. She works with the Family Connection Foundation's Neighborhub project in a creative access country. This project is designed to reach out and share Christ with the local community. She helps create weekly opportunities to live and share life at the Hub, asking the Holy Spirit to soften hearts and plant seeds. The hope is that the Hub would be a place where "neighbors become friends, and friends become family," resulting in life-changing relationships.

Sticky Faith

Our Sticky Faith mornings are designed around 2 objectives. The first is to equip parents to know how to instill principles of spiritual formation in the lives of their children. The second is to model these principles. Parents and children participate in activities together. This year **over 50 families** came together to partner with each other and with Hershey Free Church with the goal of parents joining their children on their spiritual journey.



FINANCES

Throughout this report we have shown lives that have been changed, events that happened, ministries that are ongoing. Your financial investment in the life of Hershey Free Church enables these ministries to take place. Your giving is vital and appreciated.



FISCAL YEAR TO DATE

Ministry Fund
\$2,134,525

Compassion
\$71,161 (a fund to help with needs including housing, medical, transportation, and food)

KidStep Offering
\$654 (majority used for GlobalFingerprints child sponsorship)

Estate Gifts
\$257,840

Global Ministry Projects
\$164,170



The Global Ministry Project Fund was established to help fund specific and strategic ministry initiatives in cross-cultural contexts around the world. We specifically seek to use these funds to help the global workers with whom we partner.

The breadth of the projects we've been able to partner in is astounding! From helping to fund the construction of a mobile chapel in Brazil to helping with a crisis pregnancy center in Southeast Asia, we have seen the Lord do amazing things. Rejoice with us in these stories. **Over \$140,000 was directed towards these and other needs!**



In partnership with **Larry and Fay Buckman**, we were able to help with the **training and equipping of house church pastors** in two creative access countries in Asia. **(\$6,000)**

Over \$50,000 (plus **\$150,000** from a special Christmas offering) went to help complete the main **academic building at STEP Seminary**, which had been destroyed in the 2010 earthquake.



Over 1,600 trucks pass through the port of Paranagua, Brazil, each day. The ministry of Transport for Christ is to share the gospel with these truckers. But they cannot be in the port area where the trucks wait without having a chapel and space. Hershey Free was able to give **\$14,000** towards this critical ministry opportunity of funding a **mobile chapel in Brazil**.



Because of the awful practice of sex trafficking and prostitution, there are many crisis pregnancies in Southeast Asia. We are working with a missionary family in the area as they provide a **home associated with a pregnancy center**. This home for moms and babies focuses on giving training for careers and hope in the gospel! **(\$8,000)**



\$25,000 was given for scholarships for the **training of Haitian leaders through STEP Seminary**, which will fully fund the annual tuition of 8 students!

LOOKING AHEAD

HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2017-18

- **New leadership** in Student Ministries (Nick Mance) and a new Executive Pastor
- **Additional Live/Love/Lead Groups** launching in the fall
- **Ephesians** sermon series
- **Perspectives** on the World Christian Movement course (learn more at perspectives.org)
- **Sunday, October 22**—Church: Beyond the Walls
- **EFCA Gateway** theological course based on the EFCA doctrinal statement



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CHURCH

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