

2024 Belle Center Session Report to Presbytery

Out of His grace, alone, Christ continues to fulfill His promise: "I will build my Church" (Matthew 16:18).

Blessings

1. Last year we rejoiced in a local Session. We continue to rejoice. Both of our Ruling Elders have served well in the congregation and on Presbytery appointments. Now, we are glad to report that we have, after several years, a Deacon board. Mr. Jonathan De Jong, a son of the Bloomington congregation, was elected and ordained to the office of Deacon in our congregation. He brings in much help to our senior Deacon, Mr. Greg Probst. As well, Jonathan serves the congregation as our Assistant Precentor, leading for Psalm Sings and for our second Sabbath services. He and his wife, Katie, were blessed with their first-born, Hannah, last June.
2. Our average attendance for 2023 was 55, a rise from our 2022 figure of 50. We had membership increase from the following sources: transfer by three from the Columbus, IN, congregation, two by baptism, one from another NAPARC denomination and one from an independent church. Two baptized members made personal profession of faith and took the vows of the Covenant of Church Membership. We have three new baptized members. We received one baptized by transfer and two by infant baptism. Total membership now is 71; 52 communicant and 19 baptized. We anticipate that the family we received from Columbus will transfer to another denomination due to a move brought about by a new job. We currently have two church members under suspension.
3. Finances continue to be far better than a few years ago. Last year, we noted that 2022 ended with financial surplus. God blessed us this year with a great increase; this is three years in a row in the black. The appended financial report was presented to and approved by the congregation in its annual meeting on 27 January, 2024.
4. With growing membership and attendance, more folks are wondering how long we will be able to use our building! Due to surplus funds on hand for new chairs and a kind gift in memory of Owen Pockras, a new AED has been bought and emplaced. Thankfully, with the provision of chairs that we mentioned last year, there are many more chairs that we have in order to accommodate a larger attendance. The problem, currently, is sufficient room. We will have a little more with the building of a small shed in our back property to store the extra chairs.
5. There is a spirit of love, care, and delight in one another, shown by the fact that it is hard to get people out the door after worship services! People delight in sharing their lives with one another in prayer and concern. There is a special ladies' prayer group that operates online, and several of our young men, on their own initiative, have begun an every other week Bible study. These young men take turns leading the study. Usually at least one elder is there, as well. Our pastor is very hopeful that Zion's King already has in place our congregation's future Session and Deacon Board. As a Session,

41 we testify to the value of Synod's TFY program. Most of these young men are "alumni"
42 of it. At least one of their wives is, too.

43 6. Our pastor continues his chaplain work at Mary Rutan Hospital in Bellefontaine, OH.
44 Always, on the way to Bellefontaine from Belle Center, he prays that he will be a
45 blessing to patients, families, staff, and administration. He testifies that he certainly
46 knows that each visit to Mary Rutan brings blessing to him!

47 **Challenges**

- 48 1. We have continued health challenges, especially chronic ones. We have people with
49 lung and pulmonary problems, heart issues, arthritis, and diabetes. In one family there
50 has been a cancer scare. It turned out to be benign, but in a bad place. There is much
51 hope for this member after well over a month of daily radiation treatments. There is at
52 least one other cancer patient, one of our beloved retired deacons.
- 53 2. A second challenge for our pastor and his wife was the death of their little grandson,
54 Owen, in June. He is buried in the cemetery at the Rose Point RPC, close to where his
55 grandparents' grave plots are. Owen is buried in a yard full of resting saints, many of
56 whom are his ancestors, relatives, and friends, all of whom shall rise together in the Last
57 Great Day.
- 58 3. Attendance at both the prayer meeting and the second worship service are relatively
59 poor. We are concerned that some of this is due to spiritual coolness. Some is due to
60 our next challenge:
- 61 4. A continuing challenge is the physically spread-out nature of our congregation. We have
62 families coming from the southwest travelling an hour and a half each way. From the
63 northwest, people must drive forty-five or so minutes. From the southeast, families
64 travel thirty to forty-five minutes to get to Belle Center. This makes fellowship, except
65 on Sabbath, difficult. It makes pastoral visitation difficult. But there may be a hidden
66 blessing to come! Each of these four population centers – Greenville, Ohio;
67 Lima/Bluffton, Ohio; Marysville/Dublin, Ohio, and the Belle Center/Bellefontaine, Ohio
68 center, could, in God's adorable providence, conceivably be kernels for daughter
69 congregations.

70 The session of the Belle Center, OH, Congregation met for 11 stated and 13 called meetings in
71 2023. The minutes of the session were submitted to Presbytery and approved without correction. Our
72 pastor attended Synod and 1 regular meetings of the Presbytery. Our new elders have been diligent to
73 attend higher courts.

74 The congregation met once. As of the time of the writing of this report, the 2024 annual
75 meeting has already occurred. It was characterized by clarity, concord, and good spirits, as usual.

76 We meet each Lord's Day at Noon for worship. We have second services and, on the last
77 Sabbath of each month, fellowship meals. The Lord's Supper is celebrated on each fifth Sabbath in
78 months that have them. Our pastor has continued preaching through Luke's Gospel during the first
79 service. In the second service, he preached through Ecclesiastes and is now early in the book of Job.
80 Following morning worship, we meet for Sabbath School. We have two classes, now: our adult class,
81 taught by our minister; and a class for ruling elder and deacon education through material produced by

82 the RPTS, taught by Elder Brotherton. Several young people attended many of the presbytery CYP
83 activities, as well as some Alleghenies Presbytery events, in the past year.

84 The congregation meets for prayer on Wednesday evenings at 7:30, with an average attendance
85 of four. We would like to see more participation from the congregation, but the physically scattered
86 nature of our congregation does not help.

87 We look forward to 2024 as a united congregation with a rather clear vision of where we want
88 to go, as we continue to advance a testimony for salvation by grace through faith in the saving Person
89 and Work of Jesus Christ, and the mediatorial kingship of Jesus in our area.

90

91 Respectfully submitted,

92

93 Phil Pockras, Moderator

94 Jeffery Brotherton, Clerk

Belle Center Reformed Presbyterian Church

2024 Financial Report

Income	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Tithes and Offerings:	\$ 75,816.00	\$ 105,595.57	\$ 100,000.00
Synod Dividend:	\$ 2,277.00	\$ 2,444.27	\$ 2,444.27
Designated Income:	\$ -	\$ 2,756.33	\$ -
Interest Income:	\$ 33.00	\$ 54.13	\$ 1,573.00
Total:	\$ 78,126.00	\$ 110,850.30	\$ 104,017.27

Expenses	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Church Building:	\$ 9,754.00	\$ 4,453.70	\$ 11,249.00
Manse Building:	\$ 8,408.00	\$ 9,183.99	\$ 11,410.00
Utilites:	\$ 3,585.00	\$ 3,617.36	\$ 3,723.00
Pastor Support:	\$ 61,500.00	\$ 61,930.73	\$ 63,769.00
Session Support:	\$ 880.00	\$ 949.60	\$ 2,440.00
Church Staff:	\$ 700.00	\$ 759.16	\$ 5,560.00
RP M&M	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,250.00
Assessments:	\$ 3,045.00	\$ 2,960.00	\$ 2,944.11
Total:	\$ 87,872.00	\$ 83,854.54	\$ 103,345.11

Total Income - Expense	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
	\$ (9,746.00)	\$ 26,995.76	\$ 672.16

Asset Balances	2022 Balance	2023 Balance
Bank Checking:	\$ 38,853.07	\$ 72,332.33
Bank Savings:	\$ 7,163.86	\$ 1,000.86
Petty Cash:	\$ 2,156.78	\$ 2,088.00
Total:	\$ 48,173.71	\$ 75,421.19

Designated Funds	2023 Balance	2024 Balance
AED / First Aid Fund:	\$ 1,088.21	\$ 3,357.21
Mercy Fund:	\$ 4,182.46	\$ 5,000.00
Sunday School Fund:	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00

Belle Center Reformed Presbyterian Church

Appendix: Breakdown of Budget Line Items (1/2)

Utilities	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Electric:	\$ 760.00	\$ 748.03	\$ 760.00
Gas:	\$ 617.00	\$ 730.07	\$ 740.00
Internet:	\$ 1,243.00	\$ 1,182.51	\$ 1,243.00
Sewer:	\$ 642.00	\$ 654.37	\$ 660.00
Water:	\$ 164.00	\$ 140.29	\$ 150.00
Capital Improvement:	\$ 159.00	\$ 162.09	\$ 170.00
Trash:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total:	\$ 3,585.00	\$ 3,617.36	\$ 3,723.00

Church Building	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Furniture & Fixtures	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,659.33	\$ 6,835.00
Maintenance / Cleaning	\$ 6,250.00	\$ 155.68	\$ 1,160.00
Office Supplies	\$ 250.00	\$ 99.69	\$ 200.00
Medical / First Aid	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100.00
Technology	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 300.00
Insurance (Inc. Manse)	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 2,385.00	\$ 2,500.00
Taxes	\$ 154.00	\$ 154.00	\$ 154.00
Total:	\$ 9,754.00	\$ 4,453.70	\$ 11,249.00

Manse Building	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Maintenance / Repairs	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,777.84	\$ 10,000.00
Taxes:	\$ 1,408.00	\$ 1,406.15	\$ 1,410.00
Total:	\$ 8,408.00	\$ 9,183.99	\$ 11,410.00

Church Staff	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Pulpit Supply	\$ 700.00	\$ 759.16	\$ 4,000.00
Janitor	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,560.00
Total:	\$ 700.00	\$ 759.16	\$ 5,560.00

Belle Center Reformed Presbyterian Church

Appendix: Breakdown of Budget Line Items (2/2)

Pastor Support	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Salary	\$ 37,300.00	\$ 37,300.00	\$ 38,419.00
Housing Allowance	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,600.00
Health Insurance	\$ 9,600.00	\$ 9,600.00	\$ 9,600.00
Med. Expense Reimb.	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Pension	\$ 5,250.00	\$ 8,850.00	\$ 5,250.00
Visitation Mileage	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 2,400.00
Office Expense	\$ 1,850.00	\$ 180.73	\$ 500.00
Conference Expense	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Total:	\$ 61,500.00	\$ 61,930.73	\$ 63,769.00

Session Support	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Synod Expense	\$ 480.00	\$ 915.00	\$ 940.00
Presbytery Expenses	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 800.00
Mileage	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Training	\$ 200.00	\$ 34.60	\$ 200.00
Total:	\$ 880.00	\$ 949.60	\$ 2,440.00

Assessments	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
Presbytery	\$ 1,326.00	\$ 1,326.00	\$ 1,241.49
Synod	\$ 1,719.00	\$ 1,634.00	\$ 1,702.62
Total:	\$ 3,045.00	\$ 2,960.00	\$ 2,944.11

Appendix: 2023 Designated Giving

RP M&M	\$ 509.32
Soma Fund	\$ 4,068.48
Total:	\$ 4,577.80