



2022/2023

ANNUAL REPORT

WOLLONGONG BAPTIST CHURCH



WBC Vision

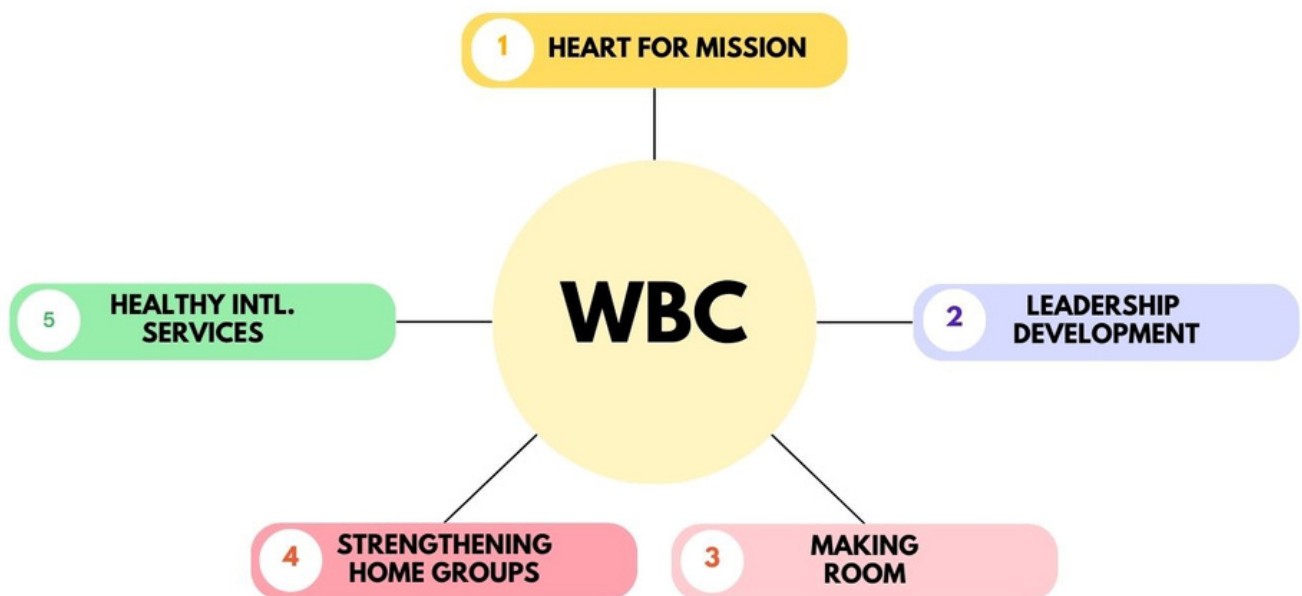
August 2023




Twelve months ago we identified five areas in the life of WBC that we needed to develop as they are essential for our health:

1) a heart for mission, 2) leadership development, 3) making room for the growth that God has produced, 4) strengthening our Home Groups to nurture spiritual growth and pastoral care, and 5) increasing the spiritual health of our international services. We have been addressing these over the past year and are planning to strengthen them further this year, as we pursue our vision that:

'God might grow us to be a church bursting at the seams with mature, gospel-hearted servants of Jesus, from all ages and backgrounds, who are passionate to reach our neighbours for Christ.'







Over the last 12 months the Baptist churches in the Illawarra have been thinking through the nature of the local churches in the area, and whether they are a smaller neighbourhood church, a regional church or a resourcing church. In our case, we are clearly a regional church, but our desire has been to become a resourcing church which seeks to serve other churches and facilitate growth in the region. This is because of our heart for mission, and our desire to see leaders developed across the region, as well as in our own church. We are the only local church currently positioned to be a resourcing church in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven-Southern Highlands regions, and this is a responsibility that we are keen to shoulder. We have already been taking steps in this direction through supplying preachers to Dapto, Tahmoor and Nowra churches, and through supporting pastors at Bowral and Dapto.



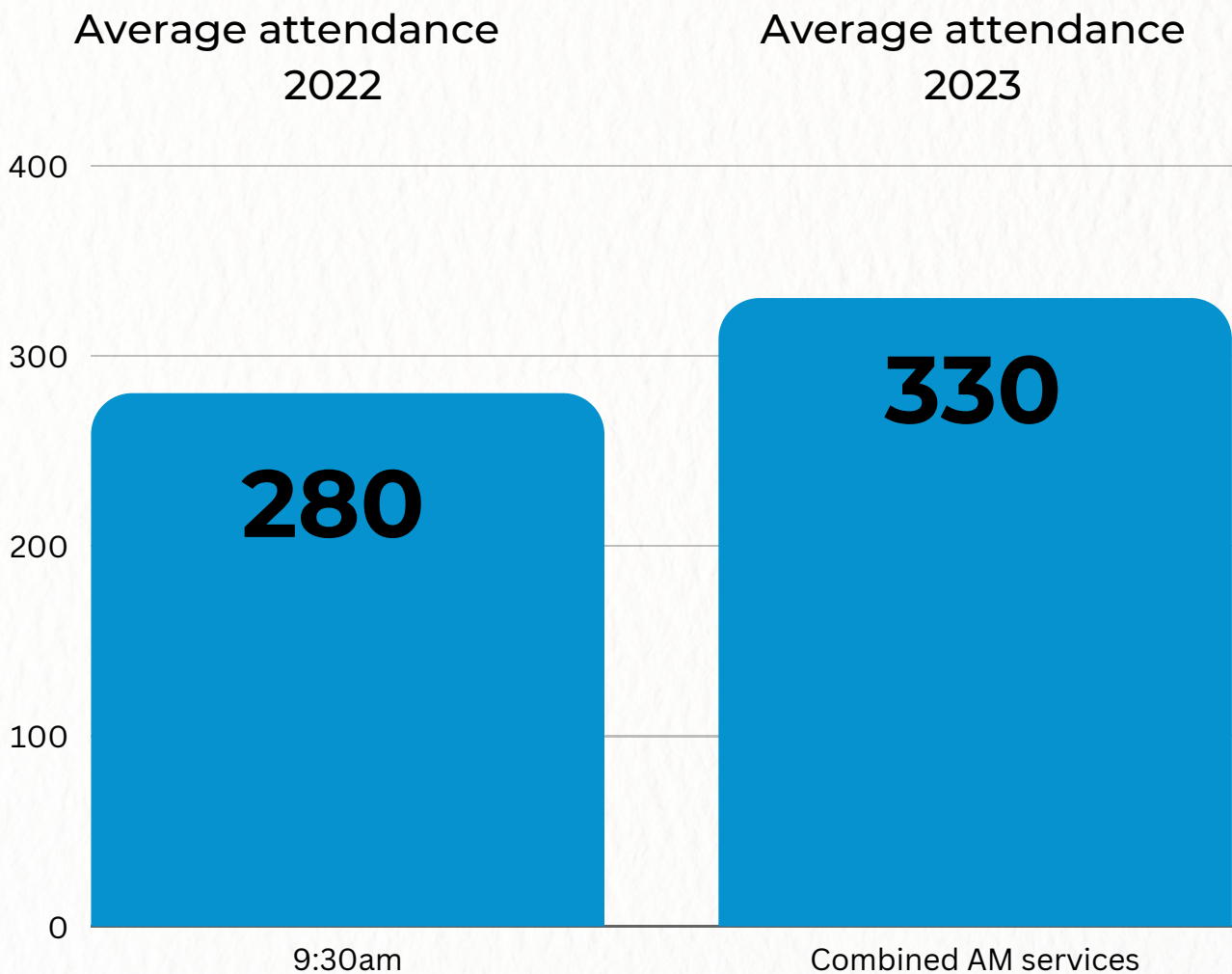
An even greater commitment to becoming a resourcing church has been our planning towards a church plant over the past 5 years, as we look to reach the growing number of people moving into the Calderwood Valley and beyond in the growth corridor that stretches from Kembla Grange to Tullimbar. We want to move toward commencing the church plant in 2024 and are now making one final push for the recruitment of a suitable person over the next 12 months. If we are unable to find someone in that period then our plans will need to be adjusted regarding the church plant. As such, the employment of a church planter is a priority, along with the raising of funds for this role. In addition, the Baptist Association is committed to purchasing land in the Calderwood Valley for the church plant as part of their commitment to our region, but we would need to pay for the construction of a building with the help of other Baptist churches in the region. As a result, we are announcing a new push to raise funds for the church plant at our AGM, in particular to revive our building fund. This is a once-in-a-generation possibility, and we are keen to take hold of it.





If we are to be a resourcing church, we also need to cater for the growth we have been experiencing at WBC, so we are investigating how we might make room by improving and expanding our facilities at Keira Street. We are working through improvements to our outdoor space for the children, improving the accoustics in the hall through installing carpet, considering leasing space next door to assist Kids Church, and are keeping an eye on nearby properties if they become available for purchase. If land is not found in Calderwood to construct a building, any funds raised would then be available to meet our space needs at Wollongong. The elders have appointed a Property Search / Development Committee of Michael Lepke, Wayne Gregory and Samy Saad to look at opportunities in Calderwood and Wollongong.

Morning Service Comparison





We have also advertised our youth worker role for the past month and hope to interview possible candidates over the next 3 months so that the right person can commence at the start of 2024. This will help meet the needs of the growing number of teenagers currently attending Immerse and our Sunday evening service, and of those future teenagers coming through our Kids Church program.

It expresses our heart for mission with regard to youth, but also our commitment to raise up leaders to serve in this ministry to the next generation.



Please commit to praying with our elders and deacons as we seek to pursue these goals in the next year, while also moving forward with our church planting plans under God.





LIFE AT WBC



Kids Church
160



Immerse
35



In Home Groups
60%



Serving
45%



Baptised
10



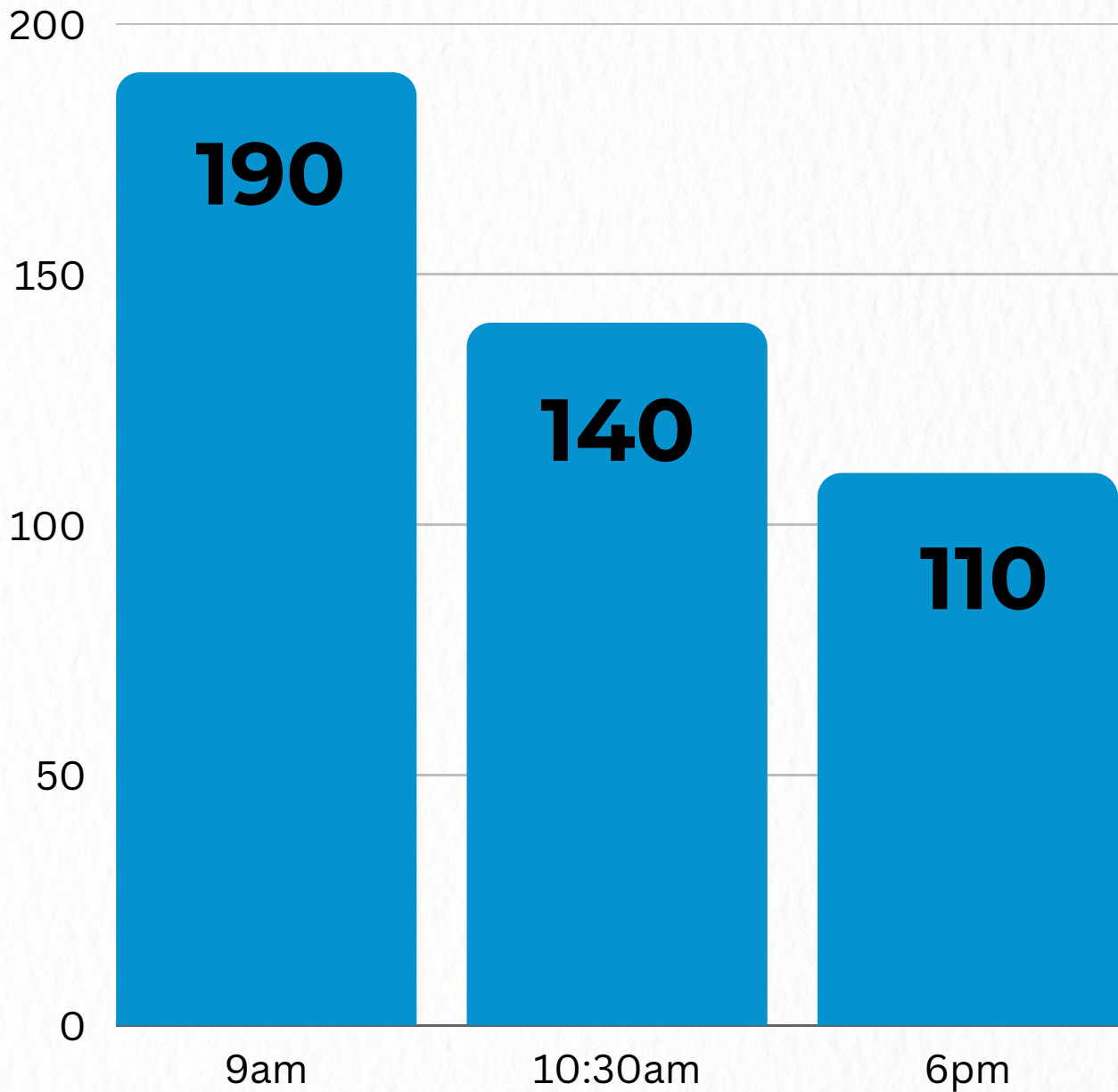
Formal Membership
180





Attendance Snapshot

February 23 - July 23



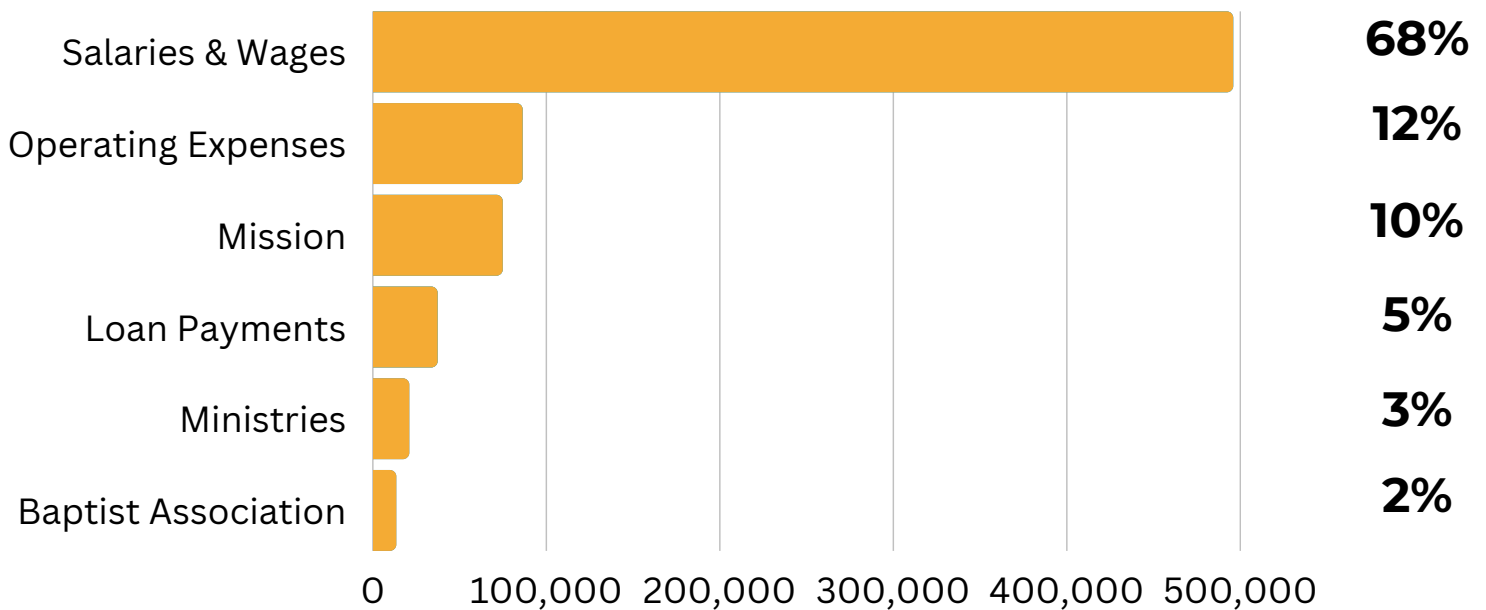
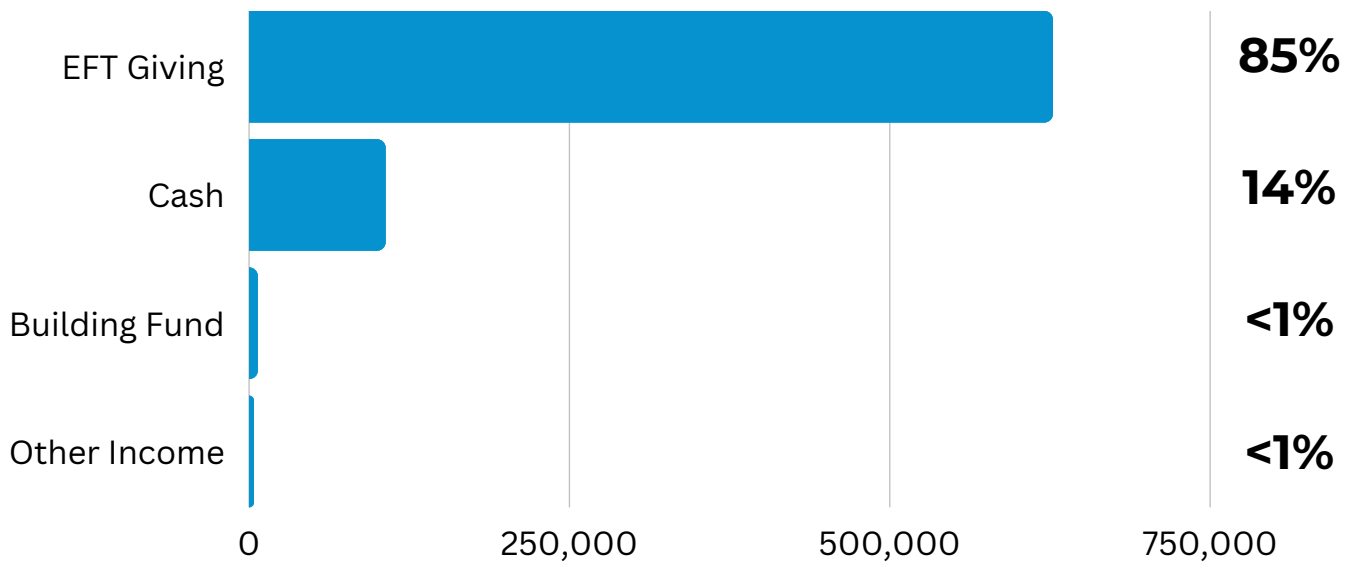
192 visitors across the three english services





Finance Report

BUDGET	Income	\$742,516
\$719,891	Spending	\$726,367



Mortgage Balance: \$148,820





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