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# Annual Report 2016

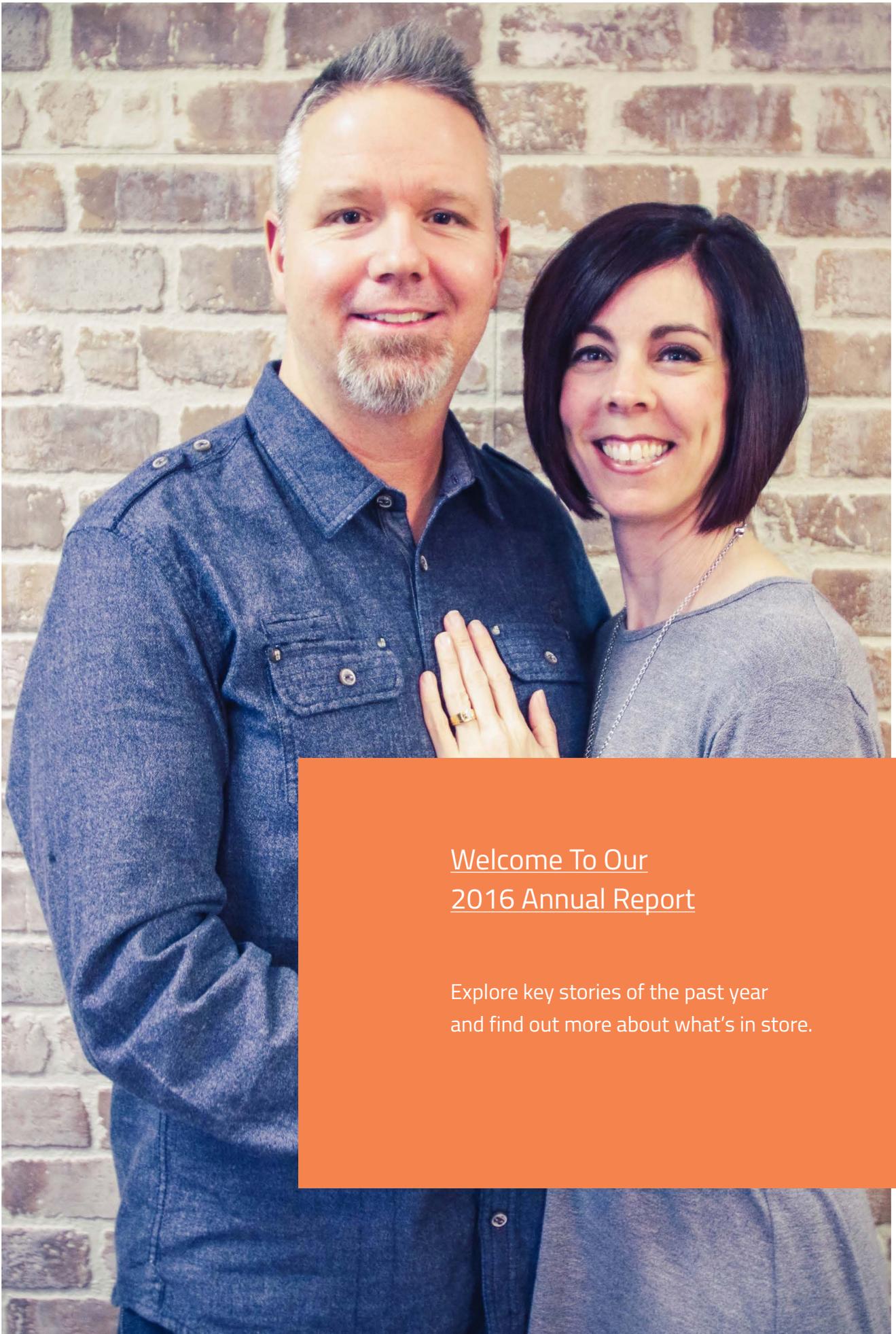
Bring Hope.  
Build Faith.  
Change Lives.



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[Welcome To Our](#)  
[2016 Annual Report](#)

Explore key stories of the past year  
and find out more about what's in store.

# Our Pastors

## A Letter From Us

“Behind every statistic is a story. This is just the beginning of what God wants to do, and He won’t do it without you.”

We can’t believe that 2016 has come and gone, yet we marvel at the things God has done in and through Eastgate Church this past year. As Pastor Charla and I approach our second year of serving you as lead pastors, we feel it’s our responsibility to display those things with detail to you in an annual report. We take this very seriously and our team works diligently and consistently all throughout the year to present this to you on an annual basis. The truth is, your investment and trust in the mission of this church deserves to be maximized and stewarded with the highest integrity and efficiency. Hopefully, this report will give you a glimpse of that commitment.

The Eastgate Church Annual Report is an opportunity to keep our eye on the metrics that matter. In other words: behind every statistic is a story. We believe you’ll be informed and inspired by this year’s edition. Hopefully you’ll be able to relive some of the moments that were special to you, and rejoice in the miracles we experienced together last year. By the way, this is just the beginning of what God wants to do and He won’t do it without you.

Thank you for your commitment and faithfulness to bringing hope, building faith, and changing lives in our region. We love and appreciate all of you and are grateful to be on this journey together.

The best is yet to come,  
Pastors Ron & Charla Nelson

# Board

## Support Team



**President/Lead Pastor**  
Pastor Ron Nelson



**Brent Williams**  
Secretary



**Edison Fowler**  
Officer



**Micheal Haynes**  
Officer



**Clarence Hearn**  
Officer

# Staff

## Leadership Team



**Charla Nelson**  
Co-Lead Pastor



**Alicia October**  
Executive Administrator



**Jeff Chandler**  
Worship Pastor



**Laron October**  
Student Pastor



**Skyler Buck**  
Children's Director



**Tiffany Buck**  
Children's Director

## Who We Are

1) Non-denominational: Although we are not a part of any particular denomination, we are in relationship with many. We submit to & follow the local church model we see represented in the new testament. Knowing that all of us together can accomplish God's plan of redemption in our region.

(Acts 20:20 / Eph. 2:19 / Eph. 4:11-13)

2) Christ-centered: We place Jesus & His Lordship as the central focus of all we do. (Matt. 6:33 / Col. 3:17 / Gal. 2:20)

3) Bible-based: We do our very best to teach God's word from cover to cover.

(Prov. 7:2-3 / 1 Thess. 2:13 / 2 Tim. 3:16-17)

4) Spirit-filled: We believe in every aspect of the Holy Spirit's power and presence in our lives including the gifts of the spirit and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

(We express these with great maturity & responsibility, not recklessly)

(Acts 2:17-18 / 1 Cor. 12:7-11 / 1 Cor. 14:33)

5) Life-giving: We don't condemn, judge, or compare spiritual journeys. We accept everyone wherever they are in their walk with God with the expectation that we are all growing together as a family.

(Romans 14:1,4,12,19, 22 / Eph. 4:29 / 1 Peter 1:22)

## Vision & Mission

Bringing Hope (Weekend Worship Services)

Building Faith (Small Groups)

Changing Lives (Growth Track)

## Core Values

✓ P: people matter

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✓ E: exemplify Jesus

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✓ O: obedience to God

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✓ P: passion for Christ

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✓ L: life giving always

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✓ E: excellence in everything





# Casting New Vision

**“If people can’t see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed.”  
(Prov. 29:18 MSG)**

2016 was a year of transition, it was also a year of “preparation” as to what was to come. As we began to prayerfully ask the questions, “who are we”, “what are we called to do”, and “how do we get that done”, God began to reveal the very answers to those questions. In the Fall of 2016 we begin to cast God’s vision for Eastgate Church that He began birthing in our hearts nearly one year earlier.

With that said, Eastgate Church is called to bring hope, build faith, and change lives. Primarily through our weekend worship services, we are a church where those who are living in this world without hope and without God can experience true hope that only comes from a real relationship with Jesus Christ. We are also a community where those who have experienced this hope can “grow up in every way into Christ” or in other words grow spiritually through building relationships in small groups. Finally, we are a place where people can experience a fulfilled life by discovering how God created them so they know what He created them to do. We begin that journey in a series of steps called the Growth Track.

As we look into the future with eyes of faith, we believe that we are going to make a real difference in this region by bringing hope, building faith, and changing lives, one person at a time. We have discovered that the best way to build God’s Kingdom is to build His people!

Pastor Ron Nelson  
Lead Pastor



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# Financial Highlights

## Stewardship

God has called us to bring hope, build faith, and change the lives of people in our region. As we are faithful with that vision and our church grows, He will continue to give us more opportunities to reach people in North Georgia and abroad with the life-giving message of Jesus. Through the obedient and generous giving of the people of Eastgate Church, we are able to faithfully respond to those opportunities. We are committed to managing Kingdom investments and take that responsibility seriously. We will continue to operate our finances with integrity, accountability, and generosity in order to make the greatest impact possible for the Kingdom of God.



### Income

\$641,614 Total



### Expenses

\$710,961 Total



### Assets

\$2,641,904 Total

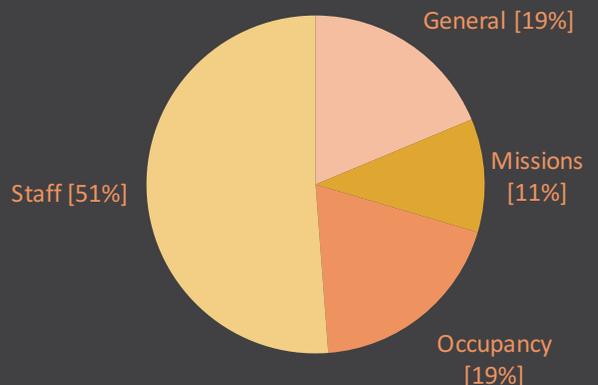


### Liabilities and Equity

\$2,641,904 Total



### Expense Percentage



# What's New

Added This Year

## A look into the initiatives added to our church culture

### 01 Growth Track

God has an incredible purpose for each of our lives, and the Eastgate Growth Track is designed to help you connect with that purpose. In this course, we spend four Sundays discovering what it looks like to know God, connect to His church, discover your purpose, and then make a difference by serving others.

### 02 Student Service

In endeavoring to bring hope to students in our region who are disconnected from God, this year we implemented a new service model for our students in 6th-12th grade. Once a month, the students meet for an all-in fun night with live worship, games, and a relevant message. During the other weeks, the students meet in small groups in order to develop their relationships with their peers and mentors, and discuss deeper teachings and issues.

### 03 Small Groups

We have always believed that real life change happens in small groups, when we connect with other believers. This allows us to lift each other up in support and growth. This year featured two full semesters with over 24 weeks of group sessions.

### 04 Focus Church

We believe that no matter the denomination, the responsibility of the church is the same; to lead people to Christ. Our weekly Focus Church initiative highlights one church in our area. Each Sunday we pray for that church's ministry and send them a financial gift to show our commitment to the local church.

### 05 Serve Day

In the summer of 2016, we participated in the ARC organization's initiative "Serve Day". Our team of volunteers lifted their hands and hearts to help others. Along with hundreds of other ARC churches, we worked to create a culture of serving others.

### 06 Media Room

With the help of our team members, we underwent rearranging and remodeling to create a media production room. The space allows our video & media team to have the space and resources needed to create an engaging and excellent experience.



# Attendance

Average Weekly **230**  
Highest Sunday **283**

eKidz Service Average **30**  
Highest eKidz **53**

Littles Service Average **15**  
Highest Littles **26**

## Special Services

Mother's Day **275 Total**  
Father's Day **254 Total**  
Easter Sunday **333 Total**  
Christmas Celebration **213 One service**  
Christmas Eve **170 One service**



**28**  
New Members



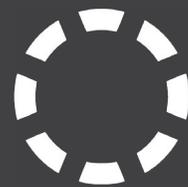
**92**  
Guests



**25**  
Baptisms



**4**  
New Commitments

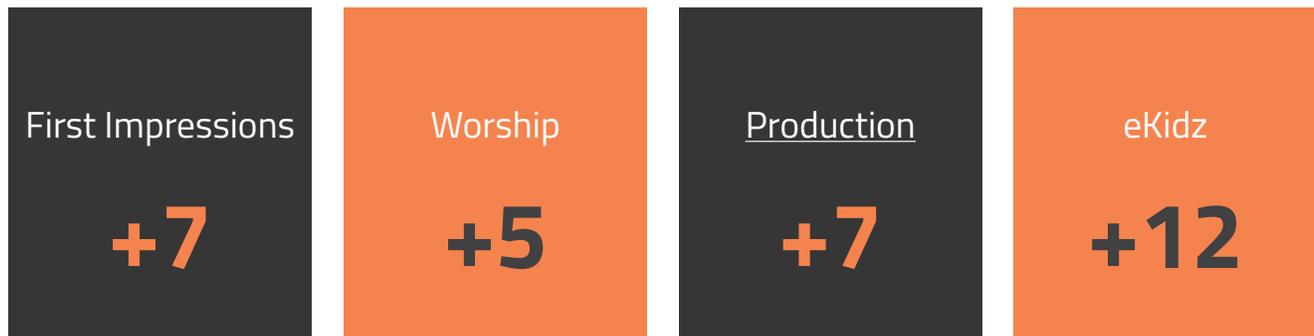


**11**  
Re-Commitments

# Team Members

## What We Get To Do

We believe that a person gains purpose and value in serving others. In turn, they are changing someone else's life! Here is how some of our teams have grown this year.



## Brand New Teams

### Guest Experience

A guest's first impression begins in the parking lot. We created this team with intentional purpose to serve our guests from the moment they exit their car. This team welcomes the guest with a friendly face, gives them a gift and information about our church, escorts them around the facility. Their main goal is to make the guest feel right at home!

### Video Production

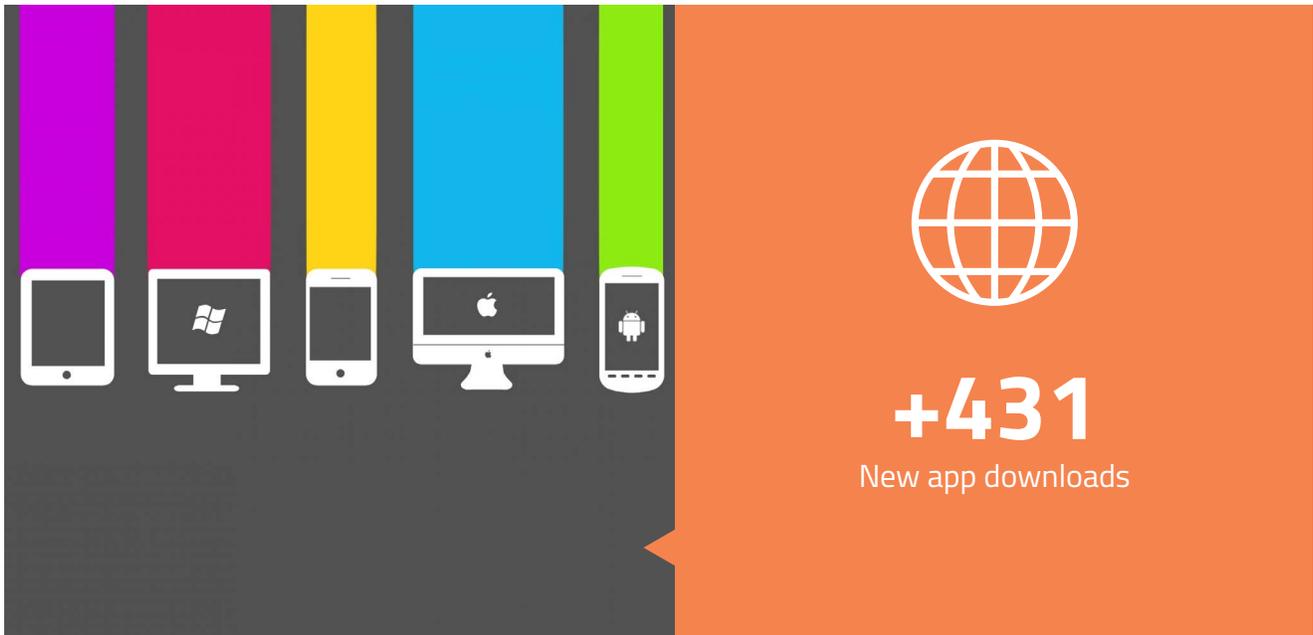
In today's modern culture, many people experience a church service through the eyes of technology. We developed this team in order to provide a high quality experience. From camera switchers, to online streaming, the video production team focuses on being the eyes and ears of our church services.

### Strategic Prayer

The Strategic Prayer Team's mission is to pray for the salvation, rededication, healing, protection, deliverance, breakthrough etc. of others through united and individual prayer efforts during weekly services, small groups, and seasons of corporate prayer.

# Web & App

How You Connect



The re-launch of our Eastgate app allowed us to engage with culture in a relevant way.

On Mother’s Day 2016, we re-launched our improved app with new features. One of the most popular were the “Message Notes”. Since launching this feature, the use of our app has gone up 60%.

The Eastgate website received over 7,800 views last year!

## Market Overview

### Website

- ~63% of visitors were new or second time viewers
- ~Top visited pages: “Team” “ I Am New” & “Events”
- ~41% of viewers were female. 59% were male.
- ~Ages of Viewers:

Under 25: 20%	25-34: 20%	35-44: 30%
45-54: 20%	55+: 10%	

### Application

- ~1315 people viewed past messages on the app
- ~431 downloads in 2016

### Text 2 Give

- ~New feature launched May 2016
- ~28% of giving came through T2G

# Missions

## Reaching Out

### Supporting local, national, and international outreach efforts

At Eastgate, our missions giving budget is of utmost importance. These investments go to support local, national and international missions efforts which help in bringing the life-giving message of Jesus to people all around the world. Our approach is to have a few strategic relationships in all three areas so that we can have a greater impact both financially and physically over time with these ministries.

With our "First Gift Sunday" annual initiative and others, you will see that making a difference in our own back yard comes first. Also, you will notice that planting life-giving churches is a high priority. Since the local church is a place where those who don't know God, or who are far from Him, can experience hope, help, and healing...we believe we should be involved in making that happen. We have established relationships nationally and will continue to partner with ARC and others to continue this effort. Also, in 2017 we are aiming our focus toward one of the darkest regions on earth, Europe! Together, we will continue to leave a legacy by financially funding Kingdom work and displaying His love all around the world.



## +32% National

As part of our partnership in the Association of Related Churches (ARC), we share resources to assist in church planting. This year we were also able to assist in providing resources for the Louisiana Flood relief.

## +66% Local

A few of our largest local partners are Well-spring Living, The Place of Forsyth County, and the Orphan Foundation. This category also contains our weekly Focus Church initiative and costs for events and holidays such as Mother's Day and Student Ministries.

## +2% International

In 2016 we gave a one time gift to Just One Africa and also helped to support one of our own missionaries in her journey to Thailand. We are in the early stages of pursuing additional mission relationships internationally in 2017.

## National

Association of Related Churches (ARC) - 7,200  
Additional Church Planting - 15,200  
Louisiana Flood Relief- 2,000

## Local

Focus Churches - 3,300  
Wellspring Living - 13,350  
The Place of Forsyth County - 11,952  
The Orphan Foundation - 7,000  
Community Events - 8,592  
Other - 7,214

## International

Just One Africa - 800  
Other - 500



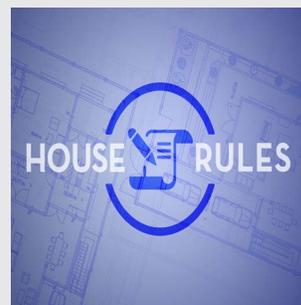
# Messages

What Was Taught This Year



**MAKE ROOM**

**January**  
Beginning the new year with our 21-days of fasting and prayer, this series helps us make room for what God wants to do in and through us.



February Series.  
Every home has a different family dynamic. How do we develop those relationships, God's way?



March Series.  
A study on the book of Galatians. Written by Apostle Paul.



April Series.  
Discovering how to hear the voice of God, and how He speaks in the Bible to us today.



May Series.  
We each have forgotten dreams of our own. God has a dream, a plan, and a purpose for all of us.



June-July Series.  
Various speakers and messages including Pastors LaRon October, Jeff Chandler, and one of our Overseers, Pastor David Wright.



August Series.  
 Answering questions submitted by you! Concerns and issues that we wonder about.



Sept Series.  
 Realizing that we are better together when we take ownership of the place that God has called our home.

A graphic with a yellow background and a white diagonal line. The word "GREAT" is in large red letters at the top, and "DIVIDE" is in large yellow letters at the bottom. A silver coin with the word "THE" on it is placed over the diagonal line. Below the graphic, the word "October" is written in white on a dark background, followed by a paragraph of text.

**October**  
 There can be significant gaps between generations, genders, churches, leadership, etc. God intended to bridge those gaps & receive the rewards of understanding and living out this principle.



November Series.  
 Changing our focus from the temporal to the eternal. Discovering how God called us to leave a legacy of what we leave behind.



December Series.  
 Reflecting on the colors of Christmas: Red-Sacrifice. Green-Life. Gold-Value. White-New.



# Big Events

This Year

Each year, we are intentional in planning a few main events. While the events may change, the holidays are celebrated big! With each experience, our goal is to engage families and create a comfortable environment to welcome new guests and community members.



## MOTHER'S DAY

This year we wanted to celebrate moms in a big way! Sweet treats and sweet gifts were given. But even more importantly we campaigned for our single mothers and widows, by giving them a gift of cash to spend on themselves. No strings attached. Just a simple gesture of appreciation, that they were not forgotten.

## FATHER'S DAY

We can't forget about dads! This year we celebrated dad as well with chicken wings! Zaxby's was a huge hit as an after-service snack. People were raving about the food! We also gifted dads with a travel mug, with some Eastgate swag!





## LADIES CONFERENCE

The "Treasures" Ladies Conference focused on discovering self-worth and how God created you as a gem. 62 girls and women engaged together. The conference featured main stage sessions, as well as very successful breakout sessions. These were the main hit of the event! The team of women coordinated an all-day event, to reach our girls and women and celebrate their treasures.



## ONE Night LAUNCH

In endeavoring to bring hope to students in our region who are disconnected from God, this year we implemented a new service model for our students in 6th-12th grade. Once a month, the students meet for an all-in fun night with live worship, games, and a relevant message. During the other weeks, the students meet in small groups in order to develop their relationships with their peers and mentors, and discuss deeper teachings and issues. At the launch on September 11th, over 40 students attended. New friends are being invited, and students are engaging together.

## CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

A full event of Holiday fun! This event was meant to be a general joy to parents, kids, and new guests. We featured a hot chocolate and candy bar, family photo booth, and real snow! This was a huge hit with the kids, and families enjoyed a free event to celebrate together!



A close-up photograph of a lit sparkler against a dark background. The sparks are bright orange and yellow, creating a dense, starburst pattern of light trails. The sparkler itself is a dark, cylindrical object on the right side of the frame.

# GOOA

# What's Next

As we have celebrated all that God has done in 2016 throughout this annual report, we are anticipating what He has put into focus for us in 2017. God has been faithful to put before us "WINS" (what's important now) or initiatives each year and 2017 is no different. One of those initiatives that is constant over the years is continually fulfilling our vision of bringing hope, building faith, and changing lives. In addition to that are a few more that we will harness some of our energies toward in the coming year.

## **Children's Ministry**

Developing our children's (K-5) worship services: We will be working hard at equipping and empowering our student worship teams (6-12th grade) to lead our children in live worship in order for them to experience His power and presence at a deeper level. This will also maximize their time in worship to experience the hope and life of Jesus in a life-transforming way.

## **Leadership Depth**

Identify and increase leadership depth: We have been very intentional about developing a leadership culture and will continue to do so. In the coming year we will be looking to empower those leaders and others to lead at a macro level in order to prepare for growth.

## **International Missions**

Explore and solidify international ministry relationships: God has given us a burden and call to aid in reaching one of the darkest regions of our world, Europe. We will seek out relationships and efforts to partner with to plant life-giving churches and other ministry expressions to reach that region with the love and power of Jesus Christ.

A large, stylized graphic of the letters 'L' and 'S' in a bold, orange font. The 'L' is on the left and the 'S' is on the right, both rendered in a thick, rounded, sans-serif style.

**Eastgate Church**

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