

Acton Bethel CRC Information Package - 2024



Bethel Christian Reformed Church
365 Queen St, Acton, ON, L7J 2M6

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Bethel at a Glance

Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Acton, Ontario is a dynamic and mission focused church that seeks to **“Follow His Light”** in the community of Acton and surrounding area. Our Church has experienced a lot of change recently - going far beyond the impact of COVID-19. One of these changes was the departure of our long-time minister - Pastor Ray Vanderkooij in the summer of 2020, as he accepted a call to Clinton CRC, and the other was going through the Natural Church Development survey as a congregation.

This survey brought to light several areas to revisit and prompted a Visioning Day in fall of 2020 for the congregation to participate in and for the Church to discern where God is leading us. We want to share with you the results of the survey and areas of focus for Bethel going forward under the “Follow His Light” ministry.

In the Fall of 2019, the leaders at Acton Bethel asked if it was time to re-evaluate what we as a church are called to do.

Is it time for a new “season” of direction and purpose? Are we growing spiritually? Are we being fed? Are we loving God as much as we can? Are we loving each other? Are we loving our community to the fullest?

God prompted us into a process where we felt the need to step back and look at ourselves through the Natural Church Development survey. Throughout the visioning process we were led to focus on three areas - our love for God, our love for each other and our love for our community. This exercise brought to light that there were areas we needed to revisit. As a result, we had a successful Visioning Day, with tremendous input. We had an overwhelming turnout and discovered where the Holy Spirit is leading us, and we received 122 courageous proposals from the congregation to work with!

From the proposals and the common themes, through discernment and prayer support we were led to 7 initiatives that comprise the Follow His Light ministry. The 7 initiatives are:

1. Seek a gifted, relevant preacher
2. Learn how to be more vulnerable with each other
3. Engage in vibrant, passionate, authentic worship
4. Create geographically based Community Care Groups that support each other
5. Create an environment for intergenerational social connections and mentoring
6. Partner with existing agencies to work together to serve our community
7. Equip and encourage the congregation to share the gospel

Following the development of the 7 initiatives an Implementation Team was formed and has been actively working with program leaders to modify their activities to encourage the congregation to Follow His Light in these ways.

Natural Church Development *summary* guide

The current culture and values of...

Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Acton

December-2019


Comes more naturally to us


1 Fellowship

2 Service

3 Faith

Comes less naturally to us

Our current culture and values 

A balanced church 



8 essentials of church life


The current culture and values of...

Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Acton

Comes more naturally to us

- 1 Holistic Small Groups
- 2 Need-oriented Evangelism
- 3 Effective Structures
- 4 Loving Relationships
- 5 Empowering Leadership
- 6 Gift-based Ministry
- 7 Passionate Spirituality
- 8 Inspiring Worship Service

Comes less naturally to us

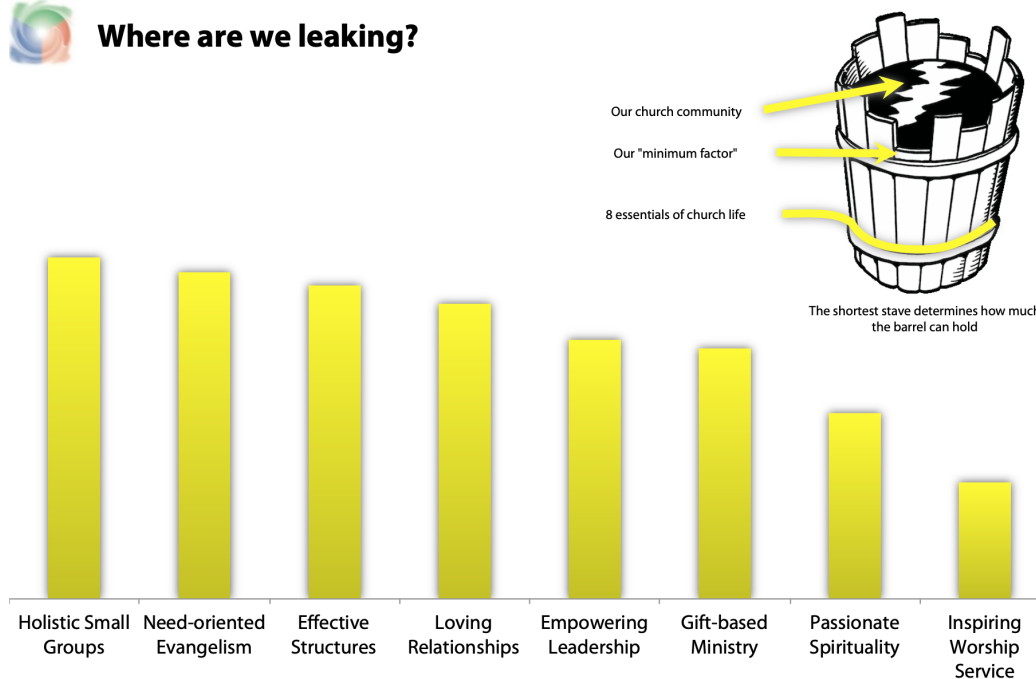
Our current culture and values 

Our current average 





Where are we leaking?



Mission

Under the overarching ministry slogan of “Shining Light, Showing Love” we express our biblical mission in alignment with the Great Commandment, Great Commission, and Great Call.

- *Great Commandment:* “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’” (Matthew 22:37-39)
- *Great Commission:* “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)
- *Great Call:* He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

Vision

The biblically provided mission of Bethel CRC is expressed in having a vision for eight areas of ministry expression, for which we are continually seeking to guide and grow through goals and strategies that are lived out in ministries.

- Empowered leadership
- Gift-oriented ministry
- Passionate Spirituality
- Functional Structures
- Inspiring worship services
- Holistic small groups
- Need-oriented evangelism
- Loving Relationships.

These areas of ministry expression are guided in implementation by the Holy Spirit working through evaluation tools we have employed as church leadership, such as Natural Church Development, Healthy Church Index, and Lasting Impact. In our staff model of ministry, the ministry staff share in shaping ministry and developing goals and strategies to continually grow in being led by the Holy Spirit in generating and sustaining creative energy in moving towards God's ever emerging future.

Our History

Formally established in 1953, Bethel Christian Reformed Church has a long and full history in the community of Acton. The timeline presented on the following page outlines the major events and highlights that have taken place throughout almost 70 years of service.

Church History

- May 17, 1953, the first service was held in the Anglican Parish Hall in Acton. Reverend G. Andre came from Grand Rapids to help Bethel get started as a church. There were 130 members who transferred their memberships from Orangeville and Brampton, all who had recently immigrated from Holland. Services at that time were only held in the Dutch language.
- April 1954 began meeting in the YMCA for church services.
- May 29, 1955, Rev. R. Groenenboer who arrived from Holland, became Bethel's first minister. He led the afternoon service on the same day he arrived in Acton.
- In 1955 Bethel became part of the Acton ministerial collaborating with other churches in the community to share God's love and continues to do so.
- July 1955 finalized the purchase of the church property from a farmer, Richard Nicklin Brown.
- About 1955 Acton Bethel began the "Calvin Christian School Society" prior to Georgetown CRC being formed. A number of years later Georgetown CRC was formed and began the "Georgetown Christian School Society". The two groups amalgamated on April 29, 1960. The new school opened its doors in September 1965, the beginning of "Halton Hills Christian School" (formerly called "Georgetown District Christian School").
- Jan 28, 1957, official opening of the basement of the church. The top was not added until 1963.
- In July 1959, Bethel held its first VBS (Vacation Bible School) program for the Acton Community and has been going strong ever since. Since 2011 there have been over 200 kids attending per day each summer.
- In 1962, the name Bethel was chosen for the church. (Beth-El... meaning "House of God")
- Dec 13, 1963 was the official opening of the upper structure of the church with services in both the Dutch & English languages (although more Dutch than English services).
- 1965 is when a number of programs began... Cadets, GEMs, an English ladies society to go with the Dutch ladies society since 1953. Around this time was also when the Dinner committee began.
- In 1970 the parsonage was built for the minister on the church property.
- Fall 1988 Coffee Break and Story Hour programs began.
- 1992 the first community Unity service was held in Acton.
- 1995 Small groups were launched.
- Oct 27, 1996 was the dedication service for a major building expansion which doubled the size of Bethel.

- 1996 the Reorganization of Council to include the Ministry Board, Pastoral Elders and Diaconate. A few years later Pastoral Care workers were added.
- Fall 1997 the church library opened on Sept 21st and Men's Breakfast began on Oct 11th.
- In 1997 the Church hired a part-time Small Groups Coordinator. This title later changed to an Outreach Coordinator.
- 1998 the first 24 hour prayer vigil was organized.
- 2000 the Alpha program was initiated.
- Bethel took part in the Natural Church Development (NCD) in 2000. Bethel's results indicated strength in the area of Relationships, and weakness in Inspiring Worship.
- In 2001 the evening worship service was replaced with small group meetings with many more attending.
- In 2002 the Plan to Protect Abuse Policy was adopted.
- Also in 2002 Bethel brought a part-time Worship Coordinator onto staff.
- In 2004 another NCD Survey was completed.
- In 2007 Bethel hired Andrew Nunn as a Ministry Coordinator -Youth and Small Groups and later became the official Youth Pastor until 2016.
- In 2016 Brian Smith joined Bethel as Youth Ministry Coordinator until Oct 2021 when Brian chose to pursue an associate pastor position at Upper Thames Missionary Church.
- In June of 2009 Bethel completed an NCD Survey. Bethel scored high in Empowering Leadership, and Effective Structures, and low in Inspiring Worship and Passionate Spirituality.
- In 2012 another major building expansion was underway for Bethel Christian Reformed Church, first service in the new sanctuary was held on Dec 2, 2012. Building dedication was held on April 13, 2013.
- The NCD survey was done again in 2019. Bethel scored high in Small groups and in Need oriented Evangelism, and low again in Inspiring Worship.
- There have been two 24 hour prayer vigils in the past 4 years.
- In 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic Bethel CRC began livestream church services and have continued ever since.

Pastoral History

- 1953-1954 Rev. G. Andre
- 1955-1958 Rev. R. Groenenboer
- 1959-1963 Rev. J. Nutma
- 1964-1967 Rev. W. Van Dijk
- 1967-1972 Rev. P. Brouwer
- 1972-1977 Rev. J. Corvers
- 1978-1982 Rev. J. Cooper
- 1985-1989 Pastor D. Miedema
- 1991-1993 Pastor A. Van Giessen
- 1995-2002 Pastor S. Brix
- 2003-2020 Pastor R. VanderKooij
- 2013-2016 Youth Pastor Andrew Nunn

Senior Pastor Role

God calls the Senior Pastor of Bethel CRC, through council, to serve Jesus Christ and to guide God's people in the fulfillment of the church's mission and vision. Serving as the primary spiritual leader for Bethel CRC, the Senior Pastor develops a team ministry that will foster spiritual growth among members and empower them into mission and ministry.

When established, one of the responsibilities of the senior pastor will be to assist in hiring a second pastorally gifted leader to be responsible for Spiritual growth, shepherding work, pastoral care, and prayer ministry.

Senior Pastor Key Responsibilities:

Preaching and Teaching

- Provides clear, practical Bible teaching that challenges people to know, love and obey God.
- Encourages the congregation to relate their faith to their daily lives.
- Preaching authentically on Sundays to help us apply Biblical truths relevant to our everyday lives.
- Fosters an environment within the church where prayer is deeply embedded, nurturing, and overseeing the prayer ministries of the church.
- Encourages the congregation and other leaders to minister according to their spiritual gifts, providing teaching along the way.
- Provides effective biblical mentoring and counseling.
- Takes adequate time in the week to study scripture and relevant literature in order to keep informed and updated on matters relating to ministry.
- Administers the sacraments of the church, officiates weddings and funeral services.

Leadership

- Together with the Worship Coordinator, designs, facilitates, and leads engaging and Christ-centered Sunday morning services.
- Serves on the Ministry Board and makes a significant contribution to strategic planning, priority setting and leadership development.
- Serves as an advisory member of the Elders Board and provides spiritual leadership and guidance.
- Ensures that individual staff ministry objectives and plans are consistent with the church's vision and strategy, and that these are achieved.
- Advise, encourage, and participate in the instruction of our lay leaders to be effective disciples in their ministry.

- Facilitates a Christ-centered culture amongst the staff and all members of the church.
- Develops and empowers staff members and other church ministry leaders through regular meetings as well as daily interactions.
- Provides feedback and leadership to staff members through progress meetings and formal performance reviews.

Bethel Family & Community Outreach

- Together with the Community Life Coordinator, builds significant relationships with those inside and outside the church family.
- Provides pastoral care to the Bethel Family, along with the second pastorally gifted leader, including visiting the sick, members who are grieving or struggling and our seniors.
- Casts an inspiring vision for reaching the local community, the region, and the world for Christ.
- Actively supports outreach functions and gets involved in key outreach events.
- Provides counsel and support to the local Ministerial Association.
- Fosters a strong connection with local leaders of the churches of Acton.

Council Structure

Mandate

Council is responsible for the governance of the church in accordance with biblical principles and the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church. Council has the final authority to make changes and approve new initiatives to the way the church is governed.

Council Membership

The Council consists of the elders and deacons of the church. Council members shall serve for three (3) years normally and have a two (2) year sabbatical before being eligible for nomination again.

Elders Board

Mandate

The Pastoral Elders are responsible for the pastoral care and prayer ministry of the congregation. The Pastoral Care Workers (PCW) and Deacons assist them in the work of pastoral care. The Elders Board shall normally meet once every two months unless its work requires more meetings to achieve its specific duties.

Board Membership

The Elders Board will consist of 7 Pastoral Elders, 2 Young Adult Elders, 1 Seniors Elder, and the Senior Pastor. The Elders Board shall select a Chairperson, a Vice-Chair, and a Recording Secretary from among themselves. The Chairperson shall also serve on the Ministry Board.

Ministry Board

Mandate

The Ministry Board (MB) of Bethel CRC is tasked with the oversight of the ministry groups of the church. It performs its tasks by setting policy, visioning, and coordinating the ministries under its care. It also performs the executive function of Council by providing the executive member positions. The Ministry Board shall normally meet once per month unless its work requires more meetings to achieve its specific duties. A significant amount of dialogue occurs via e-mails as well.

Board Membership

The Ministry Board will consist of 3 Ministry Elders, 1 Pastoral Elder, 1 Deacon, the Senior Pastor, and the Recording Secretary. The Senior Pastor's role is in an advisory position while the Recording Secretary is an administrative role. The Pastoral Elder shall be the Chairperson of the Elders Board. The Deacon shall be the Chairperson of the Deacons Board. One Ministry Board

elder shall be selected as Chairperson, one as Vice-chair and the third Ministry Board elder shall be the Clerk. All executive positions shall also serve in the same capacity on the church's Council.

Deacons

Mandate

The Deacons are responsible for the ministry of mercy to the congregation, the community, and the world. The Deacons assist the Pastoral Care Workers (PCW) and Pastoral Elders in the work of congregational care. In addition, the Deacons shall stimulate the congregation to faithful and obedient stewardship. The Deacons Board shall normally meet every other month unless its work requires more meetings to achieve its specific duties.

Board Membership

The Deacons Board will consist of 6 Deacons. They shall select a Chairperson, a Vice-Chair, a Treasurer, a Recording Secretary, and an Outreach Deacon (not on a pastoral care team) from among themselves. The Chairperson shall also serve on the Ministry Board as the representative of the Deacons Board.

Ministry Staffing Model

Bethel operates a staff ministry model led by the Senior Pastor with a Child & Youth Director, Community Life Coordinator, Worship Director and Administrative Assistant to carry out the ministries of the church effectively.

When established, the Senior Pastor will assist in hiring a second pastorally gifted leader to focus on spiritual growth, shepherding work, pastoral care, and prayer ministry.

We are excited about this new development and what it means for Shining Light and Showing Love in the community of Acton.

Ministries

Coffeebreak / Storyhour

The Coffeebreak program invites women to enjoy a time of socializing, singing, starting new friendships, and studying God's word through a variety of materials. Coffeebreak has proven to be an amazing tool for witnessing in our community. Presently, about 50 women attend weekly. A babysitting program is also provided for small children. The Story Hour program is designed for pre-schoolers; giving children an opportunity to play, sing and hear Bible stories.

Food For Life

Every Thursday a "Food for Life" truck arrives at the church with surplus food from distribution centres. Six volunteers spend a few hours unloading, sorting, and delivering free perishable foods to clients from our community that are in need.

GEMS / Cadets

GEMS is a relationship-building club for girls from Grade 2 through Grade 8. Games, crafts, singing, badge work, and Bible lessons which relate to our daily lives all enhance this experience. A big focus of the program is to provide Christian mentorship to the girls and Junior Counsellors in order to help encourage a relationship with Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Every year a weekend retreat is planned which allows for relationships to deepen with their leaders and friends, but more importantly with God. The club also does a couple of community service work projects to model Christian serving throughout the year. The club has 20 counsellors with 80 girls attending. 1/3 of the girls are from our church, 1/3 from other churches and 1/3 are from unchurched families.

Cadets is a club for boys from Grade 2 to Grade 8, offering merit badges, projects, camping, hiking, Bible study and a place to make new friends. The goal of the program is to help young boys grow into good Christian men. The last 5 years 40 boys attended with 20 counsellors serving alongside. 50% of the boys are not from our church and approximately 25% are from unchurched families. During Covid the ministry has managed to stay connected with the boys through online small groups and craft project tutorials.

Knit & Chat

Knit and Chat began as a place for knitters, both young and old, to meet together for a social time as well as to knit items to sell at the church bazaar and to donate to other causes. It is now primarily a social chat group that meets all year, every other week, with knitting being optional. The morning meetings open with a devotional and prayer and then it's a time to connect and care for one another. There are 15-17 members currently involved in this ministry. (Name change pending!)

Library

Bethel is very fortunate to have a well-stocked and well-used library. The Head librarian, under the advisory of the Pastor, ensures that there is a good selection of bible studies, devotionals, church development books, Christian fiction of varying genres, children's books, videos and CD's. Funds are set aside in the budget for purchase of new materials, but several members also donate books on a regular basis. Eight volunteers staff the library on Sunday mornings on a rotational basis and help manage the library cataloging and lending system.

Men's Breakfast

Our church issues an open invitation to men from Bethel CRC and the community for breakfast in the church every second Saturday of the month from September to June. This breakfast get-together has been a great way for men to meet others and to be drawn into the activities of the church in a very non-threatening way. A team of 8 men host this breakfast with approximately 50 men enjoying a breakfast and fellowship together.

More Than Meals

Provides free home-cooked meals (fresh or frozen) to anyone in our church family or the community at large who are experiencing a difficult time due to medical treatments or recovery, recent loss of a loved one, or other difficulties. We arrange meal trains to have a warm meal delivered when that is preferred. Meal Trains are also arranged for church families when they have had an addition of a newborn to their family. The church has a dedicated freezer to store frozen meals that have been prepared in the church by willing hands on cook off nights. The meals are available for the Deacons, Pastoral Care Team, Community Life Coordinator and the More Than Meals Team to give out anytime they wish to bless and extend a helping hand.

Prayer Ministry

Bethel's prayer ministry has been largely headed up by the Elders Board in recent years. In September, preceding ministry start-up, we have a week of evening prayer meetings that focus on different areas of church ministry each night. All the ministry leaders are invited to come on the night highlighting their particular ministry, but it is also open to the whole congregation to attend.

Sunday Morning- A few dedicated people along with the Elder of the day meet on Sunday mornings before the church service to lift praise and concerns before the Lord on behalf of the congregation. During the service on Sunday mornings there are 2 prayer partners that lift us up in intercessory prayer. Members of the congregation are invited to participate with a partner and are scheduled about twice a year.

Bethel CRC has held 24-hour prayer vigils in past years as well as prayer walks on the streets of our community. Prayer ministry is something we would like to develop further as we feel we have lost some of the passionate focus we once had in recent years.

Sign Committee

An often underestimated, yet vital ministry in our church takes place by the roadside. Bethel CRC is situated on the main thoroughfare in Acton (Highway 7). Our sign is used to broadcast inspirational, bible-based, thought-provoking bits of wisdom; and also, to advertise upcoming church events to passers-by and the community at large.

Small Groups

Small groups is the primary vehicle for building true community in the church. In a society that is increasingly changing and with a family structure that is fragmented, small groups can provide a safe place to share our life experiences. At different times throughout the year, several small groups meet to study the Bible, support one another and to grow and learn in the Christian faith. About 90 people attend small groups.

Sunday School

An important weekly ministry to children takes place in Sunday School. Sixty children are currently registered with approximately 40 children in attendance each week. After being dismissed part way through the worship service the children begin with large group worship singing and an interactive Bible story. The children then break off to small groups to do age-appropriate activities and crafts with their small group leaders that reinforce the message of the bible story. The program is for pre-schoolers up to Grade 5.

Presently, the beginning of the livestreamed service is dedicated to a special children's message with some creative video and story-telling performed by the Sunday School team.

Sunday Service Hospitality

Bethel's hospitality ministry is spearheaded by the Greeters, Ushers and the Welcome Center. The Greeters are stationed at both entrances and welcome people as they enter the church and direct newcomers as needed. The Welcome Center is a place newcomers may approach for any information or questions they may have about Bethel. Ushers welcome and distribute bulletins as people enter the worship space and respond to those with special needs (ie. Wheelchair access, or other needs)

The Roxy

As a result of Initiative #6 of the 7 Follow His Light Initiatives Bethel is partnering with the local Alliance Church to develop community meeting spaces for Christian content. The exact details of how this ministry is going to spread God's Word is still being determined however we are committed to partnering with existing agencies to work together to serve our community and we see the work occurring at The Roxy as a potential area for discipleship.

Vacation Bible School

Our Vacation Bible School program typically runs for a week each summer for half days, wrapping up with a special Sunday service and BBQ/Bouncy Castle event following the service. VBS functions as a community outreach program, seeking to bring children from senior kindergarten to grade 5 to a personal relationship with Jesus. Enrolment each year is approximately 200 children with at least 85% not being from our church.

A large base of about 110 volunteers helps run the program with 50 of them being high school students. For 2021, we plan to run a virtual Vacation Bible School program for the community - free of charge.

Worship Ministry

Bethel has many members of the church who participate in leading worship through their gifts. There are currently three music teams, each made up of six musicians, a sound person, a projectionist and a camera operator. The teams plan their scheduled services based on theme information given to them by the Worship Coordinator and from the Pastor. At the start of the service, we have a Host that welcomes and gives any announcements that may need to be made. There are congregational prayer leaders, and scripture readers who are regularly scheduled to participate in the services as well. We livestream our Sunday services.

Yes to the Dress

An annual two day spring dress event that provides free gently-used formal attire to students for Graduation or Prom. The goal of the program is to help ease the financial burden of these events and is free to anyone and everyone who comes to “shop”. The donations of formal wear comes from our community. The dresses and accessories are sorted, organized and the space is turned into an awesome time of selecting the right outfit for their special occasion. About 50-60 dresses leave the church building every year and we normally have 5-10 volunteers from the church to help out.

Youth Group

Youth group is comprised of high school aged teens from both the church and community. We seek to make youth group a place where absolutely anyone is welcome. The purpose of youth group is to foster relationships between youth and Christ.

Brian Smith, our Youth Ministry Coordinator (2016- Oct 2021) previously oversaw the Youth Group and coordinated the leadership team - made up of 7 other church volunteers.

Currently, our Young Adult elders and youth group volunteers facilitate weekly teaching time where the youth are taught Biblically on relevant topics. Youth are encouraged to ask questions and interact with the teaching. Most weeks there is a game or activity to begin the time together. There are also a number of retreats and ‘getaway weekends’ such as All Ontario Convention where teens can have some time away to focus on spiritual development. 15-25 youth attend weekly. 75% churched and 25% from unchurched families.

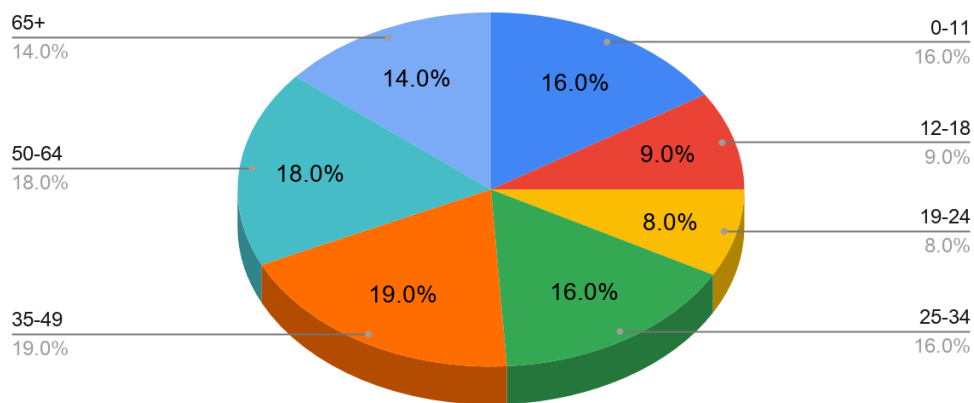
YOY (Youth Of Yesterday)

On the first Monday of the month a social time of coffee, tea, snacks, and games are enjoyed by people ages 65+. A few Mondays per year, special side trips are organized such as dinner out, a tour of Fall colours or a visit to St Jacobs. Weekly attendance is around 20 participants while the special side trips attract 32-34 participants.

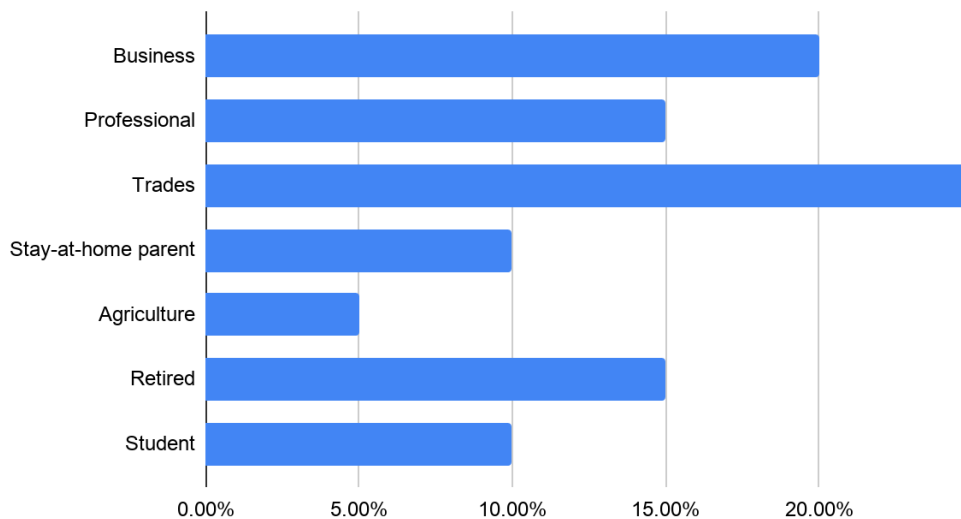
Congregational Statistics

Bethel Church in Acton is a church with a beautifully balanced age demographic. Young families continue to find Bethel to be a church that has appeal because of the friendly community of believers and the congregation's strong desire for vibrant passionate worship.

Bethel Age Demographics



Bethel General Vocation



Sunday attendance Pre-Covid-19

- 275-300 people

Sunday attendance during Covid-19

- 70 people in person / 90 average online devices (representing approximately 240 people)

Active adult professing members

- 257 people

Membership in Congregation by length of time

- Less than 5 years: 16%
- 5-10 years: 22%
- 10 or more years: 62%

Composition of congregation

- Mostly mono-cultural

Communion Services

- Seven times per year

Financial Information

	<u>2020 Actual</u>	<u>2020 Budget</u>
Income Details		
Total Budget Income	513,312.26	448,619.00
Canadian/Local Causes collected		
Total Canadian Causes	30,180.65	
Total Local Causes	79,574.91	
Total Sunday School Causes	120.00	
Total Canadian/Local Causes collected	109,875.56	
Ministry Share causes collected		
Guelph Campus Ministries	4,262.80	
Ministry Shares collected	99,829.00	84,780.00
Race Relations	2,325.25	
World Missions - Karen Lubbers	24,929.25	12,000.00
Total Ministry Share causes collected	131,346.30	96,780.00
Total World Renew causes collected	13,291.70	
Total Income	767,825.82	545,399.00
Expenses		
Total Ministry Expenses	419,280.27	448,619.00
Total Local/Canadian Causes Disbursed	108,772.68	
Total Ministry Shares Disbursed	144,638.00	96,780.00
Total Expenses	672,690.95	545,399.00
Balance	95,134.87	0.00

Church Facilities & Parsonage

Church Facility

Bethel CRC was built in 1957 and was used as a basement church for 5 years. The first upper level was added in 1963. Minor changes were made over the next 30 years as needed. Then in 1996 the building was expanded to allow for more meeting rooms and a fellowship hall was added. In 2012 it was decided that the church would undergo another major expansion. There was again a need for more meeting rooms as ministries like GEMS and Cadets, among others, had grown. The sanctuary was also sitting up to 80% capacity since the 1996 expansion, and so a new sanctuary was built (converting the old sanctuary and fellowship hall into a variety of uses, including hall, kitchen, nursery, and facilities). Before 2012 the church was 16,082 square feet, and since the renovation was complete the square footage is 29,225. At the link below you will find a video walk-through of the church facility.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01QXfBQhx4s>

Parsonage/Housing

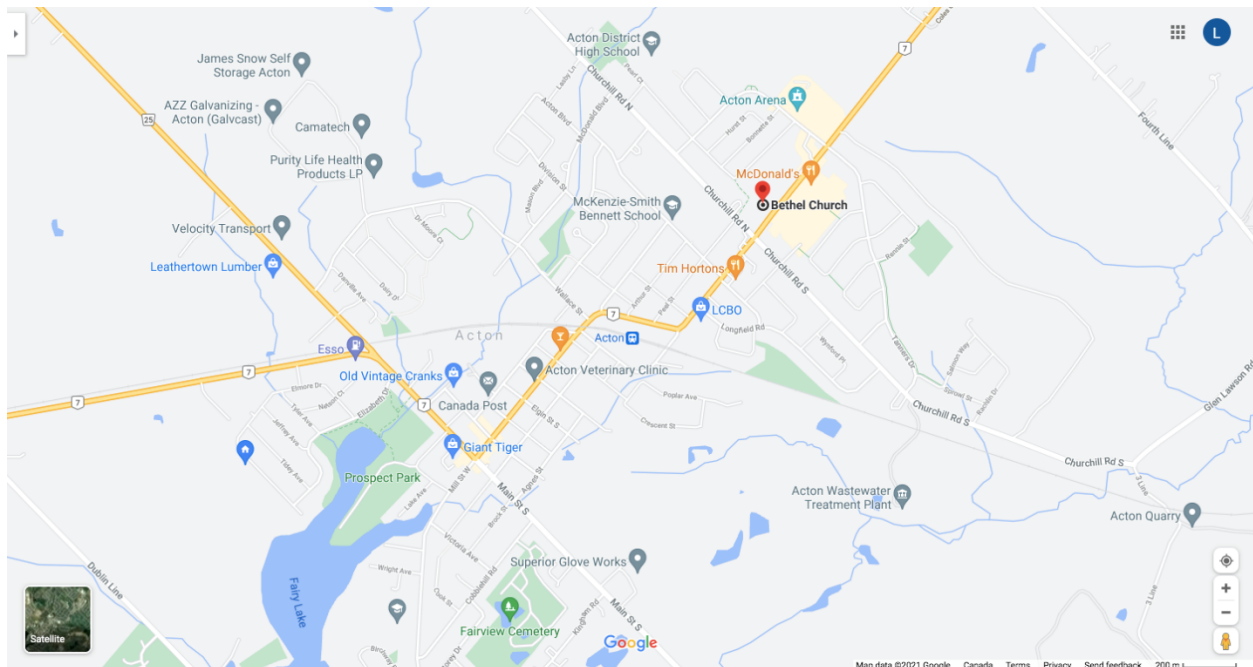
Bethel also offers incoming pastors an option to live at the parsonage or a housing allowance. The parsonage is located on the northeast corner of the church lot. The house is a two storey home with a two car garage, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms.



Our Community

Acton is part of the amalgamated Town of Halton Hills. Set in the beautiful high altitudes of “Escarpment Country”, Acton is a growing community of approximately 10,000 - located about 60 km west of Toronto.

Acton residents enjoy an enviable quality of life. Clean air, a spring-fed lake, forested hiking paths, public parks, recreational sports centres, and locally owned small businesses all contribute to the ambience and appeal that makes Acton a special place.



While retaining its small-town feel, Acton is also close enough to other major cities like Guelph, Brampton, Milton, Mississauga, Oakville, and Toronto to absorb the energy, cultural diversity and attractions that larger centres offer.

Growth

Acton is a quickly growing community. Housing trends in Halton Hills have resulted in a steady production of units throughout the past few decades. We see this as not only community growth, but an expanding mission field as well!

Safety

Acton is a safe place to live. Acton is part of the Regional Municipality of Halton, which continues to have the lowest crime rate for municipalities over 100,000 population in Canada. Emergency Services include volunteer fire rescue, community police, and volunteer emergency medical services. The nearest hospitals are in Georgetown, Milton, and Guelph, all within 15-20 minutes' drive.

Transportation

Highways 7 and 25 run through Acton and provide the main arteries for travel to other towns and cities. Highway 401 is a short drive (15 minutes) down Hwy. 25. The GO Bus has several stops in Acton, as well as a GO Train Station, on a connecting route from Guelph to Brampton.

Shopping

Downtown Acton has over 85 specialty shops and services that are locally owned! There is currently a great selection of grocery stores, pet stores, pharmacies, etc.. Some other specialty shops include The Holland Shop, Willow Lane Natural Foods, Vinyland, Smooth Solutions Spa, Forever Youngsters, 70 Below Treats, and so much more.

In the summer, several local farms open to the public for "pick-your-own-produce". You can get anything from fresh strawberries to corn on the cob.

For other purchase requirements, Georgetown, Milton, and Guelph are only 15 and 20 minutes away respectively.

Restaurants

Acton is blessed to have a large variety of restaurants to enjoy. With many options to choose from including Indian Cuisine, Chinese, Middle Eastern, Greek, Vietnamese, and Canadian food! There is also never a shortage of great pizza with five different pizza restaurants!

Recreation

- Parks: There are many public parks/playgrounds in Acton, including Prospect Park which is situated on a peninsula surrounded by Fairy Lake.
- Arenas/pools: Acton has a new double rink skating arena close to the church. It is also surrounded by large soccer fields and a skateboard park, enjoyed by the community all year round. There is a public swimming pool that is also located close by inside Mackenzie-Smith Bennett Public School.

- Golfing: Acton boasts two golf courses. The first is the highly touted, very picturesque Blue Springs Golf Course, owned by ClubLink. The second, Acton Meadows, is a public 18-hole course.
- Hiking: The Bruce Trail winds its way along the Escarpment. Hikers can enjoy an hour's walk, a full day's hike, or a trip of several days. Several other side trails, Crown Land, and Conservation areas surround Acton, and offer a diversity of scenery – from high rocky outcrops to low wetlands.
- Skiing: Several of the hiking trails can also be used for cross-country skiing. Downhill skiing is just a 15-minute drive away at Glen Eden in Milton.
- Canoeing/kayaking: Several rivers are within easy distance for canoeing or kayaking, as well as our own Fairy Lake right in town. Also, lots of places to go fishing.
- Sports Clubs: Sports and recreation clubs are available for a wide variety of activities for both adults and children including soccer, hockey, curling, and baseball.

Events & Festivals

- Leathertown Festival: Mill Street (the main street through Downtown Acton) shuts down one day a year to host a street carnival with local vendors and artists to celebrate Acton's heritage in the leather industry.
- Acton Farmers Market: From Spring to Fall, local vendors and farmers set up shop on the side streets of Acton to sell produce and speciality items.
- Acton Winter Market: Hosted once a year at Prospect Park, the Acton BIA offers fun outdoor activities including tractor rides, face painting, arts and crafts, and much more.
- Trunk Sale: This is Acton's unique garage sale on wheels. It runs every Saturday from May to the end of October.
- Acton Fall Fair: A fun weekend of fairground rides, displays, truck and tractor pulls, and contests in Prospect Park run by the Acton Agricultural Society.

Acton Ministerial

Bethel CRC is a member of the Acton Ministerial Association. Some of the exciting events sponsored by the Acton Ministerial include an annual community church service in January. Acton has ten churches of different denominations that all work together to bless the community and share God's love!

Local Schools

We are fortunate to have access to a wide variety of Christian, Catholic and Public schools, at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels. The schools that are closest to Acton include:

Elementary

- Halton Hills Christian School (Preschool - Grade 8)
- St. Joseph’s Catholic Elementary School (Kindergarten - Grade 8)
- Robert Little Elementary School (Kindergarten - Grade 6)
- Mackenzie-Smith Bennett Public School (Kindergarten - Grade 8)

Secondary

- King’s Christian Collegiate (Grade 9 - Grade 12)
- Christ the King Catholic Secondary School (Grade 9 - Grade 12)
- Woodland Christian High School (Grade 9 - Grade 12)
- Toronto District Christian High School (Grade 9 - Grade 12)
- Acton District High School (Grade 7 - Grade 12)
- Georgetown District High School (Grade 9 - Grade 12)

Post-Secondary

- Redeemer University College (Ancaster, ON)
- University of Guelph (Guelph, ON)
- Sheridan College (Brampton, ON and Oakville, ON)
- Conestoga College (Kitchener, ON)

Contacts

The following people comprise the Search Committee for Bethel CRC Acton. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any one of the committee members listed below.

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