



International Church of Bangkok

advancing the work of Jesus

2023 Annual Meeting Agenda

Sunday, January 29, 2023

Welcome and Opening Prayer

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(2/3 majority vote required of members present)

2023 Church Council Nominees and Process

Pastor's Oral Report

Prayer and Benediction

International Church of Bangkok

2022 Annual Meeting Minutes
Sunday, January 23, via Zoom Webinar
Bangkok, Thailand

Welcome and Opening Prayer

The meeting began at 11:15 a.m. Council Chair Margaret McMillion welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their presence. All seven members of the current church council were present; therefore, the constitutional requirement that two-thirds of the council members be present was met.

Pastor Chee then offered the opening prayer.

Minutes of the 2021 Congregational Meeting

Margaret noted that the packet for the meeting had been posted on the church website for members to review in advance of the meeting. She then turned to the minutes of the 2021 ICB Annual Meeting, noting that the Council had reviewed them earlier in the year. There were no corrections, comments, or questions. Carl Straub moved and Kris Panijpan seconded that the minutes be approved as read.

The congregation approved the motion by voice vote.

Committee Reports

Margaret explained that following ICB's customary practice, there would not be individual committee reports, except for the presentation of the 2022 budget. She invited members to present any questions or comments.

Pastor Chee asked who would be the recording secretary for the 2022 meeting. Margaret said that she would prepare the minutes from the Zoom recording.

Carl explained that he had not submitted a written report due to his preparation of a manual that would go to the United Nations. He will send a written report in the coming week. Margaret asked whether he had any points to convey to the congregation, and he did not. As there were no questions from the congregation, she invited Pete to present the Finance Report and the budget for 2022.

Finance Report and 2022 Budget

Pete said that 2021 was very similar to 2020 because for most of the year we were unable to hold in person services. Consequently, ICB had very little income from loose offerings. However, pledged offering mostly held up as expenses decreased due to the inability to hold in person services. ICB then ended the year with a surplus of nearly 500,000 baht. Although revenues came very close to the projections, they were still lower than our revenue from 2020. In 2021, ICB had a total offering of around 3.4 million baht as against a budget of 3.5 million baht, which was very good; however, in 2020, we had an offering of 3.7 million baht, so that is a 300,000 baht reduction in our income. Nevertheless, because ICB's expenses went down significantly, we had a significant surplus for the year that has helped our balance

sheet as well. It is now about 4.5 million baht, which is quite healthy and is more than a year of our total expenses. ICB is looking OK on that front.

In terms of what 2022 is projected to look like, his projection is already incorrect because we will not have in person services for the entire year. If our income stayed relatively stable and we had in person services for the rest of the year, ICB would have a budget deficit of about 250,000 baht by the end of 2022. Given the balance sheet with 4.5 million baht in assets, that deficit is quite comfortable for ICB to take on at this point in time. ICB would have to count on services coming back to something resembling normal in the medium term over the next three to four years with income recovering accordingly.

Margaret thanked Kris for his work in tracking the budget this year and invited questions.

Stephen Salmon asked given a budget prepared with current knowledge, what is the church's flexibility to change the budget during the coming year. Kris said this was a very interesting question that he does not know the answer to. He imagined that there would be a great deal of flexibility because ultimately the budget is approved by the council, which should be able to make changes as needed. Stephen explained that 2022 was likely to be less predictable than the preceding two years; therefore, he was concerned about the council's ability to adjust items in the budget. Pastor Chee suggested that there could be a proposal to allow for flexibility in this year. Cameron said that he did not think that the church constitution allowed the council to change "the budget," but it certainly permitted the council to adjust individual items throughout the year. The budget has to be approved by the congregation, and the amount of the overall budget cannot be changed. What the council can do is respond to an unusual need for an unusual amount of money. It has the flexibility to do that. For example, if that council found a new place of worship that is slightly more per week than BCC, it should be able to approve the cost. There is a difference between what the budget says we are planning on spending, which is fixed today, and what we actually end up doing. He agrees that the council should have the flexibility to respond to specific needs.

Pastor Chee thanked Cameron. Martin asked whether that meant the Council would have to ask for the approval of the congregation for any major change in the budget in a special meeting or wait until the annual congregational meeting in 2023. Cameron said the council would have the freedom to call a congregational meeting if there were something massive that needed to be done. If there were small changes or unforeseen expenses, the council could use the Perpetuity Fund, which was to be discussed later. The purpose of the Perpetuity Fund is in part to deal with unforeseen expenses.

Stephen noted that some organizations have a contingency fund that is a small percentage of the budget. He asked if that were possible. Cameron said that the Perpetuity Fund existed for that purpose. Stephen then asked if the Perpetuity Fund were used, would ICB be creating other problems. Cameron replied that he thought not unless the church suddenly had a million baht expense. The Council needs to use its judgement on what is a reasonable adjustment and what needs to be brought to the congregation. Kris noted that in the past two years, expenses have come in under budget. Margaret added that while there was no guarantee that that would happen again, it indicated that spending within the church has been careful and was therefore likely to stay within the budget unless there were an unexpected expense or a catastrophe.

Jordon noted that the budget also includes restarting the evening service and asked if that included the rental for the space used. Kris said yes.

Carl moved, and Stephen and Jordon seconded that the finance report and budget be approved as presented. The motion was approved by consensus. Margaret thanked Kris for preparing the budget and tracking the church's finances during the year. She also thanked the council members who had served as committee chairs in 2021 and had supported Pastor Chee. Finally, she thanked all the members who had participated in ICB's various activities.

Request for Use of the Perpetuity Fund

Margaret explained that the Perpetuity Fund was originally established to help fund scholarships for needy students. At the end of 2021, the fund had 783,726.72 baht. A congregational meeting must approve the use of the fund by a two-thirds majority vote. Two previous congregational meetings have approved use of the fund if needed, but thanks to the faithfulness of ICB's members, it had not been necessary to use this money. If the congregational meeting did not approve use of the fund, the church council would have to call a congregational meeting for this specific purpose in the future. Therefore, the current council would like to secure the congregation's approval on a contingency basis for the use of funds this year.

Jordon commented that it was good that ICB had not tapped the Perpetuity Fund, he was concerned that it might be losing value due to inflation. Was there a better way to invest the funds? Kris explained the money was in a savings account. Occasionally, it was put in a fixed deposit. He recalled that several AGMs ago, there had been a debate about how the money might be better invested. Identifying an investment was difficult, especially because church finances were shakier than they are now. There was reluctance to put it into any kind of investment where there was a risk of losing money. Typically, higher return involves higher risk. ICB ended up investing it in the safest possible place. A decision to place the funds in a higher risk would involve a full scale debate. He was not sure that the congregation wanted to do that right now. For the record, Kris said his preference was to have a nine month cushion. Additional money might be put in a riskier investment. Then there is the question of who decides in what instruments the church would invest. That is not easy.

Margaret thanked Kris for his comments, noting that until 2021, inflation had not been a major problem. In the past year, it has become more of a problem. ICB might be able to find some investments with higher interest, but this question needs some consideration. She suggested that this question might be something that the Finance Committee could look at in the coming year.

Stephen noted that as had been discussed at the 2021 AGM, Article X of the church constitution also deals with the Building Fund, which has more money. It is completely separate from the Perpetuity Fund now under discussion. Margaret confirmed that Stephen was correct.

Stephen asked Kris whether this contingency request was for purposes of cash flow. He noted that in 2021, Pastor Chee had asked whether money taken from the Perpetuity Fund had to be replaced. Kris pointed out that no funds had been taken out from the Perpetuity Fund, which Stephen acknowledged. He explained that when the original request had been made, ICB had approximately 300,000-400,000 baht in its checking account or roughly two months of expenses, which is a precarious situation. Now with the improvement in finances, ICB has roughly a million baht, or roughly four months of expenses, which is relatively safer.

Given the volatility of the situation, it is nice to have an additional buffer, which is relatively low cost to use if we have prior approval. Together, that gives ICB a seven to eight month buffer which is very, very safe. A CFO of a publicly listed company would like to have a six to nine month buffer, and so this fits in with that idea. If ICB tapped the Perpetuity Fund, it should replace the funds whenever we have a surplus, but today, he doubts that the church will need to do so. It is nice to have as a contingency.

Martin asked if ICB had topped up the Perpetuity Fund or does it simply collect interest. Pete said that he did not know. Margaret said that she did not know but that sometimes the church has received gifts, such as legacies, designated for the Perpetuity Fund. She is not aware of any recent donations. Cameron said that in his experience with the council over the last six years, the council had not placed money in the Perpetuity Fund. Any contributions were designated for it, and that has how the fund has grown. He does not know if the council used church funds to establish the fund at its beginning.

Carl suggested that this topic should be discussed at the next meeting of the Church Council. Margaret accepted this suggestion saying that the Finance Committee could review this issue each year and report on its actions at the following congregational meeting.

The question this morning is whether the congregation would approve the following proposal:

“We, the congregation, approve granting the ICB Church Council the authority to spend all or part of the principal in the ICB Perpetuity Fund, to meet any church-related expenses that may arise in 2022.”

Cameron moved and Thelma Kay seconded the proposal as written. Margaret then asked if the congregation was willing to approve the motion by consensus. The congregation agreed and approved the motion as presented.

Approval of the Draft Statement on Diversity, Inclusiveness and Unity

Noting that a draft of the Statement on Diversity, Inclusiveness and Unity had been discussed two weeks previously after church (January 9, 2022), Margaret invited Pastor Chee to lead a discussion to respond to any further questions before the congregation took action. Pastor Chee explained that the document had been available on the ICB website. He reviewed the prior meeting, including the change of the word *affirmation* to *respect* in Paragraph 7, line 7. This document is now presented for approval as a policy of ICB. He asked if there were any further questions.

In response to the request for any further questions, Jordon said as he had written in an email after the meeting, he would like to change the word *affirms* in line 2 – Paul affirms – to *encourages*. He reasoned that if *affirmation* had been changed, *affirms* should be changed in line 2. *Encourages* is a similar word that does not carry the connotation that *affirms* does in some churches today.

Stephen commented that just because a word had been changed in one sentence, we did not have to change it in another sentence, especially when we are talking about what Paul did 2000 years ago. He had been trying to identify another word, but he could not, and *affirm* is an entirely respectable English word. He understood that some words in America now have alternative meanings, but he could not find that meaning in any dictionary. *Affirm* is an

entirely positive word. Other words like *confirm* do not have an entirely positive meaning, so he was not sure how we could reword the sentence or whether it was entirely necessary.

Pastor Chee thanked Jordon and Stephen for sharing. He said that in the chat function, Avery Udagawa had suggested the word *emphasizes*.

Martin Cowling said he understood Jordon's concern because *affirms* does evoke reactions in some people. However, he thought *encourages* was too weak a word to use. *Emphasizes* was a better word. Pastor Chee asked for others' opinions. Caryn Macky said that *emphasizes* seemed to do the trick. Jordon and Carl also supported *emphasizes*. In response to Stephen's question, Pastor Chee said *emphasizes* would be better than *encourages*. The word was changed to *emphasizes* in the text. Pastor Chee thanked Avery for suggesting *emphasizes*.

Caryn said that she appreciated having a document saying where ICB stands as a church. She thanked everyone who had put time and effort into preparing the document. Jordon also expressed his appreciation saying that ICB's position on these matters would be very clear. Carl also expressed his appreciation.

Margaret called on My Hang Trang who had raised her hand. She wanted to know whether there would be additional statements that would express how the policy on Diversity, Inclusiveness, and Unity would be implemented in order to reflect God's teachings. Would this document be permanent? She was concerned that this document was not enough to address issues within the church. Pastor Chee noted that the final paragraph of the policy said that it will be updated biennially and when circumstances warrant it. The statement reflects what this AGM is willing to endorse. If ICB wants to make changes in the future, it always has the ability to do so. Its views could change in response to new circumstances, new opinions or new members who want clarity on certain issues. Nothing is written in stone.

My replied that she was not referring to this proposal, but she thought there might need to be another document to stand alongside this one. Margaret said that the first step was to complete the statement on Diversity, Inclusiveness and Unity. The incoming council could then review other issues and prepare documents as needed during the coming year. My replied that she had not had time to develop all the information about the current proposal. She hoped that her intervention would be the basis for further study and action in the coming year. Margaret thanked me for her comments.

Pastor Chee added that the Policy on Diversity, Inclusiveness and Unity would not be the only paper. There would be others. He was currently preparing a paper on ICB's missional role. He believes that having a series of papers to serve as references would help people understand the church's beliefs and direction. My thanked Pastor Chee for his explanation.

In response to Margaret's request, Carl moved and Caryn seconded a motion to approve the policy as amended. The motion was passed by consensus. Margaret thanked everyone for their contributions to the discussion and said that the congregation would look forward to receiving information from the church council about the implementation of this policy document.

Election of 2022 Church Council

Margaret asked Cameron as chair of the nominating committee to present the nominees for the 2022 Church Council. Cameron first apologized for not presenting the slate of nominees earlier as would have been the case in more normal times. He noted that due to the pandemic, there had not been an opportunity to meet with people at church to discuss options as would normally have happened. It was also his first time as chair of the nominating committee, and he had learned a few things. He explained that he had a list of nominees, but at this meeting, anyone was able to nominate another candidate for an office. The current list of nominations was

Chair	Cameron Macky
Finance and Stewardship	Stephen Salmon
Christian Education	My Hang Tran (interim)
Fellowship	Mary Santhi
Outreach	Martin Cowling
Property and Personnel	Carl Straub
At Large	George Amurao
	Usman “Shani Jee” Rajput

Stephen has also agreed to assume the responsibility of vice-chair who takes on the responsibilities of chair in the absence of the chair. Cameron stated he would take on the position of chair for one year only. This would be the fourth year in the last seven that he has served in this capacity. It would also mark seven years since a non-American has held this post. ICB has a very diverse church in terms of its geography, and it needs to see that diversity reflected in its leadership as well. He hopes that during the year, the members of the church will consider the leadership of the church and the fact that if he can do it, anyone else can do it, too.

Pastor Chee asked who Mary Santhi is. Cameron explained that she is a member of the evening service, has worked on the Displaced Persons Committee, and had been suggested as a potential council member by Margaret and Caryn. Mary added by chat that she had also been a member of several prayer groups. Cameron also noted that Pastor Chee had suggested that Shani serve as a co-chair of the Fellowship Committee; however, Shani had indicated that he would prefer to be a member at large.

There were no nominees for the following positions: Recording Secretary, Worship, Membership, and one at large position. Cameron said it would be wonderful to have a recording secretary but as a practical matter, other council members can take notes at council meetings.

My nominated Jordon Shinn to be a member at large. Cameron thanked My and explained that two seconders were needed.

Martin interrupted to express his concern about the lack of gender balance on the proposed slate. Cameron said that was correct and noted that he had emailed a number of members who were neither white nor female (sic), and the responses were what they have been. Martin expressed concern that there were only two women, one of whom is present on an interim basis. He urged that the nomination process be used to improve the gender balance, which would be to the benefit of the council. In response to Martin’s question, Cameron said the present slate had six men and two women.

Cameron invited the congregation to make nominations for other positions. There is a limit of two nominees per position. He again requested seconds for My's nomination of Jordon. Jordon and Carl seconded the motion. Cameron explained that there could still be more nominations. If someone wanted to volunteer, members were welcome to do so. If someone were nominated by another person, the proposed nominee would have to accept the nomination.

Jordon accepted his nomination and nominated Margaret for the role of secretary. Margaret thanked Jordon but declined the nomination, noting that after two years, she would prefer to do other things in the church during 2022. Cameron and others thanked Margaret for her service.

Jordon then proposed Caryn as secretary. Margaret explained that as a rule, ICB does not have people who are married to each other on the council simultaneously. While Cameron and Caryn could undoubtedly overcome this difficulty, she believed it was a good practice and one that the church should continue. Caryn said that she upholds that practice. Carl then asked Avery if she were willing to serve on the council this year. Avery thanked Carl but said not this year.

Cameron reminded the members that after the AGM is concluded, the council will be able to select members to fill vacant positions without any further approval of the congregation. At its first meeting, the council will discuss who it might recruit to fill these positions. Thus, if the positions are not filled today, there is a possibility that they will be filled during the coming year.

As there were no further nominations, Cameron explained the voting process. According to the constitution, candidates may be approved by voice vote or a member may request a secret ballot, either for the entire slate of nominations or a specific position. If a written vote is requested, Cameron will send a Google form to every member of the meeting. If there is a vote, he will share the results with Pastor Chee and Margaret because he is also a nominee. Margaret noted that the AGM could approve all of the candidates by voice vote since we had only one candidate for each position, which, unless there were some reason that she could not see, is how we would normally proceed with the voting.

Margaret requested a motion to approve the nominations as presented with the addition of Jordon as an at large member. Caryn requested a written ballot for the position of at large members. Margaret asked if there were any other requests. None were made.

Cameron asked for people to send their emails to permit anonymous voting. If people were not concerned about voting privately, they could send a vote to Cameron but only send the message to him. If ballots were requested, it would take a few moment to complete the process. Margaret invited Pastor Chee to present his report.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Chee said that it has been a rather challenging year. Much of the initial time that I spent at ICB has been quite a learning curve. There were expectations of me which were difficult and which I had to take on. I do hope that by the end of the year things have jelled together in terms of communication. One of the things that has given me hope in this difficult year is that the finances have been rather good. Many people who had dropped giving have

come back on, and the amount of giving has come close to what was in the budget. That is good because it allows the church to continue its work for this new year that is ahead of us.

I have said in the past year that our mission is not about ourselves. Our mission for the next year and the year after is always to be forward looking and outward looking. We cannot afford to keep on looking at ourselves. I have some people who have suggested to me that charity begins at home. But charity has begun at home for many years now. Some people have suggested that we look more at what has been done in the past years. What has that done for ICB in the past years if we keep on doing the same? I believe that now is the time for ICB to face new challenges. With the inconvenience of the lockdowns that have made us the way we are today, I would think this gives us an impetus to think of new things to do, of new way to do church together.

It is certainly not easy to be a church, especially for ICB because we come from different backgrounds. Some of the backgrounds have been rather conservative, and there are other people who are rather progressive. But in my estimation of what ICB is, even when people think that they are conservative, they are only conservative in certain parts of it. Some people think they are conservative without realizing that they are quite progressive. Others think that some people are too progressive. But ICB is in a unique position in Bangkok. One person explained to me that ICB is perhaps distinct from all other Protestant churches in Bangkok itself. We certainly have a glut of churches here in Bangkok. In fact, many of the churches around us are small, and just like them, ICB is struggling to survive in the past year or two. I recently sent out a link that I was given about the situation of small and medium sized churches. All over the world, churches are down with their numbers, and it's not surprising. It's not surprising even for ICB as we face new challenges. I hope that we all understand that we have different views as we make changes for ourselves and our church in order to be relevant to the people who are out there.

I thank God for the people who have been called into the council for this coming year. It won't be a time for rest but a time when we need to work much harder. And I hope that the hard work that we have for the new year is not only for ourselves but for the people that we are going to touch, people that we make our missional outreach to, because that is the mission of Jesus. And that is the mission that we have taken on ourselves as Christians in our walk with God. I hope that with a new council and the new people in it, we will be able to undertake the task that is set before us. What I say is not going to be easy, and therefore, I encourage a new discipline with one another. I hope that the disagreements that we have with one another will not turn us into enemies but allow us to understand there is so much more to look forward to.

I thank everyone for being with me on this journey. Your patience with me, your kindness to me, and your encouragement has been very much appreciated. I do hope that the situation that we have passed in the past year will ease, and I pray for more opportunities to meet in person. In the past two weeks as we have gone back to Zoom services, I have tried to communicate with some people outside of the church to look for new places and new spaces where we can meet. I have been told that Bangkok Christian Guest House is no longer available for us to meet in the morning on Sundays because there are four churches meeting there now.¹ I'm not sure about the evening time, but it just shows that churches are beginning to downsize and look for smaller spaces to meet. I have reached out to two other churches to see if they would allow us to share space with them, but I'm not sure. One good

¹ ICB has never worshiped at BCGH in the morning, only in the evening.

news is that I've been able to communicate with the Bangkok Institute of Theology. The person in charge is to come back to me in April this year and see how things go. Let's pray for ICB and for the challenges ahead and for the ability to find the space whereby we can grow and meet together. I think that is one of the key things to look at. Certainly our services on Zoom are not the best, but we have to use them at this time. Some of you already know that some of our members have come down with the Covid-19 infection, and this is not good, but let us pray that those who are infected will receive healing in God's time. I do encourage people to continue to keep safe and watch out for one another and remember each other in prayer. Pastor Chee closed his remarks with a prayer for the church.

Report on the Balloting

Cameron noted that some people had sent both their email and their vote in the chat. In that case, he had not sent them a link to the ballot because they had already voted. To access the ballot, voters had to sign in through Gmail. If people did not have a Gmail account, they might not have been able to use the link. If so, Cameron was prepared to send them a ballot by email and asked that people send him a quick email. He would then have the results in about five minutes.

While the voting continued, Margaret took the opportunity to thank the members of the church council and the congregation for their support and participation during the past year. She especially thanked members who had stepped in to help when someone on the church council was absent citing Marrison Anthali who had organized the Easter potluck in Jordon's absence. If people were unable to serve on the church council this year, she hoped that they would consider serving on a church committee or taking on a special project. Carl thanked Margaret for her support in organizing the arrival of Pastor Chee, and Stephen offered the congregation's thanks for her attention to the many behind the scenes details of the past two years. Cameron then reported that each of the three at large members has been overwhelmingly approved, and he thanked the three candidates for their willingness to serve. Cameron reiterated Martin's point that the council has many white male members this year. He urged those ICB members not in this category to consider volunteering to serve either on the council or on a committee in support of council members. These are trying times, and the church needs the support of every member.

Margaret concluded that the slate of candidates, including all of the at large members, have been approved. If there were no further business – and there was not, she would ask Pastor Chee to give the benediction.

The meeting concluded at 12:40 p.m.

Margaret K. McMillion
Council Chair, 2021

Council Chair's Report

As 2023 begins, it is with great happiness (and relief) that we believe that the worst of the Covid pandemic may finally be behind us. After beginning the year with virtual, Zoom-only services, we were able to begin holding in-person worship at the Student Christian Centre on Phayathai Road shortly before the Easter season. With the recent relaxing of restrictions and a greater sense of safety being felt in Bangkok, we hope that more and more of our members will come back and join us each Sunday morning.

The Council experienced a number of challenges in 2022. We began the year with eight members, but two of them left Thailand during the year. Others, citing personal reasons, also felt that they could not continue. This left us with only 3 Council members for the last several months of the year. Calls for other ICB members to step in, unfortunately, did not lead to any volunteers, which left several important roles unfilled.

In addition to the worship-location challenge noted by Pastor Chee in his report (p. 13), I believe that this lack of congregational participation in the governance of the church will need to be addressed in 2023. If ICB's mission to "advance the work of Jesus" is to take place, we need members who are willing to give of their time and energy.

The other challenge facing the church this year is to find a suitable replacement for Khun Arunee Ordonia, our longtime administrative assistant and bookkeeper. Khun Arunee left her position at the end of September, after many years of faithful service, and the job has been vacant since then. While the Council did interview one very strong candidate in November, she ultimately decided the position was not right for her. Our search continues. As with Pastor Chee's call for ideas about worship locations, if you know of anyone who might be interested in the administrative assistant position, please contact Pastor Chee or a member of the 2023 Council.

I would like to especially note the tireless work done in 2022 by Stephen Salmon, the Chair of our Finance Committee. Stephen has been involved in a seemingly-endless (and maddening) bureaucratic struggle to get our bank accounts modernized and accessible online; he has taken on many, many additional roles as a result of Khun Arunee's departure; and he has put in far more time than expected while trying to update our methods of financial reporting. Everyone in the congregation owes a significant debt to Stephen for all the time that he has spent serving the church and its members in 2022.

As my family prepares to depart Thailand, it is my prayer that God will bless this congregation and raise up more members willing to serve. May ICB continue to offer God's love and peace to the people of Thailand for many years to come.

Cameron Macky
Chair, 2022 Church Council

January 23, 2023

Minister's Report, 2023

Dear Members of the International Church of Bangkok,

The year 2022 began with the softening of Covid-19 lockdown rules which allowed for a slow process towards normality. However, as I have mentioned recently in one of my sermons, there is a new normal which is here to stay. Much as we would like things to return fully to life as before lockdown, the situation has changed much. The world is still coming to terms with various waves of Covid-19 variants and this presents its own limits. The beginning of the conflict in Ukraine in February followed by continued sanctions against Russia have slowed economic recovery worldwide. This has also created new problems with prices of energy and food hitting new highs. There have also been unprecedented wild weather patterns in many parts of the world. This is the “new normal” that we are faced with in the world.

ICB is not spared in facing this new normal. We have to come to terms with new realities as to how ICB may journey on into an unpredictable future. So while, there is a “new normal,” we take heart that God is ultimately in control. The prophet Isaiah saw a vision of God Almighty reigning on high at a time when the nation was faced with the death of its king (Isaiah chapter 6). While the passing of King Uzziah may have brought a sense of grief, Isaiah exhorts all to look beyond present circumstances to the reign of God Almighty. We must never allow circumstances in life to dictate our future, no matter how dark it may be.

On this note, we give thanks and praise to God, ICB has emerged into the new normal. What will the New Year bring us?

First and foremost, I want to thank all who have steadfastly continued to come together to worship God, each Sunday morning. Your presence at worship services has been encouraging to all and we continue to urge you to bring others along to “come and see” Jesus (John 1:29-42). It is to Jesus that we are gathering and this is at the heart of our worship. So when you invite people to Sunday service, you are inviting them to see and taste Jesus. We have also been encouraged by the presence of new people at our Sunday services.

Sadly in the course of the year, we bid farewell to two distinguished members of the ICB Council, namely - Carl Straub and Martin Cowling.

Most members of ICB will remember Carl and Denise with great affection for their support and fellowship. Both of them have been assisting ICB for a long while and it is sad to see them return to Australia owing to personal and health reasons. Carl had been Chair of Personnel and Property and had performed exceedingly well in the position. Carl had also through his company provided assistance in the form of free labour from his workers to help with general maintenance of the manse and training for the Administrative Assistant. Over the years too, both Carl and Denise has provided assistance to some of the displaced people in our midst. We pray for their health and general well-being.

Martin has been with ICB for a number of years and attends mainly the evening service. In 2021, we saw more of him in the morning service particularly on Zoom. It was a delight to have him as Chair of Outreach from the beginning of the year. It was a good start as he networked with various external people to assist with our outreach efforts. As part of his studies, he got together a group of university students to assist in exploring local efforts in outreach to disadvantaged communities. He was also instrumental together with his partner Pom, in assisting a displaced family when they were down with Covid-19 and subsequently

assisting them to resettle to Australia through their contacts at the Australian Embassy. We wish them well in their endeavours and hopefully, our paths will cross again.

There has been a baptism of a child in the past year. We pray for Joshua Obaid as he matures and grows up in his faith in Christ.

Sadly, we mourn the passing of the late Dr. Bhinyo Panijpan (husband of Thelma Kay and father of Kris Panijpan). This was soon followed by the passing of Thelma's brother in Singapore. We continue to uphold Thelma and Kris in their recent bereavement.

I include herewith a report on the following –

1. Worship: Our worship services were held at BCC in January and February with rent being reduced slightly. However, owing to further outbreaks of Covid-19, BCC had on a couple of times given short notices of cancelling Sunday service and requiring ATK tests. The Council made the decision to temporarily halt our services at BCC hoping to return when rules are back to normal before lockdown.

In the past two years, the Council had sought alternative venues bearing in mind that Prantip Court has closed down. Alternative venues included two hotels and an international school. In the end the Council settled for SCC (present venue) as the rent was much lower than BCC (one week's rent at BCC is about one month's rent at SCC).

In the meantime, the Council continues to look for alternative sites. The official word from BCC (towards end of last year) was that ATK test is still a requirement for all people entering their premise a day before. While this defer from the official position of most schools, we recognized that BCC as a private institution may have its own procedures. This Council does not think that it can comply with this requirement. If anyone knows of a space that will suit as a worship venue, kindly inform the Council.

The following criteria applies –

- Proximity to BTS / MRT stations
- Comparatively low rental
- Free car park space
- Hall for 80 - 120 people with social distancing

We need to bear in mind that as renters, ICB is subject to the rules and procedures as laid down by landlords. We are not in a position to determine the amount of rent and the length of time we may use a particular venue.

The good news is that we are having regular attendees at our worship services and often there have been visitors as well. We are grateful for ex-members from overseas who find their way to our services at SCC. Our communication via the newsletter and Facebook is getting through. The Council had also made the decision to phase out Zoom services to encourage members to return to in-person services. Please do encourage others to return when you meet them.

2. Outreach: Martin Cowling who took over the Chair at the start of the New Year could not continue for long owing to personal reasons. In the short time that he was Chair, much was being done behind the scene as evidenced by frequent meetings of the Committee.

During his tenure, guidelines for our continued relationship with Life Raft were also drawn up and are now available on our ICB website.

Together with his partner, Martin was able to provide time and finances when one displaced family at ICB came down with Covid-19 (some needing hospitalization) and the father ended at IDC. Owing to their connections with the Australian Embassy, Martin was able to secure the father's release from IDC and their subsequent migration to Australia. A number of ICB members also assisted financially.

There was another displaced family who were also assisted by Margaret and others to move over the Canada. Grateful thanks to all who have helped. ICB continues to assist one displaced family currently.

We continued to support eight other outreach partners financially. The reports of their ministries are made available on our dedicated Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100077563654211>

The minister has been coordinating with Concordia (which is headed by one of our members) by referring local and overseas volunteers. This has been welcome by Concordia in assisting with families in the Khlong Toei area. Rahab ministries has regularly provided updates on their ministry which is available on our Facebook page. We are in need of someone to head this Committee in the New Year, preferably someone who knows Thai.

3. Christian Education: Grateful thank to Grace and My who have continued to do Sunday School during worship service times. They have committed themselves to doing this even when there had been few numbers of children attending.

4. Fellowship: The Council has in the past year continued with the policy of limited social interaction after services owing to sporadic Covid-19 infection among attendees at church services. This is unfortunate as fellowship is limited. However, the Council agreed to allow a Christmas Day pot-bless gathering after the worship service. Thanks to all who assisted and make this into a grand occasion, the gathering was well-attended. An entire roast pig was on the table was offered among various other dishes. There was a renewed call to bring back fellowship times after worship services. I do believe that the Council will be agreeable if someone will volunteer to be the Fellowship Chair in 2023.

For part of the year, there has been a regular Prayer Meeting on Zoom as initiated by Martin and a few others.

5. Personnel and Property: In the course of the past year, the Council created a part time position to undertake the following tasks –

- Render technical support for all ICB staff
- Manage ICB's website, newsletter production and distribution, production of Google scripts and slides, and other online promotions
- Assist with technical support every Sunday for both morning and evening services
- Provide technical support and training to ICB's Administrative Assistant
- Provide music support at both worship services when called upon

Towards the end of June 2021, the Council gave advanced notice to a yearly contracted staff member that the position will not be renewed after the end of 2022. The Council has taken steps to advertise the vacancy of the position with added responsibilities.

On the matter of property, the Council has continued to do general maintenance of the manse which it rents for the use of the minister. It is an aging property and requires constant upkeep when the plant breaks down. The landlord has been kind in absorbing 50% of the costs of major expenses through deduction of rent.

6. Media & Communication: ICB currently maintains communication with members (present and past) through its weekly newsletters, website and several Facebook pages. This will be greatly enhanced if and when a gifted person in media can assist with the Chair of this department. Would you know anyone who can assist for the year 2023?

7. Missional International Church Network (MICN): The ICB Council has in the course of this year signed up with MICN to become a contributing member. If you would like to know about MICN, please have a look at their website - <https://micn.org/> Past members of ICB who would like to continue supporting ICB financially, may go through MICN.

8. Policy on Diversity, Inclusiveness and Unity: One year on, after the Policy was adopted at the last AGM, the Council continues to advocate this position strongly. If there be anyone who believes that there is a shortfall in this regard, kindly inform the Chair of Council or the Minister.

Last but not least, may I thank all the past year Council members particularly those who wish to step down at the end of their term. It has been a challenging year but we pull through it by God's grace. May God bless us all, the International Church of Bangkok.

Chee Keong Yong

Worship Committee Report

In the absence of a chair, there is no Worship committee report.

Christian Education Committee Report

In the absence of a chair, there is no Christian Education Committee report.

Outreach Committee Report

In the absence of a chair, there is no Outreach Committee report.

Fellowship Committee Report

In the absence of a chair, there is no Fellowship Committee report.

Membership Committee Report

In the absence of a chair, there is no Membership Committee report.

Property and Personnel Committee Report

In the absence of a chair, there is no Property and Personnel committee report.

For some information about the above areas, please read the Pastor's Report and the Council Chair's report.

Finance Committee Report

The church is in the process of overhauling its bookkeeping and reporting methods, and as a result we are unable to report full 2022 results at this time. We expect the process to be completed by mid-March 2023, and will call a special congregational meeting to report those results for interested members.

We are also in the process of updating our banking accounts, with the hopes of moving fully to online banking soon.

The position of administrative assistant / bookkeeper has been vacant since the end of September 2022. We continue to hope and pray that a qualified person will soon be found for this role. Please see the Council Chair's report for more details.

2023 Budget Proposal

The budget on the following pages was approved by the ICB Council at its meeting on 27 November, 2022. Given the uncertainty surrounding our finances, the Council felt it best to maintain spending at 2022 levels or below for most items, with the exception of a 3% raise in salary for the Pastor and also for the manse housekeeper.

Results for 2022 are not available at this time (see note above). We instead are using 2021 results and the 2022 budget as guidelines.

International Church of Bangkok 2023 Budget Proposal

<i>Presented to Annual General Meeting, January 2023</i>				
Revenue				
Offering				
Account:	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
Church School Offering	5,000.00	1,032.75	5,000.00	0
Designated Outreach	0	45,320.00	-	0
Evening Loose Offering	80,000.00	-	50,000.00	0
Flower Contribution	3,000.00	-	-	0
Morning Loose Offering	400,000.00	91,088.25	300,000.00	300,000.00
Pledged Offering-Morning & Evening	3,000,000.00	3,232,045.84	3,000,000.00	3,000,000.00
Offering Total:	3,488,000.00	3,369,486.84	3,355,000.00	3,300,000.00
2023 Projected Revenue:				3,300,000.00
Expenses				
	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2023 Budget
Christian Education				
Church School Supplies	40,000.00	11,175.00	40,000.00	15,000.00
Christian Education Total:	40,000.00	11,175.00	40,000.00	15,000.00
Fellowship				
Coffee Hour	40,000.00	4,480.75	40,000.00	10,000.00
Fellowship Total:	40,000.00	4,480.75	40,000.00	10,000.00
Finance and Stewardship				
Contribution to MICN				10,000.00
Contribution to the 6th Pakh	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
Finance and Stewardship Total:	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
Membership				
Internet Publicity	15,000.00	1,252.25	15,000.00	15,000.00
Materials for New Membership	7,000.00	-	7,000.00	7,000.00
Membership total:	22,000.00	1,252.25	22,000.00	22,000.00
Outreach				
5% Outreach	174,400.00	166,149.00	167,750.00	165,000.00
Designated Outreach Gift	0	45,320.00	-	0
Outreach Discretionary Fund	0.00	-	-	0.00
Outreach Total:	174,400.00	211,469.00	167,750.00	165,000.00
Pastor Allowances & Expenses				
CCT Expenses	12,600.00	18,243.80	18,243.80	19,000.00
Pastor's Book Allowance	5,000.00	334.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Pastor's Education	20,000.00	10,843.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
Pastor's Hospitality Expenses	20,000.00	3,008.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
Pastor Allowances & Expenses: Total	57,600.00	32,428.80	63,243.80	64,000.00
Pastor Benefits				
Pastor's Health Care	125,000.00	118,306.00	125,000.00	137,500.00
Pastor's Superannuation Offset	80,000	80,004.00	80,000.00	84,872.00
Pastor's Tax Offset	192,000	192,000.00	192,000.00	192,000.00
Pastor's Travel	150,000.00	139,542.24	150,000.00	50,000.00
Pastor Benefits Total:	497,000.00	529,852.24	547,000.00	464,372.00
Pastor's Compensation				
Pastor's Support	800,000.00	800,004.00	824,000.00	848,720.00
Pastor's Compensation Total:	800,000.00	800,004.00	824,000.00	848,720.00

Budget continues on next page

International Church of Bangkok 2023 Budget Proposal (p. 2)

Personnel and Property				
A-Choir Director's Stipend	81,090.00	53,430.00	53,430.00	81,090.00
A-Christmas Bonus	40,000.00	16,611.00	40,000.00	40,000.00
A-Evening Worship Stipend	66,250.00	-	40,000.00	0.00
A- New Assistant	0.00	31,875.00	31,875.00	60,000.00
A-Nursery Worker	15,000.00	1,143.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
A-Pianist Stipend	80,000.00	27,000.00	50,000.00	80,000.00
A-Salary for Manse Maebaan				169,200.00
A-Salary for Office Assistant	400,000.00	398,664.00	404,759.92	300,000.00
A-Sunday School Helpers	10,000.00	-	10,000.00	10,000.00
A-Travel Allowance (for Admin. Assis	60,000.00	60,000.00	60,000.00	0.00
B-Bank Fees	6,000.00	-	6,000.00	6,000.00
B-Liability Insurance	4,152.00	4,152.00	4,152.00	4,152.00
B-Maintenance & Repair	20,000.00	9,470.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
B-Manse/Office Rent	312,000.00	312,000.00	312,000.00	312,000.00
B-Manse/Office Utilities	150,000.00	93,300.00	150,000.00	150,000.00
B-Office Equipment	7,000.00	-	7,000.00	20,000.00
B-Office Supplies	75,000.00	30,514.46	75,000.00	50,000.00
C-Car Fuel & Fees	37,000.00	16,248.00	20,000.00	30,000.00
C-Car Registration & Insurance	20,000.00	14,358.00	20,000.00	20,000.00
C-Car Repair & Maintenance	12,000.00	7,856.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
Personnel and Property Total:	1,395,492.00	1,076,621.46	1,331,216.92	1,379,442.00
Worship				
Guest Pastor	18,000.00	-	18,000.00	18,000.00
Guest Choir				5,000.00
Sanctuary Rent (BCC)	530,000.00	150,000.00	636,000.00	530,000.00
Sanctuary Rent (BCGH)	72,875.00	-	87,450.00	0.00
Worship Supplies (evening)	8,333.33	-	10,000.00	0.00
Worship Supplies (morning)	25,000.00	22,918.00	30,000.00	30,000.00
Worship Total:	654,208.33	172,918.00	781,450.00	583,000.00
Other Revenue				
Interest & Other	0	0	-	0
Interest Operating 3 Months	500	0	-	0
Interest Operating Fixed	22,000.00	43.41	50.00	50.00
Interest Operating Savings	1,000.00	29.9	50.00	50.00
Interest Perpetuity Fund	11,000.00	4572.47	5,000.00	5,000.00
Other Total:	34,500.00	4645.78	5,100.00	5,100.00
2023 Projected Expenses:				3,611,534.00
SUMMARY				
Total Revenue	3,305,100.00			
Total Expenses	3,611,534.00			
Anticipated surplus / (deficit)	(306,434.00)			

Request for Use of Perpetuity Fund

At the congregational meeting of January 23, 2022, the congregation approved a proposal to begin using the principal from our Perpetuity Fund if necessary during 2022. This resolution covered only 2022. It therefore needs to be renewed for 2023. Due to reduced expenditures in 2022, the church did not need to access the Perpetuity Fund.

The current value of the fund is approximately 784,000 baht.

We are making this request in case the situation arises as the year progresses that our operational expenses cannot be met by a combination of current income plus our other savings. Given our reduced attendance throughout the pandemic, and the fact that several pledging families have departed Thailand, we cannot predict what kind of cash-flow situation we will have throughout 2023.

Although we hope not to have to use the Perpetuity Fund in 2023, we would like to request approval of its use for one additional year in order to prevent an emergency congregational meeting and to enable cash flow stability.

From the ICB Constitution:

ARTICLE X Perpetuity and Building Funds

A. Perpetuity Fund

A Fund shall be maintained to generate income for the purpose of supplementing regular offering receipts.

Earnings from the fund may be used to pay any operating or Outreach expense or capital expenditure as approved by the Church Council.

However, a decision to spend all or part of the principal in the fund must be approved by a two-thirds majority of those present at a duly called congregational meeting.

Proposal

We, the congregation, approve granting the ICB Church Council the authority to spend all or part of the principal in the ICB Perpetuity Fund, to meet any church-related expenses that may arise in 2023.