

SPIRITUAL LIFE AND FORMATION

“You can develop a healthy, robust community that lives right with God and enjoy its results only if you do the hard work of getting along with each other, treating each other with dignity and honor.” James 3:18 (MSG)

We continue to expand on the four pronged approach to aide people growing in their faith walk. Through Connect Groups, Classes, Studies and Support Groups, we continue to offer various opportunities to take another step in your journey. In 2025, classes offered included: re:Start (we introduced v2.0 this year), re:Align, and re:Purpose, supplemented with new classes on Financial Freedom, Marriage Enrichment Course, and a new class, New Testament Survey, which was introduced in the winter of 2025.

We continue to grow in the number of Connect Groups that are offered in homes throughout Barrie and the surrounding communities. It is exciting to engage with those who step up to facilitate a group and watch their own spiritual growth take place.

We continue to offer Studies throughout the week at the church facility that cover a variety of topics of interest, as well as, Support Groups, meeting people where they are, and providing hope in difficult life situations.

In 2025, we baptized 63 individuals! This exceeded each of the past year's baptisms! We are so grateful as a church community that we can celebrate with those who are making their faith-decision public.

Our *Read Your Bible* initiative continues to grow with people signing up for the option of a daily text message with a link to a Bible passage.

In February, a small team ventured to Chiquinquirá, Colombia, to serve Father's House Church and the expansion of their ministry in local schools, and facility expansion in the construction of a gymnasium in partnership with Missionary Darren McCrea.

Our Men had our Fall retreat and enjoyed God's presence, deepening relationships, and challenging messages from our speaker.

Band of Brothers continues to push men to be comfortable with being uncomfortable... growing into new places in their spiritual journeys.

We had more Date Nights, encouraging couples to prioritize their marriages by putting them on the calendar. Additionally, we hosted the *Journey to Us Marriage Conference* in conjunction with the Young Marrieds team.

Finally, working with the staff of Maplevue continues to be a joy. I've also continued to enjoy getting to work with the various Connected Life Facilitators, both new and veterans alike, as we continue to build environments where people can connect with God and others, and live out their faith.

Our golf league continues to be a great time to connect and compete.

A special thank you to Pastor Jay and his support as I continue to serve as the South Simcoe Police Chaplain. It has been an absolute joy to get to know and support these fine women and men.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rev. John Ratz
Director of Spiritual Life and Formation