



*Pastor's Update*

*Sunday, March 3, 2024*

## **Pastor's Report - 2023**

As I reflect on 2023, it has dawned on me that this was the first year, since the onslaught of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, that we were truly liberated from the public health mandates relating to the virus. This was the year to assess the impact of the Pandemic on the church, particularly church attendance. It is well documented that church attendance has dramatically decreased during and after the pandemic. Sadly, many churches did not survive the carnage of the virus and were forced to shut their doors. Some churches survived by merging with other congregations.

At Scarborough Baptist Church (SBC), some of the senior members would never be able to return to in-person services. We can only imagine how difficult this is for those who are accustomed to attending church services and now are forced to remain apart. Thus, my pastoral visits to those who are considered shut-ins, are much more meaningful and essential.

In spite of the present conditions, we are certain that the Lord is in control of every circumstance. It is encouraging to see how some of you at SBC have risen up and are serving in various ministries within and outside of the four walls of the Church. I am sure you too will be encouraged as you read the reports from the ministry leaders at SBC.

As we move forward through another year, I want to urge us to persevere in the calling that God has placed upon each of us. We should remember that every ministry at SBC is important, and that each person is valuable. Let us keep in mind that, just as a teacher does not merely teach a *lesson* but a *person*, in like manner, ministry is not only about doing stuff; it is about helping a person to fulfill God's purpose for their life.

As I close, I also want to urge us to work together in unity (Eph. 4:3). This is the most effective way in which we can accomplish the task God has laid upon us. We can do this by sharing with one another, our strengths and our weaknesses, our hope and fears, our joys, and our sorrows. We should also endeavor to support each other. We are all in this together. Let us also remember that in ministry we do not *compete* against each other; rather we *complete* each other. My prayer is that SBC would be known as a Church that work together in unity for the glory of God.

I conclude with the words of the apostle in 1 Corinthians 1:4-9 NIV: "I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way - with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge - God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you. Therefore, you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

By God's Grace and for His glory,  
Pr. Francis