

## Soul Focus Day

Formerly Pastors' Day

We would like to thank the following supporters and prize donors who have helped make this day possible:

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- Zehrs, Fairview Mall, (St Catharines)
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- Anonymous Donors
- Northend Church

## Upcoming Events

### Soul Focus Morning Retreats

- May 30
- Sept 19
- Nov 14

### Men's & Women's Unfinished Business

Sept - Dec 2024

### Ministry Wives

Small group meets monthly

### Growing Intimacy with God Retreat

October 6 - 8 2024  
at Crieff Hills



Visit [www.thriveministries.ca](http://www.thriveministries.ca) for more information or email [info@thriveministries.ca](mailto:info@thriveministries.ca) to register for these retreats and groups.

## President's Report | Cathy Gates

Our commitment to Thrive's mission of strengthening the spiritual vitality of Christian ministry leaders has been unwavering. It has been exciting to see the international impact we are now having in Honduras.

### Program Updates

**Soul Focus Full Day Retreat:** In February we held our annual Soul Focus Day (previously called Pastors Day) providing more than 30 Christian leaders with the opportunity to connect deeply with the Lord and receive spiritual care (see an account of the day below).

**Individual Spiritual Care:** We invested time with 10 Soul Focus attendees assisting them to explore next steps in their personal walk with the Lord. In addition, we provided spiritual care for 10 individual leaders and 3 couples covering a variety of challenges including marital challenges, mental health, burnout and conflict in ministry.

**Unfinished Business:** Thrive's 14-week Unfinished Business healing group for women began in January and is touching the lives of participants in significant ways. Additionally, we provided 12 individual healing care sessions.

**Growing Intimacy with God:** The first GIWG group has been completed in Honduras. We look forward to facilitating a GIWG retreat in Ontario designed to draw leaders into a deeper walk with the Lord (October 6-8th). *Continued on next page...*

## Soul Focus Day



In our fast-paced society, Christian ministry leaders are seldom given the chance to pause and reflect. When provided with the opportunity to slow down, a sense of uneasiness often arises as we feel the need to move on to the next task.

### Intentional Pause

Yet, at this Soul Focus Retreat 2024 (formerly known as Pastor's Day), more than 30 leaders comprised of missionaries, pastors, pastor's spouses, and non-profit leaders intentionally paused. Josiah Pielt, the retreat leader, encouraged them to begin by being present in their right now experience of life and ministry. Looking at photographs on a timeline, participants chose images that best represented their current state. Whether it was the young pastor starting their first church plant or the experienced non-profit leader in their sixties, they all became present in their reality and their walk with the Lord.

### Don't Rush Past the Past

Josiah encouraged the participants not to "rush past the past" but instead to look at their memorable moments of 2023. He suggested that like poured concrete, their experiences form us in some way, either giving life or causing unhealthy responses. God longs to transform some of these places, especially the ones that have not been helpful, and reform them into something solid and secure.

And so, they examined their stories of the previous year. They were encouraged to recognize that in different seasons, we walk through valleys, deserts and mountaintops with the Lord, and all these landscapes reveal characteristics of God to us. To help embody how God uniquely met with them, they created colourful sand sculptures, each colour representing biblical truths from the Psalms as a visual representation of how God was reforming. *Continued on next page...*



Soul Focus '24 Retreat Leader Josiah Pielt



Photographs representing current state

# President's Report Continued from page one

**Financial Overview:** We have started the year on a solid financial footing. Careful stewardship and the generosity of our donors, we have been able to provide our core initiatives and services while also laying the groundwork for future growth and sustainability.

**Challenges & Opportunities:** As with any ministry, we have encountered challenges along the way:

- We are in need of technology upgrades (2 laptop computers)
- We have hired Sarah Meza, a very skilled administrative assistant to meet the need for developing more infrastructure as we experience expansion of the ministry.

**Heart-felt Gratitude:** I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our supporters and volunteers (especially those who served at our Soul Focus Day). Your dedication and generosity have been instrumental in helping us fulfill our mission and make a difference in the lives of Christian ministry leaders.

## Welcome, Sarah Meza!

It is our joy to welcome Sarah Meza as our Administrative Assistant. Sarah and her husband Jairo are no strangers to us. Thrive Ministries walked alongside the Meza family as they underwent a healing journey following difficulties as missionaries.

Sarah takes on a dual role at Thrive. Not only is she our Administrative Assistant, Sarah also facilitates various Thrive programs in Honduras. Sarah has already made significant contributions to our infrastructure. And if you notice any changes on our website, that's Sarah too! If you'd like to learn more about her background, visit our website under "Our Story"



Sarah Meza with husband, Jairo

## Soul Focus Day Continued from page one

### Looking to the Future

After an amazing lunch of gourmet pizza catered by Fratelli Broccolo, the participants paused to look to the future. Reflecting on what they need to pay attention to in the upcoming year, they talked about how to navigate change well and allow God to form them in their walk with Him. They shared communion and stories of how God met them during this retreat, praying for one another.

Equipped with Skye Jethani's book *With: Reimagining the Way You Relate to God*, they left another Soul Focus day encouraged and strengthened in their spiritual vitality.

### Feedback from Participants

"I just wanted to let you know that last Thursday was a really good day. The messages, 'experientials', music, and opportunities to take time alone with the Lord were very timely for both my spouse and me - especially given all our recent changes. We both sensed the Lord speaking to us throughout the day and confirming His messages to us.



Colourful Sand Sculpture

We were very grateful we decided to make the commitment to come ... to just pause and be with Him for the day. Thank you for all your time and effort to pull the day together. It was worth every minute!" - *Anonymous*

"After a very difficult year...the sand sculpture activity brought me home and helped me to plant my feet once again in God, and to trust Him." - *Anonymous*

"I am very glad I chose to pause in my week and attend. It was an impactful day in terms of spending time with the Lord in a very thoughtful and reflective way." - *Anonymous*



Soul Focus '24 Retreat

**Thank you for continuing to give to Thrive Ministries, whether it is through your prayers, time, or finances. Because of your generous gifts, we were able to have meaningful impact at our Soul Focus Day.**



## Did you know?

Thrive is all about strengthening the spiritual vitality of Christian Ministry Leaders. Our exceptional team of volunteers has a range of ministry leadership experience and understand what ministry can be like. We provide safe and confidential spaces for group and individual conversations.

## Your donations help to:

### Deepen

ministry leaders' walk with the Lord

### Equip

leaders to deal with the stresses of ministry.

### Support

our annual day-long Soul Focus Retreat

## How to give:

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### Mailing Address:

Thrive Ministries  
PO Box 28013 Lakeport, St.  
Catharines, Ont,  
L2N 7P8



Strengthening the spiritual vitality of Christian ministry leaders