IGNITING A PASSION
FOR JESUS IN
CONNECTICUT,
NEW ENGLAND AND
AROUND THE WORLD.
2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Message From Elder Chairman and Lead Pastors ... 3
Our Family Values ......................................................... 4
Celebrating God at Work in 2020-2021 .......... 5-19
Looking Forward ......................................................... 20
2021-2022 Annual Theme: Heaven on Earth .... 21
One Church, Many Locations ................................. 22
Our Staff ................................................................. 23
In the midst of a year marked by extreme ups and downs, a pandemic and great challenges, we have seen the Lord’s faithfulness and blessings in ways we could never have imagined. As Elders, we consistently ask God to be your strength and shield and fill your heart with joy as you put your trust in Him.

We are so proud of you and marvel at all God has done in and through your lives this past year as you have said YES to the Lord and stepped out in faith. Although we know it has not always been easy, you have demonstrated perseverance and have truly been the hands and feet of Jesus.

Over the past few months, we have been collecting your stories of saying YES to the Lord and reflecting on what God has done through His Church. This report is more like a yearbook celebrating God’s faithfulness. We pray that it will encourage you and serve as a reminder for future generations of God’s love and goodness.

Please take time reading each page and enjoy hearing each other’s stories. Make sure not to miss the last section, which is devoted to looking forward. We believe that God’s best is yet to come, and we can’t wait to see what He will do as we continue to seek Him with all our heart!
Our Family Values

Seeking God
Every person engaging in the transformative power and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

THIS HAPPENS THROUGH:
• Transformative biblical preaching
• Wholehearted worship
• Sacrificial prayer
• Intentional discipleship

Caring For One Another
Committed to equipping and revitalizing our families for Kingdom impact and growth.

THIS HAPPENS THROUGH:
• Relevant marriage and family resources
• Compassion-driven care ministries
• Championing a multicultural ministry

Serving Together
A thriving lay leadership empowering every generation for ministry and mission.

THIS HAPPENS THROUGH:
• Vibrant children’s and youth ministry
• Dynamic leadership development
• Strategic mobilization of God’s people

Reaching Out
Seven million people around the world encountering Jesus through a growing number of local campuses and partnerships.

THIS HAPPENS THROUGH:
• Authentic evangelism
• Effective community engagement
• Strategic campus development
• Missional collaboration
“God’s best for you is on the other side of your yes to Him. This has always been the case.

Mountains move on the other side of fully trusting God’s call in our lives.”

BRIAN MOWREY

Begin the journey on the next page!
Saying **YES** to helping out with video production for our Online Campus after feeling prompted by the Lord. The experience has been exciting and rewarding spiritually, and only God knows the lives we have been able to touch through the online experience.

**A Few Facts About the Year**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we fast-forwarded our plans to launch our Online Campus and began broadcasting services on March 15. More than 3,000 people joined in worship!

Following membership approval, we purchased three acres of land next to the Bethel Campus for future development.

Our weekly Conversations show began on March 24 and explored relevant topics. In total, 36 episodes were produced and viewed 11,000 times.

Our Special Needs Community Group began meeting online March 2020 for fellowship, prayer, worship, games and encouragement and to talk about Pastor Brian’s “On the Other Side of Yes” book.

Saying **YES** to serving on the worship team has meant repenting of my sins and moving forward with what God has planned for my future, regardless of whether or not I understand it. When I’m worshipping on stage, I take that opportunity to reset and fix my eyes on Him.

I said **YES** to helping out with video production for our Online Campus after feeling prompted by the Lord. The experience has been exciting and rewarding spiritually, and only God knows the lives we have been able to touch through the online experience.
On Easter Sunday 2020, I was inspired by Pastor Brian to join Alpha. Saying YES to Alpha and the WHCC online family changed my life. I’ve found a new devotion to His Word, a passion for worship and faith-filled relationships I treasure.

When I said YES to Celebrate Recovery (CR), I was broken, lost and afraid for my life. I found love, brotherhood and salvation in Christ for the first time in my life. God and CR have transformed me and made me a better man, husband and father.

Saying YES to helping out with the online prayer ministry has been a privilege and honor. It’s a blessing to pray what’s on His heart for my brothers and sisters in Christ, and it’s amazing how obedience to Him brings such joy and peace.

A Few Facts About the Year

32 people dug deeper into the foundational truths of Christianity in our first online Alpha class, and 3 people surrendered their lives to Jesus.

Throughout the year, we hosted 9 blood drives at the Bethel Campus, where 267 units were collected that could save up to 801 lives.

Between March and April, our care team personally called to check in on 4,177 families and to ask for prayer requests.

Over the past year, the food distribution ministry at the Bethel Campus has been recognized by town leaders and organizations for its vital role in providing food to more than 17,000 families. More than 400 volunteers enabled 40 distributions of 983,636 pounds of food to be given away.
Over the past year, hundreds of adults grew in faith, were cared for and fostered community via online groups (such as Community Groups, Care Groups, Men’s and Women’s Groups, and Bible Studies).

On average, 230 kids and youth engaged with our programs on a weekly basis.

Our hybrid (online and in person) ministry model enabled more participation than ever before from those who weren’t able to participate in the past because of work or parenting commitments.

I said a nervous YES to God when He brought Celebrate Recovery (CR) to me, and that has opened the pathway from my head to my heart. God has used CR to bring me safety, healing, restoration, growth and a deeper faith.

Right after COVID hit, I said YES to co-leading the first online Alpha course, which was a huge success and blessing. A discipleship group of guys was birthed afterward, and we have been meeting online weekly for a year for Bible study, prayer and encouragement.

We said YES to training from Walnut Hill and doing marriage mentoring in Rwanda. Thanks to Walnut Hill’s equipping, we can now actively walk alongside couples as they face increased pressure.

"EMMANUEL AND MARY NGOGA
World Relief"

"HAROLD ALTHEN

"DAWN"

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"We said YES to training from Walnut Hill and doing marriage mentoring in Rwanda. Thanks to Walnut Hill’s equipping, we can now actively walk alongside couples as they face increased pressure."
I said yes to getting baptized as a public surrender of my life to Christ. After walking in the shadows of addiction, carrying the weights of anxiety and depression, straying from faith, and using drugs to fill the hole only God can, I am now cleansed from these sins because of Jesus.

STEPHEN PAGLIUCA

Saying yes to helping with the online kids’ class reminded me that God will provide the time, gifts and resources needed, even when we feel unqualified for His call. And stepping out of the boat always brings us joy.

TIM WASHER

We said yes to hosting a house church. Our Community Group was hungry for fellowship and to worship together. The first Sunday, we met on our deck with the sun shining and the birds singing. Coffee after the service enabled us to catch up, share needs and pray for one another.

HANK AND DEB LEMIEN

About 150 people attended the Unity Prayer Walk in person and online in Bethel on June 12.

JUNE 2020

4 people were baptized on June 26 outdoors in Bethel.

As a first step to encouraging people to re-gather in worship, 14 families agreed to begin house churches for the summer months. In total, as many as 220 people gathered on a weekly basis.

While COVID-19 prevented us from having our typical Annual Meeting, we successfully met and voted via Zoom on June 13 and 14 to affirm the operating budget, new Elder candidates and bylaw amendment.

A Few Facts About the Year
I said **YES** to being baptized because it was something I had been excited about for a long time. It was a big step in my relationship with Jesus and a way I could let everyone know that I love Jesus and want to follow His heart.

**BRIA MOWREY**

I said **YES** to being a host for our online Kids Camp because I wanted to help create an environment that shows kids that following Jesus is exciting, fulfilling and necessary.

**FAB FERNANDES**

Saying **YES** to a leadership role in worship has been a huge blessing in my life. Not only have I been able to facilitate worship, but I’ve also been able to connect with many people and further my faith in the process.

**LEXY CHIKEZIE**

A Few Facts About the Year

- 15 people were baptized on July 31 outdoors in Bethel.
- 170 registered for our virtual Kids Camp, with even more watching with their friends, and 5 kids surrendered their lives to Jesus.
- Our online metrics showed that, in addition to our local communities, people were regularly joining us in worship from across New England as well as from 12 other states across the U.S. and countries such as Brazil, Cambodia, Costa Rica, England, Germany, Ireland, Peru and South Africa.
I said **YES** to the Cancer Support Group because I found myself on a new journey without a road map. Our group leverages faith, prayer and Scripture to find shared strength in God’s love, empowering us to carry on with our individual struggles.

**ROY**

- The “Be the Light” prayer event was held Aug. 14, where we had 1 Yellow Flower.
- 3 people were baptized on Aug. 1 outdoors in Derby.
- People in the Bethel Campus began meeting in person again.
- Thanks to the generous gifts to our Ignite Legacy Fund, the Bethel Campus mortgage was completely paid off in 2020!

**Saying YES** to watching Walnut Hill online from Northern California for over a year has reconnected us to a church family we have loved being a part of since 1984. We are thrilled to become new supporters of Church in Action and the food pantry. Thank you for these opportunities and for such good teaching and encouragement.

**DON AND CHRIS STEVENS**

**Saying YES** to making the First 20 a priority at the start of my day has led me to truly feel God’s love. Through His guidance and love daily, I have learned what a loving relationship with Jesus means.

**CINDY MOORE**
Throughout the year, we held 7 blood drives in the Waterbury gym and collected 120 units, which could save 360 lives.

The prayer ministry recorded a 6-part training series for 7 online weekly intercession groups across all our campuses. They continue to see many answers to prayer.

People in our Waterbury, New Milford and Derby Campuses began to meet in person again.

Brian Mowrey's book, “On the Other Side of Yes,” was released. In addition to being used at Walnut Hill, it was shared with 50 pastors across New England and leaders in the U.S. The profits through October of $3,600 were donated to support our food ministry.

Thank you, Walnut Hill, for saying YES to hosting our Classical Conversations group. Homeschooled students from preschool through high school meet once a week throughout the school year to learn in a Classical Christian community.

Thank you, Walnut Hill, for saying YES to hosting blood drives at the Waterbury Campus. The need for blood is constant and because of your support, the Red Cross is able to provide lifesaving blood to patients across Connecticut.

I said YES to joining with others in a weekly intercessory prayer group to hold up the needs of the Waterbury Campus. Since being a part, I have experienced more peace and joy, along with a revival of the Lord’s presence.
Throughout the year, the New Milford Campus hosted 4 food pantries and served 265 families.

During our fall sermon series, we studied saying yes to prayer, fasting, forgiveness, peacemaking, compassion, unity, gratitude, generosity and being sent.

Throughout the fall, our weekend service attendance averaged more than 2,000 people each week with approximately 80% online and 20% in person across our four locations.

Thank you to Christopher Ellington, Jeremiah Mahadeo and all our production and worship and arts volunteers, who enable our weekend services to happen with excellence each week.

My husband and I said **YES** to volunteering at the New Milford food pantry. For us, it’s all about people helping people.

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**VALERIE AYER**

I said **YES** to joining the Unity in Diversity Advisory Team. The new perspectives and shared heart to see EVERYONE in the image of God have me excited to **co-facilitate** a Race and the Gospel class with my **husband**.

**LOTTAINE GO**

Thank you, Walnut Hill, for saying **YES** to hosting the memorial services for my mother, Joan, and brother, Glenn. It was a true blessing to be provided a space where more people could gather to offer support. God’s presence was strongly felt through the music, eulogies, and message, and both services greatly helped to bring much-needed closure and **healing**.
Saying YES to serving at the Derby food pantry was an easy yes for us and has opened many doors for relationships with our neighbors. A neighbor we served at the pantry who never used to say hello to me now smiles and waves at me.

ANNIE AND ROBERTO ROMERO

When the pandemic hit South Carolina, I said YES to revisiting the church of my childhood, Walnut Hill, and joining your online Community Group. Along with my own church, your Sunday services and online group have helped me hold onto peace in my heart and joy in my daily walk, no matter the circumstances around me.

CLAIRE CAMPANA

I said YES to fasting and found it helped me to focus on the Lord. Even though I didn’t have food to give me strength, I felt the Lord actively at work during my quiet time.

GRANT MILLER

6 people were baptized on Nov. 22 in Bethel.

Over the past year, we held 11 food pantries at the Derby Campus and served 1,179 families.

Throughout the fall, youth from all campuses met in person and online on a weekly basis to grow in Jesus, connect with one another and let off some steam.

In November, Walnut Hill came alongside 90 families and provided encouragement to help enable a joyful holiday season.
Through our Little White Box collection, we raised more than $56,000 to feed the hungry through Christian Service Society in Bangladesh and the Walnut Hill Community Food Pantry.

In December, we held our second annual light show over several weekends and had 812 cars come through the Bethel Campus, providing enjoyment, the Gospel message and an invitation to our Christmas services to approximately 2,500 people.

More than 500 people from across the U.S. and the U.K. viewed our virtual Advent Breakfast, featuring a powerful word from guest speaker, Anne Calver.

Saying YES to giving some of our money to Little White Boxes made us feel great because it helped people get the food they need to survive. We think God thinks that it’s great too.

We were happy to say YES to helping with the light show. It gave us an opportunity to show God's love in action by bringing smiles to so many in such a time of isolation.

I said YES four years ago to helping at the Mobile Food Pantry to overcome my shyness. My husband and I are now part of the Bethel leadership team coordinating the pantry and serving groceries to 1,700 families a month. We have seen countless stories of God touching the lives of our volunteers and patrons.

Saying YES to giving some of our money to Little White Boxes made us feel great because it helped people get the food they need to survive. We think God thinks that it’s great too.
Saying **YES** to DivorceCare was a small glimpse of hope at a time when the anguish of my heart was still so intense. God used it to pry open areas of my heart that He wanted to speak healing into, applying the balms of His truth to my deepest hurt.

Saying **YES** to peacemaking has greatly impacted my walk with Christ. Being able to reconcile with my fellow brothers and sisters through grace and forgiveness has led me to a deeper relationship with Jesus.

I said **YES** to reading Pastor Brian’s book and was so thankful for the timely nature of its content. As a fellow pastor of a New England church, we were calling our church family to say yes to many of the same spiritual disciplines in the book and to a life of obedience and expectation in Christ.

**A Few Facts About the Year**

- We welcomed Pastor Bryan Cerrone to serve as our new Waterbury Campus Pastor. Originally from MA, Bryan has a passion for evangelism and reaching the community for Jesus.
- Throughout the year, Walnut Hill served more than 170 churches and organizations in the New England region and across the country, providing support, wisdom, preaching and prayer.
- 43 people surrendered their lives to Jesus in 2020, and an additional 130 people “raised their hands” online indicating first steps to follow Jesus.
I said **YES** to trusting God after losing my job at a company I worked at for over 10 years and after another job opportunity fell through. My trust in the Lord has grown even deeper and my faith even stronger that He has this all planned out for my good.

I said **YES** to the Special Needs Community Group and to keeping in touch with God by praying to Him before I sleep and eat and in all kinds of moments. Reading my Bible verse of the day and Our Daily Bread devotional makes me joyful, peaceful and confident. God is with me in my heart forever and ever.

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**71 kids and 20 leaders attended the Winter Youth Retreat on Feb. 21, where youth from all campuses gathered for fun and to praise the Lord.**

**Walnut Hill has 5 residents serving in ministry areas, including Men’s Ministry, Pastoral Care, Worship and Production.**

**As Walnut Hill responded to the need to feed the hungry across our campuses and Western Connecticut, the need for safe, reliable and spacious cooling storage became evident. We secured 2 coolers this past year to store thousands of pounds of perishable foods at the Bethel Campus and assisted in distributing this food to other pantries and families in our area.**

**After attending the Alpha course online, I said **YES** to being baptized and doing the Safar discipleship journey with Pastor Victoria. Life no longer feels like a struggle, and I wake up every morning feeling complete happiness and gratitude for Jesus’ love and forgiveness.**

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**Tara Ramey**

**Valerie Maschio**

**Zach Sorena**

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A Few Facts About the Year
I said **YES** to serving at Hopeline for 25 years, where I committed to endless hours of intercession for the lives of the unborn and to persevering when ministry was a spiritual battle. I experienced the joy of seeing families choose life and was rewarded with seeing the Lord’s victory.

**LINDA COCHRANE**

Saying **YES** to trusting God in this season of life to care for my dad and study chaplaincy has been challenging but a blessing. I miss my life in South Sudan but I am content to be where God has me.

**VICKI BEATTIE**

Thank you, Walnut Hill, for saying **YES** to supporting Elam Ministries. Because of your support, Elam is able to train more leaders, send more Scriptures, equip the Church with effective resources and reach thousands with the Gospel. Your “Yes” has resulted in many Iranians saying “Yes” to Jesus!

**ELAM MINISTRIES**

- We began devoting the first Monday of each month as a day of corporate prayer and fasting.

- Walnut Hill held its first Church in Action online conference, which included daily Zoom calls with missionary partners around the world.

- This year, a family gave the church a plot of land next to the Waterbury Campus. God willing, this will enable us to build a parking lot with handicap spots and easy accessibility. Praise God!

- 3 youth were baptized on March 10 in Bethel.

- In March, we said farewell to Kyler Barr after many years of faithful service building into the lives of our youth and welcomed Lance Sven to continue the challenge of growing and developing our youth in the Lord.
11 people were baptized during the Easter service in Bethel.

Having met largely online throughout 2020, Walnut Hill reached its highest in-person attendance in a year on Easter weekend with more than 1,200 (plus an additional 1,900 online).

Alpha kicked off its second virtual session with 18 participants.

Another round of care calls were initiated to 2,555 people.

32 Couples attended The Marriage Course, a 7-session online class designed to help couples invest in their relationship and build a strong marriage.

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I said **YES** to being baptized, and the Lord has broken every chain that once held me. Jesus has transformed my heart and life in ways I never thought possible. Now I live to tell of the God who rescues — the one my heart loves.

*Caeley Sullivan*

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I said **YES** to dancing at Easter because when I dance with the Movement Ministry, I believe it is a gift for God. And even when I am nervous to dance worship in front of so many people, the Holy Spirit gives me courage, peace and joy.

*Sade Karam*

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Saying **YES** to taking The Marriage Course online taught us to listen in a way that we had never really listened before. We came to trust, to learn about and to appreciate each other on a deeper level.

*DiAnne and Ron Malin*
Opportunities for Community in the Summer

Christian community is such a vital part of our health and faith. In addition to weekend services, we are excited for opportunities this summer to enjoy the warm weather together and gather outside for worship, prayer, baptisms and to serve others. We encourage you to find ways to connect in person with your friends, ministry groups and Crews. Stay tuned for our summer calendar, which will be released in the coming weeks!

A Fresh Launch in the Fall

Many people believe that September and the start of fall will be important times as schools work to further resume meeting in person and businesses become more fully open throughout the summer.

We are excited about the fall as well, as we launch our new Annual Theme, “Heaven on Earth,” on September 19. You can read more about it on the following page. Along with our online community, please join us in prayer and ask God to move in such a way that will enable all of us who live near a physical campus to gather safely in person and celebrate the launch.

What You Can Do to Help

If you have children, please recommit to helping them participate in our weekly kids programs in person or online. We also have a special 56ers program for 5th and 6th graders.

If you have youth, please encourage your teens to get involved with WHY Group and our fun and impactful special events.

If you have family with special needs, we have a growing number of opportunities on Sundays and during the week to connect. Please check out our website and get involved.

If you are a young adult, middle-aged or older, make this a moment to recommit to growing in Jesus:

• Attend a church service each week.
• Begin each day meeting with Jesus (First 20).
• Join a group and Crew. (Visit our website for more information.)
• Begin to serve and bless others with the gifts God has given you.

Ignite Legacy

There are so many wonderful things taking place through our Ignite Legacy Initiative, including developments with our Online Campus, leadership training, reaching New England, supporting the Church around the world and preparing our campuses for new guests. For more information and updates, visit www.ignitelegacyfund.org/latest-news.
The Direction

One day while Jesus was making His way toward Jerusalem, He was asked by the Pharisees, “When will the Kingdom of God come?” Jesus answered, “The Kingdom of God can’t be detected by visible signs. You won’t be able to say, ‘Here it is!’ or ‘It’s over there!’ For the Kingdom of God is already among you” (Luke 17:20-21). This was a revolutionary teaching. Jesus was proclaiming that the Kingdom of God was not just a future hope, but a present reality. When His disciples asked Him to teach them to pray, He taught them to pray in this way, “Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven” (Matthew 6:10). The prayer of every disciple today ought to be the same. Our mission and our hope are to bring Heaven to earth today.

In this next chapter at Walnut Hill, we want to increase our hope and understanding of the blessed gift of eternity with the Lord in Heaven and be inspired to bring Heaven to earth today.

The Road Ahead

The upcoming year will be approached in trimesters. Each trimester, we will focus on an important aspect of bringing Heaven to earth. First, we will be refreshed by the joy of contemplating our future hope of Heaven. What is Heaven? What will it be like? How do I get there? Second, we will spend time together learning about the present reality of Heaven in our lives through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Finally, we will commit to bringing Heaven to earth today. This will happen as we focus on our relationships with one another and how we can best minister together as the body of Christ.

1. Future Hope (September-November)
2. Present Reality (January-March)
3. Heaven Today (April-June)

Our Prayer

Throughout this year, we are asking God for:

1. A Refreshed Understanding of Heaven
2. A Greater Openness to the Things of the Spirit
3. The Discovery of Our Spiritual Gifts
4. A Recommitment to Be the Body of Christ
5. Celebratory Worship
6. An Anticipation for the Supernatural
7. A Greater Commitment to Caring for One Another
8. 250 New Believers
2020-2021
One Church, Many Locations

**Bethel**

156 Walnut Hill Road
Bethel, CT 06801
Service Times: 9 a.m., 11 a.m.
Brian Mowrey, Campus Pastor
bmowrey@walnuthillcc.org
203-796-7373

**New Milford**

19 Dorwin Hill Road
New Milford, CT 06776
Service Time: 9:30 a.m.
Brian Prue, Campus Pastor
bprue@walnuthillcc.org
203-796-7373

**Waterbury**

274 Bunker Hill Avenue
Waterbury, CT 06708
Service Times: 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m.
Bryan Cerrone, Campus Pastor
bcerrone@walnuthillcc.org
203-796-7373

**The Valley (in Derby)**

27 9th Street, Derby, CT 06418
Service Time: 10 a.m.
Joshua Multunas, Campus Pastor
jmultunas@walnuthillcc.org
203-796-7373

**Online**

Service Times: 9 a.m., 11 a.m.
Crystal Ellington, Online Campus Director
crystal@walnuthillcc.org
203-796-7373
Our Staff

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GREG FLOWER
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gflower@walnuthillcc.org

CLAY NORMAN
Staff Chaplain
cnorman@walnuthillcc.org
A PRAYER OF BLESSING

As we reflect on the past year,
We are humbled and thankful
For all God chose to accomplish through Walnut Hill.
Thank you to each and every volunteer and staff member
Who has invested their time, energy and finances,
Who has prayed and sought the Lord’s guidance
On how to be a family.
We are a family.
A family that seeks God,
Reaches out,
Serves together and
Cares for one another.
With great expectation and anticipation,
We offer ourselves anew,
With arms spread wide
Ready to receive all that God has in store
For the year to come.
May we hear His voice loudly and clearly
Guiding us through the days ahead,
Confident in His promise that
The best is yet to come.