



2023

Annual Report

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





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MESSAGE FROM THE ELDER CHAIRMAN

Reflecting on the past year, I see our Lord's hand leading us to a season of increasing refreshment and renewal. Jesus walked with us every step of the way as we were comforted and guided through life's pressures by placing our focus on His Word and improving our relationship with Him.

We saw God empower us to minister to others through the overflow of the Holy Spirit, feeding the hungry through the Food Pantry and bringing many into the Kingdom through adult and youth ministries. When we needed operating funds to continue ministries that are yielding much fruit, He used us to demonstrate the "treasure of our heart" by our sacrificial giving. We also exceeded Church In Action goals to equip our ministries locally and abroad to "Go and make disciples of all nations" and thereby demonstrate what it looks like to be a blessing because of our Lord's loving-kindness toward us.

Your prayers have been vital in this season, and we are thankful for them. Elders and staff prayed daily for His Church's provision, and the Elders prayed at each

campus for the physical property, the leadership and specific needs. Let's continue to seek His throne to accomplish all that we're called to do: "The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results" (James 5:16).

As we encourage and support the Mowrey family's walk of faith to the "other side of yes" in Michigan, we are excited about the plans the Lord has for Walnut Hill to prosper His Church. Our past obedience to "hear God's voice and follow" has developed within us a strong trust that our Lord will "never leave us nor forsake us" as we seek His voice to guide us through the transition. We are thankful for Adam and Craig as their leadership continues to "ignite a passion for Jesus" in each of us through messages, our ministries and prayer. With the start of the new theme of "Arise and Shine," I pray we will gain greater levels of intimacy and discipleship to demonstrate greater love for others, bringing glory to Jesus.



Bryan Ayer
Elder Chairman



SEEKING GOD



**CARING FOR
ONE ANOTHER**



**SERVING
TOGETHER**



REACHING OUT

A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEAD PASTORS



Brian Mowrey
Lead Pastor, Teaching

It has been one of Becca's and my greatest joys to serve at Walnut Hill Community Church. We are so thankful for all the memories that we will take with us to Michigan as we jump into this next adventure. Our years here have taught us about the power of prayer, the beauty of a life walking in step with the Holy Spirit and the blessing of a community that truly loves one another. Thank you for these priceless gifts. Keep trusting and following Jesus with your whole heart, remembering that He is with you and for you no matter what. I'm confident God has great things in store for each of you on the other side of your yes to Him!



Adam DePasquale
Lead Pastor, Executive

As we prayerfully send Brian, Becca and the Mowrey girls off to their new Kingdom assignment, we recognize the wide range of emotions each of us feels — sometimes all at once! We are so grateful for their ministry and each and every way they invested in our lives and brought us closer to Jesus. As you read through this Annual Report, we pray that you are encouraged and inspired by the stories of God at work and the incredible ministry taking place. Let's give the Lord praise for all He has done!



Craig Mowrey
Lead Pastor, Development

Adam and I feel so honored to continue to serve as your Lead Pastors. We thank God for you and your investment of time, talents and resources that are igniting a passion for Jesus in CT, New England and around the world. We have great expectancy for what we believe God wants to do this year. We pray that you get a glimpse of that as we begin our summer series July 2 on Hebrews 11 called "By Faith" and as you read about the "Arise and Shine" annual theme beginning in September (see Page 17). As we step into a new season together, let's join in prayer and gather each week with anticipation!

CELEBRATING GOD AT WORK IN 2022-2023

This year has been all about **Jesus**.

Our wholehearted prayer was to
grow deeper in our relationship
with Him than ever before.



Turn the page to
read stories of
lives that have
been transformed
by the power of
Jesus this year!



KIDS MINISTRY

“I learned to love myself more because Jesus loves me.”

Over the past year, I have grown in Jesus through the great children's programs, which are fun and help me to learn about Jesus and His Word. I've made friends with other students, teachers and pastors. I love when teachers read Bible stories, because they make it feel like God is talking directly to me. Their examples help me to better understand Bible stories, like how people met in private in early Christianity. The worksheets, crossword puzzles and other assignments help me learn the important points. The live worship helps me focus on Jesus instead of being distracted by other things.



Matthew Ayer
Bethel Campus

Since being baptized July 24, 2022, my relationship with Jesus has grown by reading the Bible and praying more. In the Children's Ministry, I learned about Judgement Day. Everyone sins, including me; however, Jesus forgave our sins and made the ultimate sacrifice on the cross so that we can live for Him. I learned to love myself more because Jesus loves me.



Nathalia Quiles
Valley Campus



We praise Jesus for how He is transforming lives...

560 kids participated in our Sunday morning programming across all campuses.

207 kids were new to our Kids Ministry.

21 kids took the next step in baptism.

18 kids were dedicated to the Lord by their parents.

137 kids participated in our 2 Kids Camps last summer, resulting in **28** Yellow Flowers.

2,000 people attended Waterbury's Trunk or Treat.

13 of our Junior Serve kids were engaged in serving each week on Sundays in Bethel.

3 Eggstravaganzas brought **415** kids and families to our Bethel, Valley and Waterbury Campuses.



YOUTH MINISTRY

**We praise Jesus
for how He is
transforming lives...**

“I have experienced new life and
freedom with my heavenly Jesus.”

107 of our students
ages 12-18 served in many
of our ministries (Kids
Camp, Food Pantry, Kids
Ministry, Café, Worship and
Production Teams).

108 students on average
attended Youth Group on a
weekly basis (70 in Bethel,
10 in New Milford, 15 in the
Valley and 12 in Waterbury).

83 students attended the
all-campus Winter Retreat.

12 youth took the next
step in baptism.

20 teens served in a
leadership role in the
ministry as student leaders.

280 youth attended
Youth Group this year, **55**
of whom were new.

60 middle and high school
students attended Summer
Camp at Hume New
England.

When I was baptized in 2019, I thought I reached a great relationship with Jesus; however, the pandemic served as a distraction. I was barely praying and reading my Bible, but I desired a closer relationship with the King of Kings. Through Walnut Hill's Youth Ministry in Waterbury, this year has been the height of my connection with my Lord and Savior. The Winter Retreat sparked a newfound appreciation and has driven me to consistently read the Bible and talk with Jesus every day. I have experienced new life and freedom with my heavenly Jesus.



Josh Melillo
Waterbury Campus



Abby Henderson
Bethel Campus



ADULT MINISTRY

“God is working to accomplish His purpose in our lives, and we couldn’t be more excited.”

Launching a Community Group in Southbury this year has helped me see a fuller picture of God taking action outside of my Bible, beyond my own experiences and in the lives of many people right here in my town. Hearing about how they are being blessed, comforted and challenged really hits home that Jesus is on the move all the time.



Rachel Wojciechowski
Bethel Campus

It had been more than 10 years since I stepped into a church, but my family started attending Walnut Hill this year. God made it clear that I do not have to earn my salvation or His love. He has given me purpose and joy. God loves me despite my flaws and imperfections. He has shown Himself to me in His Word and through some amazing brothers and sisters at church. God loved me at my lowest point and rescued me. My daughter and I were recently baptized, and my husband and I are in the process of becoming members. God is working to accomplish His purpose in our lives, and we couldn’t be more excited.



Sasha Araujo
New Milford Campus

We praise Jesus for how He is transforming lives...

689 adults made steps to intentionally grow in Jesus through involvement in our adult groups and programs.

179 women participated in women’s groups across our campuses.

230 women attended Christmas events at our campuses (Advent Breakfast, Advent Tea and Holiday Brunch).

50 men attended our Thanksgiving Dinner and Church in Action Men’s Breakfast.

Approximately **95** men participated in men’s groups across our campuses.

94 people participated in our Word by Word Bible Study at the Bethel Campus and Waterbury Campus Bible Study on Sunday mornings.





46 senior adults gathered each month to attend JOY Fellowship.

74 people were actively involved in our Young Adults group through Bible Study, Young Professionals Gatherings and other special events.

18 Community Groups met in local host homes to grow and study the Bible together.

33 adults publicly declared their faith in Jesus by being baptized.

56 people joined Walnut Hill through membership this year.

“His ways are so much bigger than ours.”

Sunday mornings, the Word by Word class searches out the Scriptures together. Being asked to teach has helped me understand God more fully and grow in love for the group of people who meet and discuss the Word each week. Last year, we studied Jeremiah, and I was amazed at how God works so personally and individually, yet His plans can sometimes take generations to come about. His ways are so much bigger than ours.



Dwayne Boulden
Bethel Campus

Last year, amid a health journey, I prayed that God would send me a friend. He exceeded my expectations through the Young Adults Ministry! I thank God for putting Walnut Hill on my radar and giving me the courage to walk into a Young Adults meeting at a point when I was desperately seeking the Lord. Since then, I have been blessed to be on the leadership team, teach and lead worship. My involvement in this ministry has given me the strength to go out of my comfort zone and share Jesus with those I connect with and tell them how this community has had a substantial impact on my life.



Clare Ferrandino
Bethel Campus



Adults across our campuses are growing in their relationship with Jesus through First 20 and Crews. For more information, visit first-20.org and mycrewkit.org.

SPECIAL NEEDS



We praise Jesus for how He is transforming lives...

Between **50** and **110** people participated in monthly family events.

25 individuals regularly attended our regional community group, which meets in person and online.

10 new families became active in the ministry.

15 volunteers helped at the Joni and Friends Camps last summer, where **10** Walnut Hill families were ministered to.

30 volunteers served our special needs families weekly.

More than **100** individuals participated in the Special Needs Ministry.

“The Church is my family whom I love, and Jesus is the source of this blessing.”

The Church is my family whom I love, and Jesus is the source of this blessing. My physical dependence due to my disability mirrors my spiritual dependence. I have been blessed with mentors from my home church in Ohio, new friendships online through Walnut Hill's Special Needs Ministry and a growing commitment to the Church. All these things reflect my growing relationship with Jesus Christ and the gift of being served by fellow believers.



Bre Hayes

Online Young Adult Bible Study in Partnership With Joni and Friends

While walking with my daughter, a woman approached me and told me about Walnut Hill's Special Needs Ministry. Then I met Lance at a barbecue, who also mentioned Walnut Hill. Afterward, a man at a work conference shared about his faith in Jesus. I got the hint and showed up at Walnut Hill. Several weeks later, my life felt brighter, and I've found a community of acceptance and understanding for my daughter, Logan, who loves being a part of the special needs community. Jesus is placing blessings and opportunities in front of me every day, and I seek to follow His Word and grow His Kingdom with everything He has put inside me.



Kelby and Logan Edwards
Bethel Campus



I've been attending Celebrate Recovery (CR) for three years. CR has helped me identify the hurts, hang-ups and habits that were hindering my walk with God. I have carried anger with me for more than 50 years. During the past year, I surrendered my anger to Jesus, who has healed and freed my heart. Praise God for CR!



Bonnie Van Kuren
Valley Campus



CARE MINISTRY

“I feel heard,
understood
and hopeful.”



I struggle with my mental health and a neurobiological disorder. While listening to Carrie DePasquale share her mental health journey during a Sunday sermon, I was encouraged to attend the Mental Health Drop-In. It took courage to go, but I quickly realized that this was a safe and calm space to meet other Christians who also struggle with mental illness. I feel heard, understood and hopeful. Jesus is encountering me in my healing journey through the Drop-In and counseling.

Dina
Bethel Campus

We praise Jesus for how He is transforming lives...

263 people were ministered to through our Care Ministries, including Cancer Support, Celebrate Recovery, DivorceCare, GriefShare, Mental Health Drop-Ins, JOY Fellowship, Senior Adult Bible Study, Marriage Mentorship and Christians Against Poverty (CAP course).

407 people were counseled and mentored.

193 people were supported through hospital or at-home visits.

1,140 care cards were sent.

27 families received help through our benevolence fund.

6 weddings and **16** memorial and funerals services were conducted by our pastors.

WORSHIP AND THE ARTS / PRODUCTION



**We praise Jesus
for how He is
transforming lives...**

277 worship services were held across our campuses.

110 musicians and production volunteers served on our worship and tech teams.

16 dancers were part of our Movement Ministry Team.

Regular trainings equipped volunteers of all ages to worship, sing, play instruments, dance and operate equipment.

400 people attended the fall “Man of the House” theatrical production, which helped raise **\$6,000** for youth summer trips.

We launched our Spoken Word Ministry.

Approximately **1,000** people from our region attended special events hosted at Walnut Hill (Walnut Hill Christmas Concert and Andrew Peterson).

“...seeing the faces of God’s people and hearing them praise Jesus have been important reminders of God’s faithfulness.”

This year, I saw Jesus’ transformational power at work in my husband as he rededicated his life to Christ and was baptized. I also saw it in the congregation as they began to lift their hands in worship and praise more openly on a weekly basis, making a truly joyful noise to the Lord. As a worship leader, seeing the faces of God’s people and hearing them praise Jesus have been important reminders of God’s faithfulness. I’m grateful for Jesus’ saving power, for the resurrection of my marriage, for the outpouring of joy in our church and for His undeniable, constant presence in my life!

Being part of the worship team has been a wonderful reminder of how important it is to keep Jesus at the center. While it is great to play and worship with such gifted and talented musicians and singers, it is the humility I see that reminds me it is not just about the gift you offer to the Lord. It is about the heart with which you offer it.



Clarence Haynes
Bethel Campus



Taryn Fernandez
Waterbury Campus



We praise Jesus for how He is transforming lives...

57 prayer servants served across our campuses.

8 intercessor groups of **54** warriors met weekly or bi-weekly to pray (including prayer walks around the Valley Campus, praying for families and prodigals, pre-service prayer, and the Yellow Flower intercessor team).

7 prayer workshops and trainings equipped **167** people to pray like Jesus and hear God for others.

1,144 people were prayed for following worship services.

The Resting Place gathered **monthly** through November to worship and pray through the Psalms.

109 people received our weekly prayer email and prayed for approximately **1,000** prayer requests.



PRAYER MINISTRY

“I have realized how crucial it is for a person to evaluate their faith.”

This year, I have learned the importance of trusting in the Lord. I have realized how crucial it is for a person to evaluate their faith. When doing this myself, I found that my relationship with God was not as strong as I thought it could be. This was because I never took the time to sit and listen to what God had to say. After committing to listening to Him, I have heard and seen Him move in amazing ways!



Norah Mowrey
Bethel Campus

This past year, I've learned to really rely on Jesus to come through for me in times of leading in ministry. It's not in my own strength that things get done, but by His strength. I really noticed this while leading the Praying Like Jesus class and the prayer trainings, and even more so during the Youth prayer and worship nights where many encountered and heard from God. Jesus has been so good to me in times where I have felt weak, and He has worked through me when I felt inadequate.



Steve Bastura
Bethel Campus



CHURCH IN ACTION

“Each time I volunteer, I learn more from this beautiful community.”

Through our non-profit, Infused Impact, my husband, Jim, and I have made multiple trips to Romania to encourage our Church in Action partner Fight for Freedom, which provides humanitarian aid to Ukrainian refugees and rescues and cares for Ukrainian orphans. As we offer support to those on the front lines of this effort, God releases joy, passion and renewed energy into our own lives, and we feel the love of Jesus in a more intimate way. What an unfathomable blessing to continually drink deeply from the well of Jesus and offer a cup to others!



Leticia Hashem
Bethel Campus



Emily Turco
New Milford Campus



We praise Jesus for how He is transforming lives...

89 lives surrendered to Jesus this year through the local ministry of Walnut Hill (Yellow Flowers).

38 ministries in **26** countries were supported through your Church in Action giving.

347 families gave to support our Church in Action partners, totaling **\$1,179,000** given away.

3 teams were sent out from Walnut Hill to Romania, Bangladesh and Macedonia.

206 people volunteered at our food pantries.

24 food distribution events were held at Bethel and **12** in Derby.

15,857 households were served (with our largest pantry night serving **791** families).

800 people are using their gifts to serve in the life of the church.



Ignite Legacy Update

Founded in 2019, our Ignite Legacy Fund was created to launch new areas of ministry locally, regionally and internationally to address real ministry challenges facing our world today. Visit www.ignitelegacyfund.org for more information.

Highlights From This Past Year

Leaders need to be equipped.

Walnut Hill is committed to raising up the next generation of ministry leaders. Praise God! Since 2019, 19 individuals have participated in our intern and residency program and have served in our care, local outreach, men's, pastoral, prayer, production, youth, young adult, and worship and the arts ministries. In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, 10 people have been invested in as part of the program and are making a great impact!

The New England Church needs to thrive.

In 2022-2023, we saw wonderful growth in our ministry into rural Litchfield County. We now host regular pastoral prayer and fellowship gatherings in Kent, Thomaston and New Milford, and we are planning on launching a gathering in the Torrington area. We are regularly called upon to guest preach at churches in the county and to provide them wisdom and advice. Visit www.litchfieldcountypastors.org for more information.

Over the past year, Walnut Hill has provided support to Greenwoods Community Church in Ashley Falls, MA. The church, which has become weakened and vulnerable, has a wonderful heart for Jesus and serves as one of the few evangelical churches in that corner of the Berkshires. Through much prayer and conversation, Walnut Hill and Greenwoods concluded that the best path forward would be to move the congregation and start a new church up the road in Great Barrington. We are so excited that Converge Northeast and Valley Community Baptist Church have agreed to come onboard as partners. Stay tuned for more information!

Did you know that Walnut Hill has partnered with 86 New England churches and organizations in the past year?

The global Church is asking for help.

At the request of our Church in Action partners, Geni and Soni Begu, we are thrilled to have sent a group of Walnut Hillers to Macedonia in April to help launch their missions sending center and to partner in prayer with them — interceding for God's blessing, breakthrough and open doors! Additionally, paid for from our Church in Action fund, we provided leadership training for the entire Fight for Freedom staff (30-plus leaders) in Romania on a retreat weekend and supported the 50-year celebration of Christian Service Society in Bangladesh by sending a team to preach, teach and encourage the staff and young leaders.

We need to prepare for future guests.

Please see Page 9 for a full update on all the advancements in our Special Needs Ministry. From a facility perspective, we are excited to have begun work on the new Waterbury Campus parking lot, roof replacement and bathroom renovations. We also made improvements to our Bethel Campus Special Needs Community Room.

A generation needs to meet Jesus.

We made a number of upgrades to our production equipment, which increased video, lighting and audio quality, as well as functionality and reliability. We estimate that 900-1,000 people connect with Walnut Hill every week online, with approximately 20 percent joining from outside our local area. Over the past year, people have joined us from 17 nations, 36 U.S. states and 581 towns. We regularly welcome newcomers to our physical campuses who share that they first started attending online.

IGNITE LEGACY

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Total Given: \$3,709,000

Total Invested in Ministry:
\$2,541,000

Total Remaining:
\$1,168,000



We are thankful to you, Brian and Becca.

God has used you to...



Equip and mobilize the next generation of pastors, preachers and worshipers. As someone aspiring to become a pastor, Brian has mentored me over the past three years, giving me my first opportunities to preach. Becca has guided me to lead worship teams in the Youth and Young Adults Ministries. Both have a passion to raise up the next generation of church leaders. — **Matt Moreira**

Model a lifestyle of obedience by saying “yes” to the Lord. I have seen you make difficult decisions that don’t make any sense, but you say “yes” anyway because you have a history where you can testify to great blessings for you and for others through that obedience. — **Jameson Parker**

Lead the way in becoming a church that looks more like Heaven through unity in diversity. Under Pastor Brian’s leadership to form a Diversity Advisory Board, God’s vision “to be one and bring Heaven to earth” was developed to guide Walnut Hill in hospitality, caring, leadership, education and our relationship with each other. He has challenged us to not just be hearers but doers of the Word. — **Naa Kumi**

Engage us in passionate, Spirit-led worship. For everyone worshipping alongside the Mowreys, it is evident how they use their talents to bring praise and glory to the Lord. We’ve been swept away, enraptured and overcome with the Lord’s presence because of their own personal connection to Him. — **Sarah Bollacke**

Teach us the power of prayer through hearing God for others. Brian taught often on the Bible story about friends removing a roof to help their sick friend connect with Jesus. When praying in groups, you encouraged us to partner with the Holy Spirit to hear what was on God’s heart for each other, knowing His words would heal, strengthen, encourage and comfort us. — **Nonna Neal**

Help us learn about our God-given gifts in order to better serve the Kingdom. In his “Why Church?” sermon, Pastor Brian taught us that we are a family of believers devoted to growing in Jesus who fellowship together and help others. This sermon challenged me as a believer to stop dating the church and commit by becoming a member and serving others as a greeter. — **Abena Allen**

Challenge us to grow further in our relationship with Jesus than ever before. God used Brian and Becca as His mouthpieces to preach and sing. Brian’s leadership in teaching the Word is life-changing, and Becca’s worship leads us into His presence and brings healing. A sermon on how we tend to communicate more with Jesus or the Father challenged me. I now pray to the Holy Spirit for the help I need. — **Greg Knight**

Create a culture of unity, honor and excellence. God used you both to create a culture of unity, honor and excellence among our staff. Your love for God, each other, your family and us is so apparent. You are always ready to share with such honesty and model a Christ-centered life. You don’t just tell us how to live and love God and our neighbor. You show us. — **Annie Romero**

Demonstrate humility and vulnerability in leadership. I’m impressed, inspired and comforted by your godliness, which is evidenced in your humility and vulnerability. Walnut Hill has been blessed by your preaching, teaching and worship. You did not merely speak with words and songs but so clearly witnessed through your lives as well. — **Jim Kennedy**

Encourage and bless by deeply investing in the lives of others. Your enthusiasm in creating community has helped to build connections that have brought forward fruit within the church and in individual lives. You live by example and operate in the gift of hospitality, whether it be on stage or by opening your home. — **Kristyn Candullo**

Senior Leadership Transition Update

On Sunday, March 5, Brian Mowrey shared with the church all that the Lord has been challenging him and his family to say “yes” to over the past several months. Specifically, Brian shared that he is being called to be the Senior Pastor at Kensington Church in Michigan.

Walnut Hill’s Elders and leadership are beyond grateful for the Mowrey family’s service here for the past 16 years. We are proud of the integrity and transparency they model as the Lord is calling them to the next chapter in their ministry, and we fully support all the Lord wants to do in and through their family.

Please mark your calendars for Sunday, June 18, as we plan to bless the Mowrey family on their final Sunday. For more information, visit www.walnuthilltransition.org/honoring-mowreys.

Prayer

Walnut Hill sits in a significant moment as we position ourselves for all God has in store for His church. We know that prayer is vital in this season and ask that you join us in praying for the Lord’s wisdom, guidance and protection. To receive specific prayer requests on the transition, visit www.walnuthilltransition.org/pray.

Interim Leadership Model

The church’s bylaws require the Elders to put in place an interim leadership model until a longer-term plan to address Brian’s vacancy can be approved by the members.

This interim leadership model we have designed is intentionally built to handle a 12- to 15-month period and affirms Craig and Adam as Lead Pastors, giving them responsibility to oversee all areas of the church. The model utilizes an exciting team preaching approach, so we will hear more from Craig, Adam, members of our staff and guest preachers. Craig will provide additional pastoral support at the Bethel Campus, and Adam is responsible for providing leadership to our Worship and Arts ministry. For more information, visit www.walnuthilltransition.org/interim-plan.

Discerning the Future

While the creation of the interim leadership model has been the priority of the Elders, they have begun a prayerful process to help discern how God may be leading the church forward. With Craig and Adam’s leadership and a strong staff team, the Elders do not feel pressure to make fast decisions but instead are able to take the time needed to seek God, listen and discern the right approach for the future. As part of the discernment process, the Elders will look for opportunities in the coming months to engage the congregation, and they plan to provide an update to the church in early fall.

Questions or Thoughts?

Please email leadership@walnuthillcc.org with your questions or thoughts and visit www.walnuthilltransition.org for updated news and information.



2023-2024 ANNUAL THEME | ARISE AND SHINE

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and His glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.” **ISAIAH 60:1-3**

THE DIRECTION

After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples over a period of 40 days and spoke about the Kingdom of God. The disciples assumed that Jesus would restore the Kingdom of Israel soon, but He had something else in mind... a prophetic calling to **arise and shine** like never before.

Jesus commented that it wasn't for His disciples to know the time or date of God's plans. Instead, they were to wait for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them and then they would be His witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Being His witnesses required those who followed Jesus to gather together and be powerful prayer warriors, fully dependent on the Holy Spirit, repentant, humble, attuned to the culture of the day, and bold in sharing His Good News. As a result, the early church grew, lives were transformed, and our world encountered the love of Christ on an unprecedented scale.

It's time for the Church once again to come together and **Arise**

and for our world to encounter God's glory through our words and actions and the wonders He accomplishes through us as we **Shine!**

THE ROAD AHEAD

We're embarking on a yearlong journey to discover what being Church in today's culture means by traveling alongside the early New Testament believers.

We will learn:

- How to **arise and re-engage** in Christian community for personal transformation.
- How to **rely on the Holy Spirit** as **we arise to share Jesus** with others.
- How we are called to **shine brightly** and radiate the truth with grace and humility.
- How to be **people of integrity** as we **shine** in a world that embraces different values.

Arise:

Gathering and engaging together are vital to witness a move of the Holy Spirit. When we're in relationships, we're

encouraged, challenged and able to authentically share Jesus with others. Alongside regular worship services, Community Groups, Men's and Women's Groups, and Care Groups, we'll encounter new spaces for corporate prayer, smaller crews (where someone personally invests in us), and events that foster friendships and fun. God works in powerful ways as we live out life in community with each other!

Shine:

Our teachings will focus on understanding the Church's role and influence given the time and place we live in. We'll lean into the actionable opportunities found in our culture and learn how to respond to the Holy Spirit's promptings to share Jesus in our homes, neighborhoods, workplaces and beyond. As we emphasize discipleship, we'll be activated to live for Jesus with passion, boldness, humility, integrity and love. Every believer, from old to new, can mature in their walk with Him, so we'll dive into practical life topics, including marriage, parenting, relationships, friendship and stewardship, and learn how to answer the difficult questions we face when our faith intersects with our world.

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.”

PASTORS AND DIRECTORS

OUR LEADERSHIP



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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.