



**2024-2025**

# Proposed Budget

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

# As you prepare to vote on the proposed budget for 2024-2025,

THERE ARE FIVE THINGS WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO KNOW.

1

## People's lives are changing because of God's work through Walnut Hill.

### Celebrating a Fruitful Report

Our Annual Report document is full of stories and facts illustrating the life-changing happenings across our campuses. Take time to read through the report and celebrate God's goodness!

### Becoming an Attractive Community

As you share your stories with your friends and family, they are becoming curious to know more about Walnut Hill. Praise God! We saw a 21% increase in the number of newcomers in the past year. On average, we welcomed 95 new friends to church each month and saw a total of 1,144 newcomers in the 2023-2024 year!

2

## We are thankful for God's provision through your faithful giving.

In December, we shared with the church that we had begun to see a reduction in giving and asked you to prayerfully consider how you could help.

We praise God for the generous response of so many, which resulted in getting us back on track. We are excited to share that, if giving continues at the same rate, we will meet our expenses and make our annual contribution to the Facility Reserve Fund.

Thank you for sacrificially giving of your time, talents and financial resources.

### Did you know?

- **1,081** families gave to God's work at Walnut Hill this past year.
- Praise God! We saw a **59%** increase in new givers as compared to last year.
- It is particularly exciting to see regular giving from **every age group**, including children and teenagers all the way through seniors!

3

## Walnut Hill is a good steward.

God calls each of us, including His Church, to be a good steward of the resources we receive. We take this seriously and focus on doing all the little things and big things well.

### Loving Our Volunteers

We are grateful for all our volunteers who choose to generously donate countless hours in and around our campuses to keep them operational, beautiful and safe. As we consider facility costs, both measurable and immeasurable, we would like to specifically acknowledge the hours volunteers donated to our campuses in the following areas:

- Preparation/setup/takedown/cleanup of our multi-campus food distribution ministry
- Planning, setup and breakdown of campus events
- Outdoor cleanup and maintenance
- Interior cleaning, organization and repairs
- Interior and exterior seasonal decorating

### Proactively Saving

Our Finance and Operations Team has developed a 20-year maintenance strategy that outlines the large property repairs and costs that will be incurred each year at all church properties. Each year, we have a goal of saving \$150,000 in order to appropriately maintain and increase our facilities reserve fund.

### DID YOU KNOW...

Walnut Hill is a member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) by representing the highest standards of financial stewardship and integrity.



In 2024-2025, our facility reserve will enable projects such as:

- Parking lot maintenance and renovation at the Bethel & New Milford Campuses
- Outdoor hardscape refinishing at Bethel Campus
- General maintenance across all campuses

Additionally, through our Ignite Legacy Fund, we plan to replace carpeting at our Bethel Campus and create a parking lot at our Waterbury Campus!

### **Increasing Resources Available for Ministry**

We pay close attention to the details of our budget — right down to cleaning supplies and toiletries — so we can fully equip our ministries.

## **4 Many factors are considered in Walnut Hill's budget.**

### **Monitoring Trends**

We trust God and know that He expects us to pay attention to the world around us. Economic factors over the past year have led to increases in utilities, contracts, benefits and costs associated with maintenance and supplies. This year's budget reflects these inflationary changes while taking into account exciting ministry growth and our return to a leadership model of three Lead Pastors.

### **Building Upon Momentum**

Over the past year, Walnut Hill has experienced tremendous growth! Each week, we're witnessing an increase in new attendees, our ministry areas are seeing impactful growth, and our in-person attendance is growing. This next year's budget allows us to continue to build and innovate, ensuring that our ministry is equipped to meet the needs of our growing community.

### **Preparing the Way**

Just as God sent John the Baptist to "prepare the way" for Jesus, laying the groundwork for His ministry and ultimate sacrifice on the cross, we too are preparing for the future. In anticipation of continued growth and the arrival of our new Lead Pastor-Teaching, several families have already stepped

forward, committing to go above and beyond their regular giving to pave the way for what lies ahead. Their dedication serves as an inspiration, and we're heartened to see many others also eager to join in, giving faithfully and generously to support what God is doing through Walnut Hill. Together, with your ongoing generous giving, these "Prepare the Way" commitments provide confidence for a fiscally wise 11% operating budget increase.

## **5 Walnut Hill is setting a fiscally responsible 2024-2025 budget.**

Our Finance Team and Elders have prayerfully labored over the proposed budget.

### **Supporting Growth**

After six years of maintaining a flat budget, this year's budget increase allows us to not only keep pace with inflation but also support the vibrant growth we're experiencing across all our campuses. The added resources to our Operating Fund, representing an 11% increase over last year's Operating Fund (5% of this year's total church budget), are being strategically allocated across all ministry areas. This infusion of funds will bolster our activities; address rising costs in essential areas like ministry supplies, utilities, contracts and maintenance; and ensure our valued staff receive a cost-of-living adjustment.

### **Investing in Leadership**

The extra investment in weekend ministry is particularly exciting. It enables us to smoothly transition a full-time role from our Ignite Legacy Fund into our Operating Budget. Additionally, we're adding in support for returning to a three-person Lead Pastor model, ensuring robust leadership for our congregation.

### **Aligning Expectations**

We will closely monitor giving and make necessary adjustments to our budget to ensure that contributions and expenses are in line with one another. We thank God that we have been able to do this well over past years.

God has given Walnut Hill a great vision to ignite a passion for Jesus in Connecticut, New England and around the world. It's an honor to do this together as a family. Thank you!



# Financial Oversight

In accordance with Walnut Hill's bylaws, an annual church budget must be submitted to the congregation for approval.

The annual church budget is a member-approved budget that helps us fulfill our mission of "Igniting a passion for Jesus in Connecticut, New England and around the world." The budget covers ongoing costs related to children, youth, adults, prayer, pastoral care, worship services, evangelism and others, as well as the upkeep of campus facilities and the enablement of ministry (administration, support, finance, communications and IT) across our five campuses. The budget does not include money raised for Ignite Legacy, Church in Action, Benevolence or special fundraising campaigns.

Our congregants' generous giving of their tithes and offerings to the Operating Fund allows Walnut Hill Community Church, by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, to engage in ministry and steward all that He has given us.

The finance office is accountable to the Finance and Operations Team and the Elder Board. Each month, reports summarizing the general Operating Fund contributions and expenses are presented to the Finance and Operations Team and the Elder Board. In addition, reports summarizing the financial assets, liabilities and fund balance are also presented.

In line with Walnut Hill's bylaws, at the end of each fiscal year (June 30), an independent CPA firm is required to perform an audit of the financial statements. A copy of the audited financial statements can be found on our website at [www.walnuthillcc.org/give](http://www.walnuthillcc.org/give).

## HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BUDGET?

Attend the budget Q&A meeting on Monday, June 3, at 7 p.m. via Zoom. For meeting information or to submit questions directly to our Finance Team, please email Doug Palmer at [dpalmer@walnuthillcc.org](mailto:dpalmer@walnuthillcc.org).



### CENTRAL OFFICE

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# 2024 - 2025

## Church Budget Framework

This year, our total annual Church Budget is \$4,764,000 and represents a 5% increase over last year. Having maintained a flat budget for six years, this year's increase enables us to keep up with inflation and support the growth we are experiencing across our campuses. As in prior years, we will monitor expenses on a monthly basis and make necessary decisions to ensure that contributions and expenses are in line with one another.

The Church Budget is made up of three components.

### 1. Operating Budget

The proposed 2024-2025 Operating Budget is \$4,124,000 and represents an 11% increase over last year. The Operating Budget does not include Ignite Legacy, Church in Action or Benevolence. Those are separate funds.

### 2. Programs, Trips and Retreats

Each year, the ministry of Walnut Hill includes individually funded youth retreats as well as ministry events, programs and trips. These activities pay for themselves.

### 3. Use of Facility Reserves

Our Finance and Operations Team has developed a 20-year maintenance strategy that outlines the large property repairs and costs that will be incurred each year at all church properties. We have budgeted up to \$400,000 to allow for both planned and emergency facility costs.

### Total Proposed 2024-2025 Church Budget

- 1. Operating Budget ..... \$4,124,000
- 2. Programs, Trips and Retreats ..... \$240,000
- 3. Use of Facility Reserves ..... \$400,000

**Total: \$4,764,000**

\*Last year's Church Budget included a \$200,000 supplemental/transition budget. This year's budget does not.

### Operation Budget Insights

- The increase to the Operating Fund is being applied across all ministry areas. It supports our growing activities and addresses increased costs in:
  - Ministry supplies and gatherings
  - Utilities, facility contracts and maintenance
  - Staffing cost-of-living adjustments and benefits
- In addition to the increases noted above, the 2024-2025 budget includes an increase to the Weekend Services budget for one full-time staff who was previously funded through the Ignite Legacy Fund and a portion of the salary of our Lead Pastor, Teaching that had been removed from last year's budget.

## 2024-2025 OPERATING BUDGET

The proposed budget includes ministry and staffing costs by ministry area.

### 2023-2024 Approved Budget

Operating Expenses	Approved Budget	% of Budget
Weekend Services	578,000	16%
Adult Ministry	311,000	8%
Children's Ministry	295,000	8%
Youth Ministry	268,000	7%
Prayer Ministry	125,000	3%
Care and Connection	323,000	9%
Evangelism and Local Outreach	271,000	7%
Communication and Marketing	210,000	6%
Campus and Facilities	933,000	25%
General and Administrative	388,000	11%
<b>Total Operating Expense</b>	<b>3,702,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 2024-2025 Proposed Budget

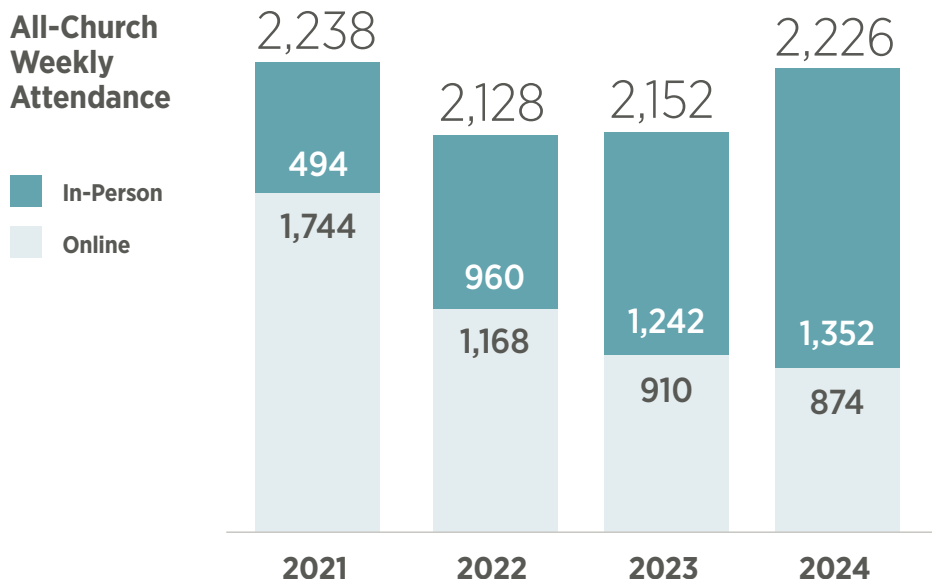
Proposed Budget	% of Budget	Ministry \$ Change
725,000	18%	147,000
347,000	8%	36,000
325,000	8%	30,000
300,000	7%	32,000
135,000	3%	10,000
362,000	9%	39,000
311,000	7%	40,000
240,000	6%	30,000
983,000	24%	50,000
396,000	10%	8,000
<b>4,124,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>422,000</b>

# 2023-2024

## Campus Attendance Averages

We praise God for the growing number of people who call Walnut Hill home! Our campuses saw healthy growth as engagement increased and newcomers connected into the life of the church. We are grateful for our Online Campus, which often serves as the entry point for newcomers.

### All-Church Weekly Attendance

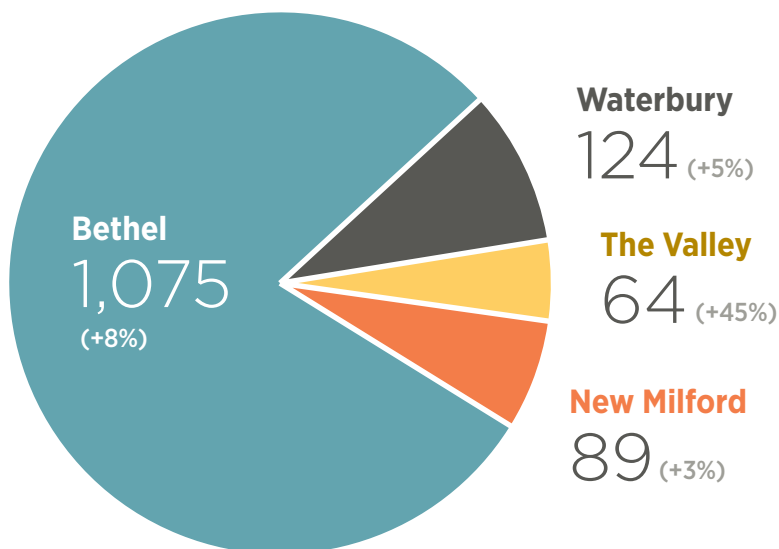


### DID YOU KNOW?

- Over the past year, we have welcomed **1,144** newcomers to weekend services, ministries and events!
- This past year, each of our physical campuses reached a **four-year** record high in attendance!
- Our in-person attendance has increased by **9%** this year!

Below is the average weekend attendance at our physical campuses over the past year. Praise God that in addition to the explosive growth taking place at the Valley Campus, we have seen 165 people gather in Waterbury and 124 New Milford in the past two months!

### Average In-Person Attendance



### Online Campus Insights

- On average, **874** people joined us online each weekend.
- People joined us from **40** different states and **20** different nations!
- A survey this past year indicated that people worshipped online for the following reasons:
  - Checking Walnut Hill out for the first time
  - On vacation or away for business
  - Illness in the family
  - Live far away or lack transportation
  - Work or volunteer schedule
  - Homebound due to long-term illness
  - Family schedule on a particular Sunday
  - And more!