2025 Annual Report

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

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SEEKING GOD



CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER





REACHING OUT



MESSAGE FROM THE ELDER CHAIRMAN

Praise be to God! The Lord has led us through an amazing year. We have truly experienced the Lord's presence and blessings as we have sought to "Live and Love Well." My prayer has been for each of you to be touched by God's love and grace. His unwavering faithfulness to Walnut Hill has been shown in so many ways this year.

We are so grateful that Shawn and Becky Winters have become part of our Walnut Hill family, as Shawn joined our team and assumed the role of Lead Pastor, Teaching. What a blessing it has been as he has led us through James, Nehemiah, Mark and Esther, challenging us to live fully for Christ and to love each other.

This year, we witnessed a historic number of individuals (225) making the decision to follow Jesus. Each of our campuses has welcomed many newcomers and experienced remarkable growth, leading to the addition of second services at our Waterbury and New Milford Campuses. As a church family, we have shared in the joys of baptisms, anniversaries, new babies, missions and other significant milestones. We have also come together to comfort one another through times of loss and hardship. Throughout it all, God has been faithful.

As Pastor Craig prepares for a new chapter in his life, we express our deepest gratitude to him for his 26 years of dedicated ministry at Walnut Hill. We pray God's continued blessings upon him, Amy, Elly, Will and Drew. We will miss Craig tremendously. However, I am comforted that we are sending him with much love and support to fulfill the calling God has for him.

We also lift up in prayer Pastors Adam and Shawn and our entire staff as they lead us into the future. Please remind them from time to time of the amazing work they do to advance the Kingdom of God.

I am profoundly grateful for my fellow Elders and their tireless commitment to serving our church. And I am equally grateful for you and for the many ways you support our church with your time, talents and treasures. Your generosity and dedication are testaments to the vibrant spirit of our community and church family.

May God continue to bless you and Walnut Hill in the year ahead.

In Christ,



Bryan Nazworth Elder Chairman



LEAD PASTOR NOTE

As we write this letter, it feels like we are living in a fresh chapter straight out of the book of Acts! This past year has been full of so many praises. We could tell story after story of the hundreds who made decisions to follow Jesus, of people of all ages who chose to be baptized and of how you have come together — supporting one another through both joyful opportunities and challenges. We could write about the incredible impact God is having through you — the people of Walnut Hill — as we seek Him together, care for one another, serve side by side and reach out with His love. There are so many stories to tell, and this Annual Report is full of them. As you read through it, take time to thank God for all He is doing, and pause to ask for His continued blessing upon His Church and your life.

Becky and I want to thank you for welcoming us so well to Walnut Hill Community Church. We've been blessed by new friendships, new experiences and so many great memories of God working among us as we have sought to Live and Love Well! As Craig Mowery leaves the Walnut Hill staff and steps into a new chapter, we are praying God's great blessing upon him, Amy and their family. Craig and Amy have been good friends, wonderful partners in ministry and a huge blessing in our transition to Walnut Hill! Over the past year. Craig, Adam and I have made a wonderful team. While we feel sadness at this change. we are leaning forward and eager to see a fresh move of God. Please join us in praying for a stirring and blessing on our church.



Shawn Winters Lead Pastor – Teaching As Amy and I follow Jesus into the adventure that He has for us, we find ourselves excited for what He will do in and through us and for what He is doing continually at Walnut Hill through you. We are so grateful for 26 years of ministry here. You have invested in my family as we have sought to do the same in yours. May the Lord build His Church, expand His Kingdom and work in our lives so that we might enjoy the great privilege of being used by Him.



Craig Mowrey Lead Pastor – Development

Carrie and my hearts are full of excitement and faith as we look around and see what's happening at Walnut Hill. The Lord continues to open so many new doors to ignite a passion for Jesus in Connecticut, New England and around the world. May each of us walk confidently and humbly before our Lord, with hearts expectant for what He will do, always seeking to give Him the glory!



Adam DePasquale Lead Pastor – Executive

Concluding Words

As your Lead Pastors, we want to thank you for your support and all you give of your time, treasure and talent. As you read this year's Annual Report, may the Lord encourage you and give you a glimpse of what's to come!



A YEAR OF LIVING AND LOVING WELL

In 2024-2025, we embraced a bold, Spirit-led journey of transformation — trusting in Jesus, being shaped by His Word and walking together in love. As a church, we committed to living with deeper faith, Christlike character and practical compassion.





Through rhythms of worship, prayer, community and service, we grew as a people marked by wisdom, joy and hope. We sought to live out the Gospel in tangible ways by bringing light to our neighborhoods, strength to one another and glory to God. In all things, we invited God to move through us, believing that as we live and love well, many will come to know Him.





unending grace and the special ways He worked through the people of Walnut Hill as we gave of our time, talents and treasures.

Thank you for your generous and faithful giving!



Walnut Hill's Operating Fund supports our vision of Igniting a Passion for Jesus in Connecticut, New England and Around the World.



SEEKING GOD

Seeking God means every person engaged in the transformative power and knowledge of Jesus Christ.

This happens through:

HEAVER CROWDED

Transformative biblical preaching

Wholehearted worship

Sacrificial prayer

Intentional discipleship

We are living and loving well by seeking God:

- » 1,228 newcomers across all campuses »
- » 75 baptisms across our campuses
- 99 new members

2,2/5 in weekly attendance at Sunday services (includes our Online Campus) 788 involved in adult discipleship groups and classes (Men's, Women's, Senior Adults, Community Groups, Young Adults, Bible studies, classes/trainings)

Miguel Gomez

Tell us a little about yourself and how you ended up at Walnut Hill.

I'm a person who struggles a lot but doesn't let fear or failure stop me from moving forward. I try to live a life that's pleasing to the Lord and show others what the Lord has done for me. I woke up one day thinking I should go to church and decided to give Walnut Hill a try. After meeting with Pastor Bryan for coffee the following week, I kept coming back and found myself unable to leave. I love the church and how it has brought me closer to the Lord.

You had the opportunity to share the Gospel during the tree lighting event in December. Tell us how that came about and how you felt God used you in that moment.

The tree lighting came straight out of left field and left me only two hours to prepare. I didn't think I was the best fit, and yet the Lord proved me wrong. Before I went on that stage, I had spent a few minutes praying with a friend for me to be filled by the Holy Spirit, and He carried me through the entire event despite the fear I was feeling. God used me to inspire those of a similar age who might also be afraid to step into His light.

One of our values is Seeking God. As you reflect on the past year, how have you seen your faith in Jesus grow?

In the beginning of the year, I was making more mistakes than I could have imagined — swearing, being hurtful and crude, and being a horrible example of a Christian. However, as I read His Word, I felt my entire life transform piece by piece until I found myself serving the church and preaching His Word whenever possible.

What excites you for this next year based on how you're seeing God at work in Waterbury?

I'm excited to see the second service at the Waterbury Campus grow into a force that can rally even more believers together. He is working in ways we can't even see and will turn Waterbury into a safe haven for those who cry out to Him for peace.

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I FELT MY ENTIRE LIFE TRANSFORM PIECE BY PIECE UNTIL I FOUND MYSELF SERVING THE CHURCH AND PREACHING HIS WORD WHENEVER POSSIBLE.



CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER

Caring for one another means we are committed to equipping and revitalizing our families for Kingdom impact and growth.

This happens through:

Relevant marriage and family resources

Compassiondriven care ministries Championing a multi-cultural ministry

We are living and loving well by caring for one another:

» 140 ministered through care ministries (Celebrate Recovery, DivorceCare, GriefShare, Cancer Support Group, Mental Health Drop-In)

- » 46 helped through benevolence
- » 173 hospital, nursing home and home visits
- » 6 weddings

» 10 funerals/celebration of life services



Maksur and Cristiane Candido

Tell us a little about yourselves and how you ended up at Walnut Hill.

We have been married for 30 years and have three children. We started attending Walnut Hill in 2008 and felt at home from the first day. Over the years, we've had the joy of serving on the Worship Team and in the Marriage Ministry. We also provide cleaning services for the Bethel and New Milford Campuses.

You've been at Walnut Hill for some time now but recently came into a season where you needed support from our Care Ministry. Can you explain your journey over this past year?

Cristiane was diagnosed with breast cancer in March 2023, beginning a difficult journey. Her first surgery, a double mastectomy, was in May 2023. She had a second surgery in May 2024, a third in September 2024 and a fourth in April 2025. Throughout this time, we've received incredible spiritual and emotional support. Pastors, Elders, brothers and sisters visited us, prayed with us, brought meals and even helped financially.

One of our values is Caring for One Another. How have you felt cared for through our Care Ministry this year? Are there any other ministries where you've also felt supported?

This year, we truly felt cared for through the Care Ministry. The love, prayers, visits, meals and financial support made a big difference during a very challenging time. We also felt supported by the Worship & Arts Ministry, Marriage Ministry, Women's Ministry and Walnut Hill's Brazilian community. Each one showed us the heart of the church in a special way — through encouragement, community and prayer. We're so grateful to be part of a church that genuinely lives out the value of caring for one another.

What excites you for this next year based on how you're seeing God at work in Bethel?

We're excited about the opportunity to continue serving and growing in community. We're especially looking forward to seeing how God will move through the Care Ministry and how He will use our story to encourage others who may be walking through difficult seasons.

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HE WILL USE OUR STORY TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS WHO MAY BE WALKING THROUGH DIFFICULT SEASONS.





Reaching out means three million people around the world encountering Jesus through a growing number of local and global partnerships and campus community engagement.

This happens through:

Authentic evangelism Effective community engagement Strategic campus development

Missional collaboration

Serving as a resource to dozens of churches*

We are living and loving well by reaching out:

- 225 new believers (signified as Yellow Flowers)
- * 462 kids participated in
 7 camps/trips
- Approximately 715,994 pounds of food given out to nearly 1,250 families a month (about 4,619 individuals) during 35 pantries at our Bethel and Valley Campuses

- *** 40** Church in Action ministries in **30** countries
- B Walnut Hill teams providing support and encouragement to partners (Albania, Costa Rica, Israel, Macedonia, Romania, Turkey)
- # 439 families giving \$1,011,469 to support our local and global Church in Action partners reaching 5 million people with the love of Jesus (The Church in Action Fund is a separate fund supported by donations beyond and above regular giving.)

*We provide wisdom and advice in areas related to special needs, prayer, kids and youth, technology, HR, governance, facilities, administration, safety, translation, and more.

Lisa Lawson

Tell us a little about yourself and how you ended up at Walnut Hill.

I started coming to Walnut Hill in 2010. I attended the Bethel Campus, where I was involved in theater productions, Women's Ministry and Second Sunday. When they launched the New Milford Campus, I started attending there. I have a Crew that has been together for more than eight years. I have also participated in the wonderful Celebrate Recovery program for the past six years, and I coordinate the Angel Tree program for them.

Sports ministry, pickleball in particular, has had an incredible impact as an outreach to the New Milford community this year. Can you tell us how you have been impacted by this ministry?

My best friend started the pickleball program for New Milford Parks and Recreation. She asked me if Walnut Hill would let them play in the gym in the winter. Pastor Brian thought it was a great idea, and the program was born! By the end of the winter season, the program had grown to over 140 players coming each week, with more than 400 people registered to play.

One of our values is Reaching Out. How have you seen pickleball as an outreach for the church?

Pickleball has been a wonderful outreach program at Walnut Hill, allowing the opportunity to show love and kindness to people in the community through having pizza luncheons on the court, inviting people to special programs at Christmas and Easter, and introducing others to our church. We are also able to tell people about all the different programs and ministries we offer. We have had over 30 people come to Sunday services, and one gave their life to Jesus because of their participation in pickleball. The gym is filled all the time throughout the week.

What excites you for this next year based on how you're seeing God at work in New Milford?

It's exciting to see how pickleball has grown, and I look forward to seeing even more new people in the coming year. God is working in New Milford and His Son is shining.

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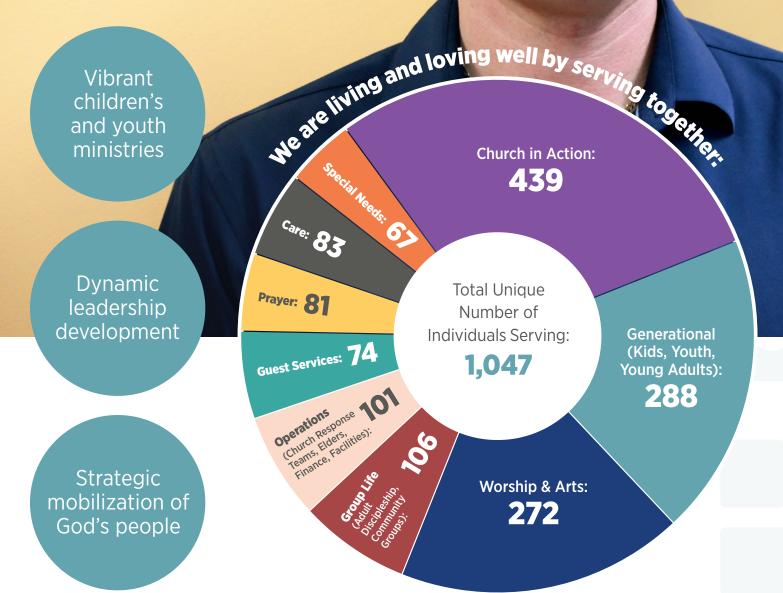
WE HAVE HAD PEOPLE COME TO SUNDAY SERVICES BECAUSE OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN PICKLEBALL.





Serving together means having a thriving lay leadership empowering every generation for ministry and mission.

This happens through:



Doug Harding

Tell us a little about yourself and how you ended up at Walnut Hill.

I started attending the Valley Campus in the summer of 2022 and would describe myself as a "regular" ever since. Surprisingly, it was an FM radio advertisement that brought me in initially, but it was a combination of the welcoming congregation, a pastor who encourages questions and the grace of God that kept me coming back.

Serving is a big part of feeling connected to your church community in the Valley. Where do you serve? How did you first get involved?

I am a "slow and steady" and "don't bite off more than you can chew" guy when it comes to serving in the church. In the early days, after Sunday service, I would throw the football in the parking lot with some of the kids. Eventually, I was asked to serve at community outreach events for kids. This evolved to being asked to serve at Youth Group, but who doesn't like playing dodgeball, manhunt and football, and eating pizza while surrounded by children's laughter? I've been blessed with a good job, and it has allowed me to participate in the food ministry of "Sunday Snacks," where we bring in a light breakfast to encourage fellowship. Since November 2024, I have been a regular at the monthly Food Pantry. Seeing the grateful families, I have found a new appreciation for all God has given me.

One of our values is Serving Together. How have you seen God use serving alongside others to impact your faith journey this year?

Jesus preached "love and charity," and I consistently ask myself whether I truly understand His message by turning it into action. I see the joy of giving everywhere and among all I am fortunate enough to serve alongside. My faith has grown immensely through these actions and ministries.

What excites you for this next year based on how you're seeing God at work in the Valley?

I am excited about the growth I'm seeing in Derby as God is moving here, and I'm blessed to be a small part of a wonderful, Jesus-preaching church.

"

SEEING THE GRATEFUL FAMILIES, I HAVE FOUND A NEW APPRECIATION FOR ALL GOD HAS GIVEN ME.



THANK YOU, CRAIG AND AMY

...for developing and launching our intern/residency program and Israel trips.

Hot bumpy bus rides are not fun, especially when you are tired. I remember the one where you produced some notes that turned into the Follow Jesus class. Your faithfulness to dream and then turn that dream into a reality has blessed three teachers and 158 individuals. The legacy of the notes from that bus ride will live on for a long time beyond your involvement because you faithfully followed the Holy Spirit's prompting. It has been an honor to be one of those three teachers.

Clay Norman (Elder, Fellow Israel Trip Leader and Follow Jesus Teacher)

...for developing a large-scale emerging generations ministry.

I can still remember my first mission trip in 8th Grade with you and Amy at the wheel of one of two 15-passenger vans on a long drive to Chicago. As an adult with kids now, I applaud you for your bravery! My youth ministry days are cherished memories that laid the foundation for my call into ministry. You have been an integral part of my spiritual journey as my pastor, a caring and thoughtful teammate, and a treasured friend with a laugh I'd know anywhere! You leave a legacy of loving and stewarding this church with passion, integrity and a solid dose of humor. I pray for exciting open doors and adventures beyond what you can ask or imagine.

Connie McFarland (Communications Director and Former Youth Group Kid)





...for providing sensitive pastoral care.

Over the past 13 years, Craig has had a profound influence in my life — not just as a manager, co-worker and friend, but as a faithful companion through joy and hardship. I had just transitioned from my role at IBM to become the Pastor of Care, when we were thrust into overwhelming grief and sorrow after the Sandy Hook tragedy. As we supported victims' families, first responders and the community, Craig's steadfastness, guiet courage and unwavering faith in Jesus were a constant source of strength. I've watched Craig and Amy walk with countless people through celebrations and challenges. Their presence, rooted in their love for God, brings a calm confidence to their ministry. Thank you, Craig and Amy, for living out your faith with authenticity and grace.

John Dischinger (Elder and Former Pastor of Care and Outreach)

...for your leadership during the Lead Pastor transition and fundraising for Passing the Cloak.

During the transition from Pastor Clive to three Lead Pastors, there was an enormous amount of change and uncertainty regarding responsibilities, timing and congregational approval. So much had to be created and innovated in a short time to help start the new chapter at Walnut Hill well. You never wavered in your trust in God's planning and providence. You remained a positive force and persevered through tremendous pressure to excel in every area in a truly remarkable and inspirational effort to lay a strong foundation for the church to grow and advance God's Kingdom. You and Amy will be greatly missed, but I am excited to see how God will use your gifts, passion and faith to further advance the Kingdom in your new calling.

Jim Kennedy (Elder Board Vice Chairman)

...for dreaming of and launching a young adult congregation.

Adam and I came back to CT after living in TN for eight years. John and Rita told us about this new service the church had started after Craig had written a "Jerry Maguire" paper that changed the course of Walnut Hill and our lives. At this Sunday night Core service, Adam and I first volunteered and started the Prayer Ministry as we know it today. It's also how Adam ended up on staff and heard God's call into ministry. Thank you for faithfully listening to God's Spirit as you dreamed of and developed that service, which went on to impact many ministries in the church. Wherever you go, God will continue to use you and your entrepreneurial mind to bring glory to His name!

Carrie DePasquale

(Former Core Team Member and Friend)

...for developing our Church in Action Ministry in exciting ways.

Craig, you have been a faithful servant of the Lord at Walnut Hill for over 26 years. Your leadership and service have made a lasting impact on all areas of our church, especially Church in Action. Our ministry partnerships are more than relationships. They are deep friendships nurtured on our shared love of Jesus by you and your team. Although we will miss you being one of our Lead Pastors, you and Amy will always be part of the Walnut Hill family!

Bryan Nazworth (Elder Chairman and Church in Action Board Member)





...for launching and pastoring Waterbury.

Your ministry has deeply impacted my family, starting years before the Waterbury Campus even existed, when our daughter found encouragement and connection through your leadership in youth ministry. In 2010, when asked to help launch the Waterbury Campus, Del and I immediately said yes, eager to support your vision and servant-hearted leadership. From Chase Collegiate to our own building on Bunker Hill, you led with passion, joy and dedication, creating space for vibrant ministries, baptisms, barbecues and countless lives touched. During Del's illness and passing, your love, presence and prayers were a profound comfort and reflection of Christ's care. As you step into a new chapter, I'm grateful for the journey we shared and the legacy of love and faith you've left in Waterbury.

Linda Shannon

(Waterbury Campus Member and Leader)

...for developing large-scale, mission-minded youth ministries.

I became the youth pastor at Walnut Hill in 1994, and one of the first students I met was Craig Mowrey. From the beginning, I could tell that Craig was a leader. People were drawn to him, listened to him and followed him. He became my first hire at Walnut Hill, serving as a youth ministry intern. Now, 26 years later, he is not only a remarkable pastor but is also a trusted and deeply valued friend. Craig's leadership has helped shape the life and legacy of Walnut Hill. When we met Amy, it didn't take long for Susan and me to realize how incredible she was as we watched her lead, organize, empower and serve with grace and strength. Craig and Amy are true all-stars.

Rob Strong (Former Walnut Hill Youth Pastor)

IGNITE LEGACY UPDATE

In 2018, our Lead Pastors launched the multi-year Ignite Legacy initiative to raise resources that would fuel new ministry opportunities and ignite a deeper passion for Jesus — both locally and globally. Now, in 2025, we're celebrating a milestone year as many of these initiatives have come to life. We want to pause and say **thank you** for your faithful support and to **praise God** for the incredible fruit we've seen together!

Here are just a few ways your generosity has made a lasting impact:

Online Campus Launch:

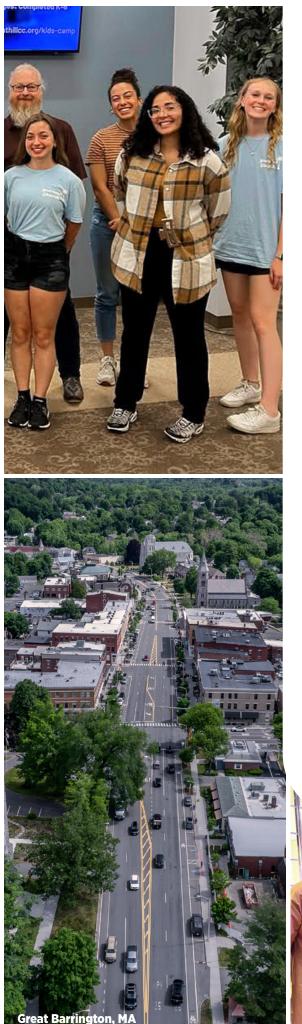
In 2019, we began planning for the launch of an Online Campus. The dream was to reach the next generation and those who might struggle to enter the doors of a church. By the grace of God, as our launch team prepared to begin in mid-2020, the onset of the pandemic fast-tracked our plans, and the campus launched on March 15, 2020. Only God could have known how powerfully this ministry would bless our church and sustain connection during those early months!

Today, more than 700 people gather online each week. In the past year alone, individuals from 39 states and 20 nations have joined us in worship!

Under Pastor Crystal Ellington's leadership, the Online Campus continues to thrive, welcoming first-time guests each week, keeping travelers and those sick connected, and providing a vital lifeline for those who are homebound. We regularly hear powerful testimonies of how God is meeting people right where they are. Praise God!



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Pastoral Residency and Internship Program:

More than 30 men and women have been equipped in hands-on ministry — serving in areas like kids, youth, young adults, special needs, care, outreach, worship, production and more.

• Support for Rural Churches in Connecticut:

We've come alongside over a dozen churches, such as Greenwoods Community Church in MA, with pastoral care, preaching, prayer, financial help and opportunities for connection with other leaders.

Church Planting in Great Barrington:

We're preparing to launch Renaissance Church in September 2025, in partnership with Greenwoods Community Church, Valley Community Baptist Church and Converge.

Church in Action Partner Retreat:

We've invested in the spiritual health of our partners in Congo, Bangladesh, Macedonia, Rwanda and Thailand by providing life-giving spiritual refreshment.

• Special Needs Ministry Growth:

Funding from Ignite Legacy has provided five years of staffing, supplies and facility upgrades, including the renovation of our Bethel Campus' Friendship, Sensory and Community Rooms.

Debt Elimination:

We paid off church debt, freeing up resources to reinvest directly into daily ministry.

• Strategic Property Purchases:

Acquiring land next to our Bethel and Waterbury Campuses has opened the door for future growth, including the creation of a parking lot at our Waterbury Campus.

Campus Enhancements:

Major upgrades across our campuses have made our spaces more accessible, welcoming and effective for ministry. Examples include new and renovated bathrooms at the Waterbury Campus, new carpet and paint at the Bethel Campus, new windows, vinyl siding and roof at the New Milford Campus, and more.

We're filled with gratitude for all God has done and filled with faith for what's still to come. Thank you for being a part of this story!





ANNUAL THEME FOR 2025-2026:

Abide

This September, we are excited to begin our new annual theme, "Abide."

After His final meal with His disciples, Jesus turned their attention to a powerful truth: "Abide in me, and I in you." (John 15:4) He wasn't offering a short-term fix or a religious task list. He was inviting them into an enduring, life-giving relationship. To abide meant to remain, to rest, to draw close and to stay connected to the very source of life.

In the same way, Jesus calls His Church today to abide — to be rooted in Him, nourished by His Word and responsive to the movement of the Holy Spirit. In a culture marked by distraction, division and spiritual fatigue, this is a radical act of discipleship. Abiding isn't passive. It is active trust, surrendered following and courageous obedience that bears fruit in every area of life.

As we abide, we begin to know Him more deeply, follow Him more wholeheartedly, serve Him more joyfully and proclaim Him more boldly. This is the journey ahead.

"Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." —John 15:4 (NKJV)

This is the heartbeat of our next ministry year — **to abide in Christ so we might bear fruit for His Kingdom.** Let's walk together in deep dependence, Spiritempowered boldness and joyful obedience. Let's be the Church that remains in Him.

We are excited for this journey together!

OUR LEADERSHIP AND STAFF

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.

WALNUT HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH

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