

*“Understand, therefore, that the LORD your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps His covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes His unfailing love on those who love Him and obey His commands.” Deuteronomy 7:9*

In the Old Testament, God instructed the people of Israel to remember. He created celebrations and festivals that all revolved around remembering. Remembering was that great moment that gave them all cause to reflect, remember, and then rejoice!

We live in a time period that is in so much of a hurry; with lives that exist so much in the present...we hardly have time to reflect! In fact, we rarely reflect! The volume of noise in the present seems to keep us from hearing the voices of the past.

Each year, we report annually what God has done during the past year at Christ Wesleyan. This is that chance to reflect! This is that chance to remember! This is that chance to rejoice! This is our **Day of Celebration!** **So...let's reflect, remember, and rejoice!**

As we reflect on the past year, it is easy to see that God is using each of you to make a difference in our world! I like to think of many of our ministries as “Bridge-Building Ministries.” “Bridge-Building Ministries” may be those opportunities that open the door for someone to want to know more about Jesus; bridge-building may be those opportunities of serving our community, and we may never know the significance of the impact; bridge-building may see direct results and give the opportunity to disciple. Our “Bridge-Building Ministries” include: The Well Ministries, Meadowbrook Christian School, Christ Wesleyan Theatre Productions, Spanish Ministry, Food Pantry, Fresh Express, our Support Ministries, our Counseling Center, Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Marriage Ministry, Leadership Conferences, Missions, Outreach events, our website, social media platforms, concerts, and any opportunity offered that reaches into our community!

Each of these incredible “Bridge-Building Ministries” is supported by a host of teams that could be called “Support Ministries.” These support ministries are made up of our paid team and volunteers who equip us to reach our community, care for those within our fellowship, and disciple those who God continues to bring into the local body of Christ. We are incredibly dependent on volunteers to assist us in reaching our world. This past year, there were over 2,111 opportunities filled by those stepping forward to serve! We could not make it without you! Although there are 137 (63 full-time and 74 part-time) on our team of Christ Wesleyan, Meadowbrook, and The Well Ministries, these ministries are always in need of more volunteers. To accomplish our goal of reaching our world, we are grateful for everyone who discovers their spiritual gift and then shares it within the body of Christ. This helps us achieve our 4 G's: Gather, Grow, Give, and Go!

Sharing specific numbers can sometimes feel cold and impersonal but allow me to share a familiar quote from Perry Noble that expresses our heart, “Every number has a name, every name has a story, and every story matters to God.” With this in mind, let's begin to reflect....

Through Global Ministries, we were able to raise \$83,620 for clean water and solar panels in Guatemala and Africa. We raised an additional \$9,328 for hurricane relief within the United States. A total of \$117,115. was from the congregation for these special needs. We gave 15,000 pounds of food to 81 families that will last them anywhere between 3-6 months. A total given through our Global Ministries fund from the 9% of our weekly tithes and offerings, special offerings, projects, mission teams raising money for trips, as well as child sponsorship reached \$765,675. One of our highest totals!

Our Food Pantry and Fresh Express continues to reach more families. A total of 212,513 pounds of food were given to 81 families in our Food Pantry and 135 families in Fresh Express.

Our regular tithes and offerings reached another high this year with \$3,555,944 received throughout the year. We were able to extend \$31,855 to families experiencing financial challenges this past year. Our membership reached a new high with 677 members and 246 new regular attenders were added to our fellowship.

Reaching the next generation is still our passion! We have been incredibly blessed with Pastor Mandy and Pastor Branden's leadership. We are reaching 192 teens with 387 unique teens on campus as well as 265 children with 966 unique children on campus. Our group involvement continues to be one of the ways you can put one of those "G's" in place – Grow! There were 808 people involved in one of 82 group opportunities. A number of our groups use the resources from RightNow Media. Over 635 people are subscribed to this valuable resource. We rejoice that 57 people took the discipleship step into baptism, both on campus and off! There were a host of those baptized in Israel but 11 of those counted this step as their first believer's baptism.

Our Relational Care has done an amazing job at caring and supporting those within our fellowship. Over 314 people have received ongoing care through hospital visits, cancer treatment, grief, and hospice. Our Barnabas Ministry is incredible! In reaching those who have experienced challenging times, the Barnabas Ministry has made 615 contacts during the past year. We seek to do our best to come alongside those in crisis through our Stephen Ministry, Cancer Hope, GriefShare, DivorceCare, Wellness Care, and Professional Counseling.

Our Marriage Ministry continues to grow and seeks to build healthy relationships through Seriously Dating or Engaged (SDOE), through Mr and Mrs, and Marriage Mentoring. This year, we served our 100<sup>th</sup> couple and have now reached a total of 110 couples.

Our website is often a first step before many actually come to know us by visiting our campus. This past year, we had all 50 states visit online as well as 127 countries. We also started our Dive Deep Podcast and have now just passed our first year. Our average attendance this year was 1555 with our greatest joy being the number of those reached for Christ for the first time! There were 810 first time decisions. 282 of those were local and 528 were international.

One of the exciting ventures this past year was Christ Wesleyan – Sunbury Campus! We are now averaging over 100 in attendance with 151 attending on Easter. This adoption came in a very short period of time and required an intense amount of work from our team, but we rejoice at what God is doing there.

This past month, our board approved the planting of a new church in Ethiopia. Through the efforts of Lowell Adams, we are beginning the process of having a Christ Wesleyan – Ethiopia! Getamesay Teferi is an experienced church planter and is our international member. Pray for his efforts as he begins this exciting journey!

Our three community ministries are sharing with us in impacting our world for Christ. Meadowbrook reached a new record enrollment again this year with 420 students from 19 different school districts. Each year, they begin new programs and seem to set new records. A bus is now running from the Williamsport area and brings 31 students each day. The Well Ministries had over 5,500 unique customers and had their best year to date. The Well Fit Ministry saw over 2700 people pass through our doors and the Well Read Bookstore has sold 4,687 Bibles since 2012! Our Spanish Ministry continues to reach our world with an average attendance of 47, a Williamsport Bible study of 21, and outreach events that have reached as many as 72. Gloria a Dios!

It is hard to believe that Sharon and I have served here for 38 years! But we have served with joy as you have been a joy to us! When Pop first asked me to be his Assistant Pastor in 1981, I had no idea all God had ahead for us. Starting Meadowbrook in 1982 was the first incredible challenge for Sharon and me. There were 12 acres of property, Davis Chapel, and a pavilion. We had little idea of what God was building and what we would see in the future. I am so grateful for the partner that God has given me as we have faced these challenges together. In 1989, when you asked us to become your pastor and wife, we began with a vision that God wanted more than we had ever imagined for a small country church in Milton. At that time, there was no team (it was just me), 20 acres of property, and a school that was bigger than the church.

Let's reflect, remember, and rejoice...

...As God has been so faithful...and today we have seen over 20,000 people on our campus during this year. We have 120 acres of property, nearly 150,000 square feet of building, and with Christ Wesleyan, Meadowbrook, and the Well Ministries, we have 137 on our team (63 full-time and 74 part-time). We are blessed with an incredible team...pastors, leaders, directors, and support personnel. Just in the last 20 years, we have seen 2,174 serve on mission trips, 7,678 new believers both locally and internationally, 494 baptized, and \$9,275,700 pass through our missions' treasury...all to be given or used to reach our world for Christ! Seem impossible?? God still has greater things ahead!

It is a pleasure to serve and a joy to see God doing the impossible! Thanks for being a part of something greater than any one of us. We could not have done this without you and your sacrifice. God continues to use each one of you as we work together to accomplish His will in..."Sharing the Light of Jesus Christ with Our World!"

Serving together,

Pastor Arlie