

"You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14 (NLT)

CWC's Mission Statement: Sharing the Light of Jesus Christ with Our World.

My life and ministry verse: *"The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV)*

At the end of my annual report last year, I stated, "I love my church!" As we end the 2023-2024 church year, I can say with greater conviction, "I love my church!" I think of the multiple ways that many of you have supported and encouraged me and the ministry through one of the hardest periods of ministry I ever hope to go through. Even though God has called some staff members and congregants away, God has been faithful. Even though ministry goes through change, some easier to deal with than others, God's love and commission to His church will never change—we are to go and tell the world about the good news of Jesus Christ. When I reflect on this past year and the journey it has been, personally, God refocused me to become a leader whose mission is more on Him and less about me. Thank you to all of you who have encouraged and supported CWC through thick and thin! God is going to continue to bless CWC because our focus will always be on Him and His command to us to, "Share the Light of Jesus with our world."

And boy have we ever this past year!

When we look at the numbers, we want to see attendance and engagement working together. I want to say that engagement is more important than attendance, so I will, again. Engagement is more important than attendance. It is because engagement is an indicator of successful or unsuccessful discipleship. Jesus calls us to be disciples who make disciples in Matthew chapter 28. Engagement comes in many forms. Our complete 4G process measures engagement here at CWC. Yes, it starts with gathering on the weekend, but true discipleship goes beyond the Sunday gathering—this includes our grow, give, and go measures. Many of these measures and stories are found in the CWC Annual Report, available to any of you via digital or hard copy. I just want to highlight a few in this report:

Gathering in weekend services

Our overall worship attendance grew to record-breaking numbers, again. We averaged **2,131** (+124) worshippers on the weekend this past year—including our Sunbury Campus, which averaged **195** (+70) worshippers every Sunday! Wow! God is so good and faithful! As Pastor Ryan transitioned out of his role as Sunbury Campus Pastor, Pastor Billy and his team have stepped in and have done a great job! The overall weekend attendance included our Recovery Church, which averaged **133** (+35) every Friday! They hit **201** in attendance one of those Fridays! Praise God for His faithfulness! Our Hispanic Ministries had an average Sunday attendance of **44**! The overall weekend attendance also included our Youth Ministry, which averaged **70** every Sunday across all three of our campuses (Milton, Sunbury, and Online). Our Children's Ministry is also included in the overall weekend attendance. Our weekend Kidz Ministry averaged **201** every Sunday. Throughout the past year, we had **942** first time guests and **270** visitors shifted from visitors to regular attenders. That is over a 20% retention rate of visitors becoming regular attenders. The national average is under 5%. Praise God! With the average attendance in the American church declining, according to the latest Barna Group study, what God has done through Christ Wesleyan every weekend was incredible!

Growing throughout the week

We want to be a church of small groups—this includes all our group and mentoring opportunities throughout the week. In Acts 2:42, we read that the church met daily in their homes and broke bread together. They did life together. As disciples, we should strive to do the same. According to a study done by the Barna Group, only **2** in **5** church attenders are actively involved in discipleship. This past year, we had **763** unique attendees involved in small groups. Our Classics Ministry saw **354** people served this year. Our Men's and Women's

Ministries saw **266** unique attenders. We also offer unique ways throughout the week to grow in our faith. Our Counseling Ministry facilitated approximately **700** sessions. We had **17** Stephen Ministers who ministered to and mentored **14** people who needed extra support. Our Recovery Ministry started a regeneration group on Monday nights and have seen an average of **65** attendees!

Giving of our time, talents, and resources

We are blessed to be a blessing. We are blessed to have **time** to give back to the church and God. This past year, we saw **827** unique congregants serve in at least one serving opportunity. Thank you for your time! We are also blessed by many people who have many **talents**. For example, our Barnabas Ministry used their talents of encouragement to encourage **2,641** unique times! We are also blessed to give our **resources** through tithes, offerings, and missions giving. You entrusted the leadership of CWC with over **\$3.8 million!** Thank you, and praise God! Out of that generosity, and other special giving opportunities we were able to give away **\$733,207** to mission work both locally and globally. In addition, we were able to decrease our debt by almost **\$320,000!** Our loan balance came down to just above **\$1.8M**. We also value the giving of your time to serve the church body. Thank you for giving your time, talents, and treasures!

Going to make disciples who make disciples

Our mission is to share the Light of Jesus with our world. So, we must ask ourselves, “How did we do that this past year?” **Locally**, we have shined the Light of Jesus in many ways. Through Kidz Camp, Valley Fest, and Trunk or Treat, we reached almost **3,000** people! Pastor Chris, our Children’s Pastor, was able to do a movie night in two local schools which saw **161** people. Our Food Pantry distributed over **227,000 pounds** of food to needy families with **2,415** total family distributions. Which includes, our Fresh Express who served **128 community families** every month. Our Benevolent Ministry distributed another record of over **\$90,040** to **112** needy families. Wow! CW Theatre Ministry presented the community with *The Sound of Music* to over **3,700** people from our community, and **3** decisions for Christ were made. We were able to host, and partner with Kids Around the World, a food packing event in our Well Fit Gym where **310** volunteers gathered throughout the day to pack **121,000** meals! Our goal was to raise **\$24,000** during the month of July and as a congregation you exceeded that goal and gave over **\$28,000** towards those meals that were shipped to needy families around the world! Our Well Ministries consisting of Well Fit, Well Read, and the Well Coffee House, saw **18** decisions for Christ, sold **269** Bibles (**5,912** since opening in 2012), and had over **35,000** transactions! The Well, since 2012, has also been able to give **\$33,373** towards clean water wells through customer donations! We also partnered with HumanKind water to provide over **214,550** gallons of clean water. Praise God! Meadowbrook Christian School enrolled **400** students and saw **8** decisions for Christ. Praise God!

Globally, we have shined the Light of Jesus in many ways. We had **24** congregants travel to Guachipilin, Guatemala, to build a kitchen/restaurant to help the community and help with income for the church to be able to invest in their community. The team also helped install a playground at the local public elementary school. Our team hosted a VBS at the church where we saw over **150** children and adults sing and hear about God’s love. As a result, **60** individuals gave their hearts to Christ! Praise God! We sent another CWC team to San Juan, La Laguna, to host a medical clinic. Our team worked hard and saw over **800** patients, handed out over **900** pairs of glasses, and pulled **196** teeth! The gospel was presented to each person who came, and **41** individuals gave their heart to Christ! Praise God! Our Child Sponsorship Program in San Juan, La Laguna and Tzucubal, Guatemala, managed **119** families and **137** kids with the help of **113** sponsors from CWC this past year. Through your generosity, we were also able to give over **\$52,000** in disaster relief around the world. Our Online Campus provided our broadcasted services to an incredible **10,372** unique viewers in **44** states and **13** countries. We gained **457** subscribers to our YouTube channel that provides devotionals and worship services to anyone around the world. We had around **30,000** visitors to our website spanning across all **50** states and **110** countries.

Unhidden: The CWC Team

The past year, again, saw many record highs and incredible stories. All that God did through Christ Wesleyan Church could not have been made possible without an incredible team working hard and sold out for Jesus. Some of these numbers do not reflect the ministries and ministers behind the scenes. Ministries like our facility, tech, broadcast, and information services teams make it possible for our facility to hold so many events and people each week. We held **7,914** events across all campuses this past year! Wow! The behind-the-scenes work of our information services team make it possible to have internet that connects us to the global community. All of us working hard to accomplish one thing: to share the Light of Jesus with our world. To be a church that is unhidden from our world and culture. That will always be our mission and reason for existing.

I want to, again, thank Loretta Paulhamus for being an incredible Administrative Assistant. There is not a better one out there! I always want to give a shout-out to my incredible wife, Nikky. Nikky, thank you for being my rock and someone I can always count on to make my cloudy days sunny. They say, “Behind every great man, there is a better woman.” That is certainly the case when God gifted me you. Love ya, babe!

Unhidden: Looking Ahead

We have an incredible opportunity that God has laid before us. As we go forward as a church, we want to make sure we stay on mission of sharing the Light of Jesus Christ with our world as we focus on discipleship, missions, and multiplication. As individuals, we need to make sure we are participating in all aspects of the 4G (Gather, Grow, Give, Go) process of discipleship so that we are at our best and most effective to do things we have never done before to reach people we have never reached before. It takes all of us. God wants all of us.

Discipleship. Missions. Multiplication. These three words encompass the vision of Christ Wesleyan Church. When it comes to our **discipleship** process, we want to continue to simplify to make it easier to connect and join with other believers. We want to see the number of people involved in small groups, serving groups, and mentorship opportunities grow. When it comes to **missions**, we want to continue to spread the love of Christ and the resources God has given us with our local community and around the world. We want to continue to grow our Child Sponsorship program. We want to build churches in communities that are mostly unreached, all the while maintaining key relationships, we have already built all around the world. We understand that the mission of Jesus Christ is more than Christ Wesleyan. So, we will continue to be a resource and be generous with local churches, ministries, and families. When it comes to **multiplication**, we want to multiply ourselves as disciples and church ministries/campuses, like what God is doing in Sunbury through our Sunbury Campus and Recovery Church Ministry. When we look at the many things God did this past year and what He wants to do in the future for Christ Wesleyan, let us lean into what God is doing. It might seem crazy, the things we do here, but all of this is to advance the big “K” in God’s Kingdom. All of this is to share the Light of Jesus Christ with our world by doing things we have never done before to reach people we have never reached before.

Looking back at this past year, yes, the state of Christ Wesleyan Church is very healthy in so many ways. As we learned in our past sermon series, the state of the Evangelical Church in America is not so healthy. May we play a part in turning that around so that the Evangelical Church can thrive once again. May we play a part in making sure the Evangelical Church exists for our children and grandchildren. Together, with the help of all of us and the power of the Holy Spirit, we can do it. We can help be witnesses for God throughout Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, as Acts 1:8 tells us. Or to personalize that verse, “May the Christ Wesleyan Church disciples be witnesses for Christ, with the power of the Holy Spirit, throughout Milton, Sunbury, Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, the U.S.A., and to the ends of the earth”.

God bless you, Christ Wesleyan. Let’s continue to be an *unhidden* church!

In Him,
Pastor Branden Mestach