

INCREASING ENGAGEMENT:  
AT WORTHINGTON CHRISTIAN CHURCH DURING SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND HEALTH CHALLENGES

By

Austin Seevers

A project report submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

The Doctor of Ministry Program

Emmanuel Christian Seminary at Milligan College

Johnson City, TN

2023

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## **DEDICATION**

To my family –  
My wife and best friend, Meredith,  
The joys of my life, Abigail, Palmer, and Evelyn,  
My dad and mom,  
My sister Ashley, my brother-in-law Kyle, my nephew Kenson, and my niece Meah,  
My brother Aaron, my sister-in-law Ashley, and my nephew Brady

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

“All the people came together as one.” – Nehemiah 8:1

I have felt the words of Nehemiah throughout this project, as many have come together to encourage and support me. I thank Dr. David Kiger and Dr. Jack Holland for their guidance and contributions to the project. You both have blessed my experience at Emmanuel.

I am thankful to the leadership of Worthington Christian Church for your support throughout the entire Doctor of Ministry program and your continued encouragement toward my family. A huge thank you to the church staff who walked alongside me throughout this initiative. Your heart and hands are intertwined in every aspect. A special thanks to Patti Remaklus for reading every page of my project and for your partnership of many years.

Rick and Cathy Fuller, thank you for continuously cheering me on. Thank you for always checking in on my family when I was traveling for class and making sure they were well-fed. You have become family.

I am grateful for my Uncle Scott and Aunt Laurie. You demonstrated great hospitality and made my trips to TN possible and less stressful. I will always cherish our conversations on the back porch! I love you both.

To my parents, Mark and Cheri, thank you for supporting Meredith throughout my many schooling trips over the years. Mom, I know Meredith appreciated your visits, and it helped ease my worries when you were with them. Dad, I enjoyed our coffees as I was “passing through” and on my way home from class.

Finally, I owe a tremendous amount of gratitude to my wife, Meredith. This could not have been done without you. Thank you for being my strongest support and ally. I love you

dearly. To Abigail, Palmer, and Evelyn, thank you for being patient with me throughout my schooling, and thank you for encouraging me during my writing. I loved the times you would check in on me and ask, “what page are you on?” You always put a smile on my face.

## **CHAPTER 1 PROJECT RATIONALE**

### **Chapter Intent:**

The purpose of this chapter is to lay the foundation of this entire project. Most importantly, this chapter clarifies why I chose to do a project on increasing church engagement. Throughout this chapter, I will describe the context of Worthington Christian Church and explain the state of the Christian community. This chapter expounds upon the impact the last few years have had on the Church and my conversations with people regarding spiritual engagement. My central thesis of this project is to emphasize that Christian leaders must carefully and purposely help their congregants continuously engage in the spiritual blessings of being in a relationship with God.

### **How did we end up here?**

There is no question that the last few years have been tumultuous for every family unit across the globe. When the news of a global pandemic traveled to every household in America, each person began to make immediate decisions on how they would adjust to the government's orders. I remember thinking that this was something serious when the NCAA chose to cancel March Madness! Who in their right mind cancels the greatest month of college basketball?

The year 2020 stands alone as a marker in time. It was the year of COVID-19, "virtual" was the new keyword, racial tension was peaking, and the year hosted the most animated and divisive presidential election in decades.

In a year that shook Americans to the core, how did the Church stand? She stood with a limp. The life of the Church did not look the same as in prior years. For many weeks, the doors

were closed, the classrooms were empty, and the hallways were quiet. Preachers took the pulpit to preach to an empty room while staring into the lens of a camera. Sunday morning worship happened in many living rooms across the county, and things just didn't feel right. People were not together, and church rituals became an isolated experience. Communion felt rushed and out of place. Not only did many Christians raid their refrigerators to find something suitable for the communion elements, but the actual communal part of communion was also missing. We weren't able to look across the room of the sanctuary and be encouraged by those also reflecting on the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus. We were isolated. We were quarantined.

Under governing restrictions, the Church body did not gather corporately and when she finally did, she did not look the same. Once churches began to regather, the pews were more empty than full, ministry outreaches and events were postponed, communion continued to be isolated, and classrooms were still bare. This trend lasted more than a few months. This trend carried on for more than a year.

Since 2020, a lot has happened in our culture and in the life of the church. The term "virtual" does not consume every sentence or advertisement, and the culture is operating more as it did prior to the pandemic. Most everything is now "open." More employees have returned to the office or, at least, some hybrid model. Consumer spending reports higher than it did in recent years and a good indicator of cultural normalcy is the response Americans have had to travel. In the Spring of 2022, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics released an economics report on changes to consumer expenditures. They cited more of an increase in travel in 2021 than the decrease in travel through the pandemic. "Transportation spending declined 19.3 percent from



the second quarter of 2019 to the second quarter of 2020 and rose 23.3 percent from the second quarter of 2020 to the second quarter of 2021.”<sup>1</sup> Similarly, in a yearend 2022 report, the U.S. Travel Association reported an increase in travel that surpassed the pre-pandemic numbers in 2019. “Travel spending moderated a bit in October after reaching a pandemic high in September but still remains positive at 3% above 2019 levels.”<sup>2</sup> Americans are re-engaging in life’s activities and leisure enjoyment, which display signs that the culture and economy are bouncing back to pre-pandemic numbers and engagement.

### **The State of the Pandemic Church:**

But what about the Church? With the culture accepting its “new normal” and responding with more openness to life’s activities and habits, what does this new reality look like for the Church? The Church stands taller, but still holds a slight limp. The Church took a punch in the years 2020 through 2021, and Church engagement continued to be a struggle. Many churches responded to the pandemic and social and political issues differently, but every church saw the effects of these events. The *Christian Standard*, a bimonthly Stone-Campbell Movement Magazine, reported in the May/June 2021 issue the effects the previous year had on independent Christian churches. The title of this article was called “Facts and Figures from a Funky Year.” Four hundred twenty-one churches participated in a survey sharing the effects the previous year had on their church engagement. The 421 churches surveyed were made up of six church size categories:

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<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Changes to consumer expenditures during the COVID-19 pandemic*, TED: The Economics Daily, May 3, 2022, retrieved January 12, 2023, from <https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2022/changes-to-consumer-expenditures-during-the-covid-19-pandemic.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Travel Association, *The Latest Travel Data*, MONTHLY INSIGHTS, January 2, 2023, retrieved on January 12, 2023, from <https://www.ustravel.org/research/monthly-travel-data-report>

- Megachurches (2,000+ in average weekly attendance)
- Emerging Megachurches (1,000 – 1,999 in average worship attendance)
- Large (500 – 999 in average worship attendance)
- Medium (250 – 499 in average worship weekly attendance)
- Small (100 – 249 in average worship attendance)
- Very Small (up to 99 in average worship attendance).

Every church saw a decline in engagement from 2019 to when they regathered for in-person worship. Kent Fillinger writes in the article, “By the time of our survey, in-person attendance had recovered to 51 percent of its pre-COVID-19 levels. Very small churches have seen the greatest rebound of in-person worship attendance, with an average of 62 percent of attendees returning. Megachurches experienced the smallest rebound of in-person worship, with just over a one-third (35 percent) returning.”<sup>3</sup> Later, Fillinger writes of baptism, “Churches saw a significant dip in baptisms last year. The total number of baptisms in 2019 was 32,139 among the 439 churches that participated in the survey – an average of 96 baptisms per church. In 2020, there were 13,502 baptisms among 421 churches – an average of 33 baptisms per church. The year-over-year decline in baptisms for all churches was 58 percent.”<sup>4</sup>

Despite the craziness of the last few years, there was one area of engagement where many churches saw an increase during the years 2020-2021, and that was the area of financial contributions. According to the article “Facts and Figures from a Funky Year,” 69% of churches reported that their financial contributions either remained the same or increased from 2019.

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<sup>3</sup> Kent Fillinger, (2021, May/June). *Facts and Figures from a Funky Year*, The Christian Standard, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

Overall, most churches have experienced a decline in church attendance, small group involvement, volunteer activity, personal spiritual practices, and other general spiritual engagements. Another research component that affirms this decline was done by Hartford Institute for Religion Research. The overarching research project is titled *Exploring the Pandemic Impact on Congregations*. This research project has made a five-year commitment to study church trends as a result from the pandemic and they will continue their research on church engagement through 2026. A recent study within this research project called, *Navigating the Pandemic: A First Look at Congregational Responses*, stretched beyond the Stone-Campbell movement and surveyed 38 Christian denominational groups. The 38 denominational groups were surveyed from mid-June to the end of August 2021 and there were 2,074 survey responses. The organization released three different survey reports, and Tracy Simmons commented on these results and the challenges churches must face. She writes this regarding the third report released in April 2022,

The most recent survey, published in April, showed that religious education took a hit during the pandemic and is struggling to recover. Half of the 615 survey respondents from churches in 31 Christian denominational groups said they felt the pandemic had caused major disruption to their educational programs. This includes Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, church day camps, and adult education. Smaller churches, those in the mainline tradition, and churches that did not quickly return to a modified in-person education program suffered more during the past two years.<sup>5</sup>

The survey reported affirmations made by the Christian Standard research project, but it also shed new light on the decline of Christian education opportunities. The *Navigating the*

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<sup>5</sup> Tracy Simmons, *Surveys shed light on pandemic-related challenges churches must face*. Colloquy Online, May 2022, p. 1, retrieved from <https://www.ats.edu/files/galleries/surveys-shed-light-on-pandemic-challenges.pdf>.

*Pandemic: A First Look at Congregational Responses* study confirmed how many churches felt. When church leaders compared the engagement metrics, it was accepted across the board that ministry numbers were not comparable to their pre-pandemic metrics. Churches were calculating fewer numbers of people in groups, serving in outreach ministries, and volunteering within the church.

Another article that was consistent in portraying the spiritual decline during the pandemic came from a 2022 annual report from the American Bible Society.<sup>6</sup> The report, titled *2022 State of the Bible*, conveyed a 21% decline in Bible engagement. This was the largest year-to-year decline since reporting. Each yearly report would fluctuate by a percent or two, but it plummeted in 2022. The report defined “Bible engaged” as those who would read the Bible three or more days a week. This definition influenced the way I structured a research question in the surveys used in this project.

As I was preparing for this engagement initiative, I wanted to compare my church context with other churches to see if they were experiencing the same deficit. After reading the *Christian Standard* articles and other articles that spoke about the decline in engagement, I could confirm the same effects present at Worthington Christian Church, but what about other churches? How were other churches assessing their congregation’s engagement after regathering for in-person worship?

I spoke with four independent Christian churches and one parachurch organization. This parachurch organization coaches church leaders on how they can be more effective in their ministry engagement. I wanted to know if any other church was experiencing the same results

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<sup>6</sup> John Farquhar Plake, (December 2022) *Rumbling with Reality in 2022*, State of the Bible 2022, p. x.

we were at Worthington Christian and if any church was doing anything specific to increase its engagement.

The five church contacts were:

1. Compassion Christian Church, Savannah, GA
2. Christ Church of the Valley, Phoenix, AZ
3. East 91<sup>st</sup> Street Christian Church, Indianapolis, IN
4. Southeast Christian Church, Louisville, KY
5. Intentional Churches, Las Vegas, NV

The main question I asked each leader within these organizations was, “How would you assess the engagement of your congregants spiritually, physically, and in ministry practices?” The two major themes that reappeared during these conversations were the lack of volunteers, specifically in the children’s ministry, and the lack of group involvement, specifically in group leaders. Every church spoke on the current strain that their small pool of volunteers was facing and feared future burnout coming to these volunteers. Each church struggled to find leaders who would commit an hour each Sunday morning to help serve in the children’s ministry, and the children’s ministries were working with “skeleton crews.”

The Intentional Churches coach I spoke with discussed how he has heard of many churches receiving guests since regathering, and these new people were looking for places to get involved and experience community. The challenge for many churches was that there was not an easy onboarding process for guests, and they could not find enough group leaders to comply with these new inquiries.

There were only two churches that spoke of any strategy they were doing to help increase the level of involvement among their congregants. One church spoke of doing more Sunday activities in hopes of getting more people together, and the other church leader spoke about a new vision the church was soon to implement. The leader hoped this new vision would give the church something to rally behind and get their people more involved.

Exactly one year after the *Christian Standard* published the article “Facts and Figures from a Funky Year,” they released another article titled “Ministry in a (Post) Covid World.” This article was released in the May/June 2022 issue. This article compared the previous year’s ministry numbers and gave a more up-to-date look at church engagement, and again, Kent Fillinger was the author.

Fillinger writes, “National surveys across various denominations found that 73 percent of prepandemic, in-person worship attendees returned by the fall of 2021. Likewise, our survey of more than 400 Christian churches and churches of Christ found that the average congregation was at approximately 72 percent of their pre-COVID-19, in-person worship attendance average last year.” According to Fillinger’s research, over the course of the year 2021, church attendance grew 21 percent in Christian churches and churches of Christ compared to his previous article.<sup>7</sup>

Regarding the previous comparison on baptism, Fillinger writes, “The total number of baptisms in 2021 increased by 51 percent compared with 2020 (20,387 vs. 13,502). Of course, in 2020 churches were closed for in-person worship much of the year. Now the bad news; total baptisms in 2021 were still far fewer than in the two years leading up to the pandemic.

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<sup>7</sup> Kent Fillinger, (2022, May/June). *Ministry in a (Post) Covid World*, Christian Standard, p. 27.

Surveyed churches reported 32,139 baptisms in 2019 and 31,269 in 2018 (in all three of these years, a similar number of churches reported).<sup>8</sup>

In conclusion to the State of the Church, 2020-2022 saw a decline in church engagement compared to pre-pandemic numbers. Entering 2022, some churches began to see an increase in church attendance, but many still lacked ministry and spiritual involvement. As an indicator, the churches surveyed in the “Ministry in a (Post) Covid World” article, cited discipleship and adapting to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 as two of the top five ministry concerns they were facing.<sup>9</sup>

For the last few years, church leaders have been facing a decline in church engagement and a decline in participation in spiritual rhythms and practices among their congregants. This decline has been true not only for those who have not returned to weekly worship, but also for those who have returned. It’s been proven through the decline in Christian education that those who have come back to church in the years 2021-2022 really have not “come back.” These are the new realities of the Church and realities that every church leader needs to face.

I must also make this disclaimer. The past few years have caused a lot of stress on church leaders and more church leaders now feel more isolated than in recent decades. There have been articles in many Christian spaces, like the Barna Group and even the *Christian Standard*, that have reported on the “State of the Pastor.” I acknowledge the stress and turmoil the pandemic has caused Christian leaders. Navigating and leading through the crisis of the last

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 30.

few years has been no easy feat. This project is not geared towards re-engaging or revitalizing pastoral ministry leaders, but the practices mentioned in this project transcend to all Christians.

### **Why This Matters:**

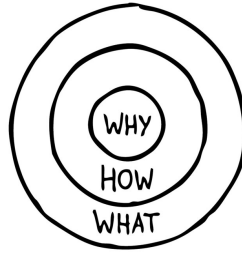
Simon Sinek, author and leadership guru, wrote a book titled, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*.<sup>10</sup> In his book, he writes that leaders can make one small adjustment to their leadership style that could make their organization more effective and more innovative. The shift in mindset that Sinek suggests is not leading with “what” we need to do, but “why” we need to accomplish the task. This one shift has birthed the greatest motivational question ever: What’s your why? The “why” is the organization's purpose or belief. It’s why they do what they do. When leaders and organizations establish their “why,” they are driven to accomplish the goal despite the difficult hurdles they may face. When the why is established, the why becomes greater than the obstacles. When leaders start with the tasks at hand by asking what they need to do, obstacles can become greater than the tasks. There is no motivation or connection to the heart. The goal is disconnected from motivation, and it’s easy to get distracted. Sinek suggests that leaders should start by asking why. Why is this important, or why does this matter? Then the progression is to ask how. How are we going to accomplish our goal? After asking why and how, leaders can get tactile and ask, what do we need to do? Here is how Sinek illustrates this progression. It’s known as the “Golden Circle.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Simon Sinek, *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action* (New York: Penguin Group, 2009).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.





Many Christian leaders have defaulted back to their pre-pandemic mindset and after regathering for in-person worship, they have attempted to resume ministry life like it was in 2019. Once churches were given the green light to resume in-person worship, many ministers hoped things would go back to “normal.” They began asking the question, “what do we need to do?” We’ve established that leading with “what” questions can easily be overcome by obstacles because there isn’t a mission connected to it. When churches regathered in 2020 and in 2021, many church leaders were let down because ministry life was not going back to “normal.” Thom Rainer, author and leader of the Church Answers organization, wrote in his book, *the Post-Quarantine Church*, “As our team began to walk with churches through the post-quarantine era, I remember my first conversation with a pastor who told me he couldn’t wait for things to get back to normal. I responded softly that I didn’t think we would ever return to the pre-quarantine normal...As jarring as it may have been for him, I wanted to help him and his church prepare themselves for the post-quarantine era.”<sup>12</sup>

In late 2022, many churches were experiencing attendance numbers closer to their pre-pandemic attendance. At the beginning stages of this project, Spring 2022, our church attendance was almost at 70% of our pre-pandemic number, but it was not the same church. A

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<sup>12</sup> Thom S. Rainer, *The Post-Quarantine Church: Six Urgent Challenges and Opportunities That Will Determine the Future of Your Congregation* (Carol Stream: Tyndale Momentum, 2020), p. 7.

lot had happened in the life of our congregation over the last two years and our church had many new faces regularly attending. It was a different church. There was no going back to what it was prior to 2020.

I cannot recall who first coined this phrase, but many church leaders spoke about the “covid shakeup” their church was experiencing. As a result of the coronavirus, the George Floyd murder, mask mandates, and vaccine stances, many people were leaving their churches to find a new one that aligned more with their beliefs. I know that during this time, our church lost a few members and gained a few new members. The makeup of our church was different in 2021. We could not come out of the pandemic and immediately insert the culture our church possessed in 2019. It was not like re-inserting a lost puzzle piece. There was no plug-and-play approach to ministry, and I think this was a good thing. After navigating through the events of 2020, many churches were experiencing a renewed vision.

On a personal note, I do not think individuals came out of quarantine the same. Most people came out of the quarantine era with a new perspective on life and with a more intentional focus on time and relationships. The research results at the end of this project will speak more directly to this matter.

I took my first Doctor of Ministry class in January 2020, right before everything started. The rest of my classes were taken during the pandemic and each class related to the current times in some way. Towards the end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022, I started to contemplate the state of our church and the upcoming Doctor of Ministry project. The Doctor of Ministry program and the pandemic paralleled during my classwork, and I was facing real-time issues in the trenches of ministry. I witnessed the pain our people were facing during the

events of 2020 and then the cry for a relational community coming out of a period of isolation. At the end of 2021 and the beginning of 2022, I witnessed people from our church coming back to in-person worship, but not knowing what to do next. Through conversations with members of our church, I knew they wanted to experience something more in their spiritual journey, but they just didn't know what to do next.

When I am not preaching or teaching on Sunday mornings, I stand in a space at our church called "Guest Central." This is a place for people who are new to the church to visit, and it becomes a starting point for their connection within the church. During this time period, we frequently had new attendees visiting Guest Central looking for help in their spiritual journey as they were coming out of the pandemic. A lot of times, they couldn't articulate exactly what they wanted, but they knew they wanted to serve in some way and be in a group with others where they could experience community. What we witnessed week after week was that this was the common voice of everyone in our church. Guest Central became the hub for people seeking personal connection and spiritual revitalization. Regular attendees were visiting Guest Central looking for something that would feed their spiritual hunger. I started to notice that people wanted some type of spiritual spark, but they just couldn't specifically identify what would help. I often heard questions like, "Is there a group I could be involved in?" or "I want to find a place to serve, I just don't know where. Where would I be a good fit?"

In February 2022, I met with a guy from our church to go on a run, followed by lunch. I baptized this man and his wife in September 2020. It was a private covid baptism. During our run on this cold Midwest day in February, he mentioned that he was struggling with anxiety. He had been isolated due to the pandemic, and then as a result, his job became fully remote. He

explained that he had been meeting with a counselor to help him with his anxiety and that he was hoping to meet more people at church to help his social interaction. He asked, “Could you recommend others I could meet for lunch or have coffee with? I really need to be around people more.”

My conversation with my friend and those I interacted with at Guest Central are my “why.” I began to realize that as people came out of the pandemic, people needed help re-engaging in the spiritual rhythms that were once familiar prior to the pandemic. People were coming back to church and looking for something more but were unsure what step to take. I think the pandemic made people socially unsure as to what was acceptable and expected, especially in the church. I sensed, and I am sure other church leaders felt this way, people returning to worship with a posture of “I’m here. Now, what am I supposed to do?” Church leaders were forced to make decisions on what was acceptable and unacceptable for the social life of the church in 2020. As time moved on, I sensed our congregation waiting for direction for what was next.

Through these interactions, I knew all of this was leading toward our church doing an initiative to help people spiritually re-engage. With the full support of the leadership at Worthington Christian Church, I met with the ministerial staff in April 2022 to lay the framework for our fall engagement initiative and to receive input on how we can best do this together. In our initial meeting, I shared a short story about my four-year-old son’s first day of preschool. My son was excited for his first day and the night before school, we laid out all of his clothes and got his backpack ready. He was ready to take on the year. As we walked to his classroom that first morning, he stalled at the door. I knew he was excited and that he was

looking forward to the year and making new friends. I gently nudged him on his back and assisted him into the room. This engagement initiative functioned as a slight nudge on the back for our congregation. We put together a plan to help our congregation take a step forward in their spiritual journey.

To be clear, this engagement initiative was not about growing our church attendance. It was not a project to “help get people back to church.” The 14-week engagement initiative served as a way to help those who have come back to church re-engage in the spiritual rhythms of life. It was a project to help combat the decline that research had shown through the pandemic. As reported earlier, by the end of 2022, people were operating in other areas of life like everything was “open.” People were eager to travel and experience life as they had before and a good cultural indicator in my ministry context is the public schools. Schools were operating with zero restrictions and people were functioning in several school activities. Ironically enough, the largest school district surrounding our church and the school district my kids are in, communicated that their theme for the 2022-2023 school year was centered on increasing student engagement. At the start of the school year, I received an email update from our Board of Education. The email was sent on Friday, August 26, 2022, and described their plan for the upcoming year. An excerpt from the email stated, “When focusing on student engagement, Mr. DeTillio shared that increasing engagement requires educators to intentionally design opportunities in their lessons, and that high levels of student engagement correlate with both academic achievement and overall well-being.”<sup>13</sup> This is exactly what we were trying to accomplish at church by organizing this initiative. We intentionally designed

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<sup>13</sup> Olentangy Schools Board of Education, personal email. Sent August 26, 2022.

opportunities in hopes of increasing the level of engagement of our congregation. Just like the Director of Curriculum shared about the result of increased engagement of students, we too believed that high levels of engagement would correlate to the overall well-being of our people.

### **The Project Description:**

The engagement emphasis was a 14-week initiative spanning the last weeks of August until the middle of November. This initiative included a variety of events, promotions, sermons, serving opportunities, group studies, and reading plans to help increase engagement. An outline of this project, including specific dates for each event or study, is listed in Appendix A.

### **The Overarching Question:**

This initiative seeks to answer one overarching question –

***In what ways will an engagement initiative help our congregants grow in their spiritual involvement?***

With this question in mind, we specifically planned the initiative with events and studies that could have been beneficial for our congregation. This overarching question also gave a standard for review. When conducting research on the effectiveness of this project, this main question functioned as the eyes and ears to determine if this engagement initiative did indeed help our congregants grow in their spiritual involvement. This question was the project guide.

As I narrowed in on this overarching question, there were some cultural assumptions to consider and through these assumptions, I was then able to articulate this question. Tim Sensing encourages Doctor of Ministry students to rely on these assumptions when honing in on a topic and research question. Sensing writes in his book, *Qualitative Research*, “What assumptions have you made regarding the nature of behavior you are investigating, the underlying theory behind your methodology, the conditions in which your study occurs, the

significance or value of the ministry in which you are engaged, or the relationship of this study to other situations or people?”<sup>14</sup> In light of Sensing’s words, here are some of the basic cultural assumptions that led me to this project:

- The pandemic interrupted everyone’s daily rhythms: work, social, home, school, church, and spiritual interactions.
- The pressure to adapt to an ever-changing pandemic climate caused an increase in anxiety and conflict.
- Interrupted rhythms have made it difficult to re-assimilate with practices that were familiar in a pre-pandemic world.
- Spiritual and ministry involvement have been disrupted as a result of the pandemic.

**Definitions:**

In this section I define several key terms that are crucial to this project. I want to be clear on what I mean by these terms and how these terms were used in this project. Including words like political and health in a title could be adventurous. Both of these terms could be their own focus for a doctoral writing project, but I assure you, these terms are not the focus of my writing. The focus of the project is “increasing engagement.” That is my main title. The words in the subtitle are in reference to the times we are living in. The Church will always be functioning in times of social, political, and health unrest. If somehow this project is beneficial to a Christian leader in the future, I am certain that there will be existing challenges in each of these areas. These terms sum up the challenges that the Church faced in 2020-2022 and these

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<sup>14</sup> Tim Sensing, *Qualitative Research: A Multi-Methods Approach to Projects for Doctor of Ministry Theses* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2011), p. 20.

challenges were leading factors that caused some congregants to disengage from spiritual life. These terms are in the subtitle because the question will always remain, “how can the Church increase engagement in the midst of these challenging times?” As we read through Scripture, we notice challenging times that included politics, social structures, and health dynamics, and believers had to navigate these settings while continuing rhythms of the faith.

Here are some definitions of these terms and how they will be used throughout this writing.

*Engagement* – When I use the term engagement throughout this project, I am referring to ways that people are connected or involved. I am referring to how people engage spiritually, scripturally, and in ministry.

*Social* – The term social includes the physical embodiment of being in positive communication with others as well as the culture’s social temperature. Specifically, to 2020-2022, the social aspect that provided the most challenges included the differing responses to Covid and the differing political stances. These stark differences have made it difficult for the social life of the church to exist in a healthy manner.

*Political* – The last few years have encompassed a heightened political divide. In the United States, we have dealt with racial tension, divisive political issues, political responses to Covid, wars taking place overseas, and talks of future wars. The Church has always had to navigate the uneasy waters of politics and having congregants with varying political stances. When I use the term political, I am not referring to a single event, but the cumulative political pressures. These pressures have affected everyone in determining how best to respond to these events. The church leader’s response to political challenges is to help congregants respond like Jesus in every life circumstance. In Richard Lischer’s book *Just Tell the Truth*, he



writes, “telling the truth begins with an accurate and passionate account of what the book of Acts calls ‘the facts about Jesus’ – who he is, what he did, what he demands, and the sort of people he empowers us to be. I can’t think of a more modest proposal than the one I am making: that Christians of all parties and in all walks of life simply tell the truth about what it really means to be a follower of the Way.”<sup>15</sup>

*Health* – Undergirded in this project are the health challenges of a global pandemic. The health challenges that have affected engagement include physical, emotional, and mental illnesses. Physically, Covid was and continues to be, catastrophic to the health of people across the globe. Millions of people lost their lives to the virus and the virus continues to make people ill. As a result of the coronavirus, people have been hesitant to re-engage in practices that were familiar prior to the pandemic. Alongside physical illness, many people have been affected emotionally and mentally. Due to long periods of isolation and the worries of potential illness, the pandemic has caused an increase in anxiety. In an article reported in the fall of 2021, the CDC cited that the recent Household Pulse Survey (HPS) indicated that one in three Americans suffer from anxiety and depression.<sup>16</sup> The greatest increase took place during August – December 2020. It is also important to note that the primary reason for the Church to stop in-person gatherings were a result of the health challenges of 2020.

### **The Context of Worthington Christian Church:**

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<sup>15</sup> Richard Lischer, *Just Tell the Truth: A Call to Faith, Hope, and Courage*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2021), p. xi.

<sup>16</sup> Jia H, Guerin RJ, Barile JP, et al. *National and State Trends in Anxiety and Depression Severity Scores Among Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, October 8, 2021, Retrieved January 16, 2023, from <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/70/wr/mm7040e3.htm>.

Worthington, Ohio, is a northern suburb of metro Columbus. In August 2022, Realtor.com ranked Worthington, Ohio, as the third hottest housing market in the country.<sup>17</sup> In recent years, the Worthington housing market has experienced turnover. Younger families have moved into the homes that other families have possessed for the last 30 years. This has brought the median age down and has changed the culture of this suburb. The current culture of Worthington balances the tension between modern ideologies and nostalgic landmarks. There is a gravitational pull to new and trendy while still maintaining the “Olde Worthington” vibe.

Worthington Christian Church actually sits a few miles north of the city of Worthington. The interstate outerbelt around Columbus closes in the Worthington suburb. The church is north of the outerbelt and rests between the Worthington suburb and the exurb, Delaware. The church's DNA carries both Worthington and Delaware’s culture. Since Delaware is further north of Worthington, it is not landlocked, and Delaware is an area that is experiencing rapid growth. Delaware County is the fastest-growing county in Ohio and in the top 90 fastest-growing counties in the country.<sup>18</sup> The church is made up of people who have resided in Worthington for decades and have witnessed the area's growth, and it is made up of people who have relocated to the Columbus area for work. The two cultures surprisingly co-exist. Since Columbus is a growing midwestern capital city, most of the people who have been here for decades are used to change and growth.

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<sup>17</sup> Hannah, Jones, *The Hottest Zip Codes of 2022*, Realtor.com, August 16, 2022, Retrieved January 16, 2023, from <https://www.realtor.com/research/hottest-zip-codes-2022/>.

<sup>18</sup>*County Demographics*, Delaware Counter Regional Planning Commission, December 2, 2022, Retrieved January 16, 2023, from <https://regionalplanning.co.delaware.oh.us/data/demographics/#:~:text=Delaware%20County%20was%20the%2086th,of%20growth%20from%202010%2D2020>.

Leading up to this project, I wanted to study our community in more detail. I ran a demographic and psychographic community report organized by Church Answers to give us researched data on our church community.<sup>19</sup> Church Answers partners with ESRI to produce these reports. In the report, Church Answers communicates that “ERSI’s software is the most powerful mapping and spatial data analytics technology available.” This report was helpful to us in knowing and understanding our community better, and it also played a factor in some of the events that were planned throughout this project.

Here are some key facts identified about our community within a 12.5-minute radius of our church location at 8145 N. High Street, Columbus, Ohio.

- Total population from a 12.5-minute commute is 223,671.
- Only 3% report no high school diploma while 56% of the population possesses a bachelor’s degree or higher.
- The median age is 37.1. The millennial generation and generation Z make up 49.7% of the population.
- 68% of the population is white, 12% black, and 10% Asian.
- The average household size is 2.4 and 40% of the population has a household income greater than \$100,000.
- 79% of the population is considered white collar and there is only a 2.9% unemployment rate.

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<sup>19</sup> The community report was run on March 23, 2022. The findings from this report are located in Appendix B.

- 25% contributed to a religious organization in the last 12 months. 24% attend religious services regularly, and 39% rarely attend religious services.
- 19% volunteered for a charitable organization in the last twelve months.
- 72% of the population have a political lean in the middle of the road to very conservative.

Outside of these data points, public schools play a huge role in people deciding to move to the northern suburbs of Columbus. The two biggest school districts that surround our church are the Worthington City School District and the Olentangy School District. The Olentangy School District represents those residing in Delaware County. Many families in our church are very active in the school sports systems and other extra-curricular activities, including club athletics. I've noticed that many families in our church are stretched thin when it comes to managing life's schedules. Many parents seem overextended and overwhelmed. The school activities and schedules are a part of the social challenges that have hindered spiritual engagement.

Worthington Christian Church was founded in 1975. It has a rich history, and much of the ministry culture reflects the community. There are innovative approaches to ministry while still standing firm on our 47-year history. Our church mostly consists of white-collar businesswomen and men, and as the community has become younger (almost 50% of the community demographic is millennial and younger), so has the church. In my ministry experience working with new guests, it seems that most families moving to the area are seeking a church home where they can experience community. From my personal observation, most of

our guests are looking for ways to interact with others and meet new people. This observation has also led to some of our activities in this engagement project.

Most of the new attendees have a “church-light” background. They are somewhat familiar with church, mostly due to a childhood memory, and if they have a family, they want a church experience for their young family. With guests attending regularly, the spiritual development throughout the church body varies. We have members who have faithfully served the Lord for decades and many new attendees exploring who Jesus is for the first time.

It’s also important to note that we are in a unique season of growth. At the onset of planning this project, our church was averaging around 70% of our pre-pandemic number for Sunday morning worship. Since the beginning of 2023, we have had a handful of Sundays averaging almost 112% of our pre-pandemic number. I like to think that this project had some influence on this increase.

### **Who, Why, How, and What:**

I have briefly described who we are as a church and as a community. We have answered the most important question for this Doctor of Ministry project, why do a project on increasing spiritual engagement? While answering this question, I have demonstrated how our culture is operating in a post-quarantine reality and that most everything is operating as “open.” I have mentioned from first-hand experience that people are returning to in-person worship wanting more connection, but uncertain how to engage. We have laid the foundation for why our church participated in an engagement initiative. The following chapters will look at biblical foundations for leading engagement during difficult times and how we approached this engagement initiative.

## CHAPTER 2 BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

### **Chapter Intent:**

This chapter will define the stages of spiritual engagement and how we can best lead during times of uncertainty. This chapter will discuss the biblical lens of the pandemic and how we can highlight parallels between the pandemic and the exile in the Old Testament. The content of this chapter will take a deeper look into the leadership Nehemiah displayed in the return from exile and the biblical and theological foundation for living and leading during challenging times.

### **Orientation, Disorientation, Reorientation:**

In *Praying the Psalms*, Walter Brueggemann describes the rhythms that each person faces in life. He uses these rhythms as a framework to approach the psalms, but these rhythms are universal and can be applied elsewhere. Brueggemann states, "I suggest, in a simple schematic fashion, that our life of faith consists in moving with God in terms of:

- (a) being securely oriented;
- (b) being painfully disoriented; and
- (c) being surprisingly reoriented."<sup>20</sup>

I suggest we use Brueggemann's framework to approach the events of the last two years. Life leading up to the pandemic was secure orientation. The pandemic was painful disorientation, and life now is processing reorientation; at least reorientation is how I approached this engagement initiative.

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<sup>20</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Praying the Psalms: Engaging Scripture and the Life of the Spirit* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2007), p. 2.

Brueggemann describes *orientation* as “a situation of equilibrium.”<sup>21</sup> This condition can be very comfortable and safe. It is a situation that we all yearn for, but as Brueggemann describes this position, he associates it with a lack of spiritual connection. Since life is safe and comfortable, it becomes easy to drift from recognition or dependence on God. We can so effortlessly be caught up in the goodness of life that we can neglect to see God’s work and we put too much focus on ourselves. Brueggemann adds to his description, “It consists of being well-settled, knowing that life makes sense and God is well-placed in heaven, presiding but not bothering.”<sup>22</sup>

*Disorientation* is when our life moves away from equilibrium. When we move from what is stable, we begin to identify what is chaotic and out of order. Over the course of life, this is a shared reality we all face; the chaos may just come in different forms. Brueggemann writes, “It may be a visible issue like a marriage failure, the loss of job, a financial reverse, the diagnosis of the doctor...Or it may be disturbance of a public kind, anxiety over the loss of energy, revulsion at the sickening spectacle of war, the sense that the world is falling apart before our very eyes.”<sup>23</sup> This movement, from orientation to disorientation, can cause all sorts of feelings. It can make us feel lonely. It can make us feel like a failure or raise our anxiety levels. We begin to wonder how we made this shift, if we will come out of it, or if it is our new reality. There is no timeframe for these periods, and long periods of disorientation can be difficult to transition out of. It is during this time that we experience some of the rawest feelings and loudest cries.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 9.

Brueggemann approaches psalms of lament with this framework and cites Psalm 13, Psalm 22, and Psalm 88 as examples in his book. Psalm 13:1-2 read,

*How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?  
How long will you hide your face from me?  
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts  
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?  
How long will my enemy triumph over me?*

In Roman Catholic spirituality, St. Ignatius of Loyola phrases a similar type of feeling as desolation. Teresa Blythe, in her book on spiritual direction, describes the Jesuit teaching of desolation. She defines desolation as “a turning away from faith, a restlessness, heaviness, anxiety, an ‘inner knowing’ that discourages, calls into doubt, or dulls the energy around your decision. Desolation generally makes you feel far from God.”<sup>24</sup> The opposite of desolation would be consolation. “Consolation generally draws you closer to God.”<sup>25</sup> Consolation is a positive movement of the heart and Blythe describes the virtues in consolation as “faith, hope, and love, inner and lasting peace, joy, an ‘inner knowing’ that encourages, supports and enlivens your decision.”<sup>26</sup> In this Jesuit teaching, consolation and desolation can take place in any life circumstance, but they produce similar feelings to Brueggemann’s descriptions.

When *reorientation* takes place, it is not a restoration of what was or a return to the old like nothing happened. Reorientation is to make new. It is a new form and a new reality. Sure, there are some commonalities, but it is not the same state as orientation. It is coming to understand and adjust to the new realities and giving praise for the movement out of the chaos. Brueggemann writes, “It is rather ‘all things new.’ And when it happens, it is always a

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<sup>24</sup> Teresa Blythe, *Spiritual Direction 101* (Berkeley: Apocryphile Press, 2018), p. 40.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.



surprise, always a gift of graciousness, and always an experience that evokes gratitude.”<sup>27</sup>

When looking at psalms of celebration and praise, Brueggemann states, “They celebrate some experience that has brought the world to a new joyous orientation that is experienced by the speaker.”<sup>28</sup> We must all agree that being reoriented is a cause for joyous celebration.

Susan Beaumont, an expert in liminality and author of *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season*, describes a framework similar to Brueggemann's orientation, disorientation, and reorientation.<sup>29</sup> Brueggemann described reorientation as “surprisingly.” He mentioned that the movement from disorientation to reorientation could not be presumed or predicted. I believe Beaumont speaks in the areas that Brueggemann does not. Beaumont outlines these rhythms as a “predictable three-part process.” She names them,

1. Separation: A period in which a person, group, or social order is stripped of the identity and status that previously defined it.
2. Liminal Period: A disorienting period of non-structure or anti-structure that opens new possibilities no longer based on old status or power hierarchies. New identities are explored, and new possibilities are considered.
3. Reorientation: A reforming period in which the person, group, or social order adopts a new identity, is granted new status, and designs new structures more appropriately suited to the emerging identity.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Brueggemann (2007), 11.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>29</sup> Susan Beaumont, *How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 3.

There are some likenesses between Brueggemann and Beaumont. Beaumont's separation is very similar to disorientation, and Brueggemann and Beaumont both use the term reorientation. For both, reorientation is something new. It is not a restoration of what was before separation or disorientation happened.

Where Beaumont expounds is the period between separation or disorientation to reorientation. Beaumont describes this as a liminal period. Liminality is the time between what was and what is to come. Beaumont writes that "The Judeo-Christian story is filled with liminal experiences. Our scriptures tell stories of characters who wander in and out of liminal times and spaces, being shaped further into the likeness of God through the power of liminality."<sup>31</sup> For Beaumont, though separation can be confusing and exhausting, the liminal space can also be freeing. It is freeing because there is an anticipation for something new. Old structures can be let go, and new structures and identities can be explored. It can also be challenging because what we were separated from was familiar. Beaumont describes, "The natural human response is to resist liminality and to strive backward to the old familiar identity...The ambiguity and disorientation are at times so heightened that the very work required to move forward becomes impossible to engage."<sup>32</sup> This can be seen in Scripture with the Israelites wandering in the desert. The Israelites struggled to leave behind their old identity and embrace the liminal space that would lead them to something new. It took 40 years for them to release their old identity as slaves and embrace their new identity as free and chosen people.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 3.

After listing several Scripture references to liminality, Beaumont comments, “Each biblical journey is a venturing forth: an ending, followed by a disorienting season of transition, and finally a reorientation to something new that is substantially different from what was left behind. Clearly, God works with liminality.”<sup>33</sup> Even the whole scope of the Christian journey can be seen as liminal. We are living in the time between Christ’s death and Christ’s return and God is working within these times.

Whether it is Brueggemann’s structure of orientation, disorientation, and reorientation, or St. Ignatius’ terms of consolation and desolation, or Beaumont’s stages of separation, liminal space, and reorientation, we can see parallels to what Christians have faced over the last few years. Life before the pandemic was somewhat predictable, but definitely familiar. Life during the pandemic, and still for some people, was chaos and disorder. Life today is learning to embrace the new.

What I like about Beaumont’s writing is that she gives practical insight into how Christian leaders can lead during times of liminality. The pandemic proved to be a difficult time in the life of the church, and leading during this time proved to be challenging. As we have discussed, people struggled with spiritual rhythms and even struggled with the Church.

In the Spring of 2022, Mike Moore wrote an article for Christianity Today titled, *The Rise of the ‘Umm’s.*’ The premise of the article is that when asked, “where do you go to church?” instead of responding with your church’s name or “I don’t go to church,” more and more people are pausing and answering the question with “umm.” People don’t know how to identify their responses. The answer is not directly Covid-19 related, but there is a correlation between

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 4.

the rise of “umms” and the total events that have transpired over the last few years, the social, political, and health challenges. Moore wrote in the subheading of the article, “Unlike ‘Nones’ and ‘Dones,’ many church-adjacent Christians want to return to a local body – but they feel stuck.”<sup>34</sup> He describes in the article that many are stuck because they want to ensure that they are part of a church that has a spiritually-driven mission and is leading with the right spiritual virtues.

To me, there are some parallels between those who feel stuck, according to Moore’s article, and Beaumont’s teaching on leading through liminality. To keep this engagement project focused, this project was not a direct answer to Moore’s article, but it was an attempt to help people feel unstuck in their spiritual journey. This project served as part of leading through liminality.

### **The Exile:**

The similarities between the exile and the pandemic are important to note as we discuss increasing engagement. The exile and the pandemic both served as disruptions to normal spiritual patterns. The exile and the pandemic both separated believers and the exile and the pandemic both served as a marker of “disorientation.”

One way that I approached the pandemic, and leading through this liminal period, was to look at the book of Nehemiah and compare the quarantine with the exile. I’m not equating the suffering the Jews faced throughout the exile with the sufferings of the pandemic and quarantine isolations. There is no comparison when we look through the lens of suffering. There are, however, some similarities when we define the exile as a disrupted time to the

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<sup>34</sup> Mike Moore, *Christianity Today*, The Rise of the ‘Umms’, March 29, 2022.

spiritual rhythms of life and the same disruptions the pandemic caused. When the Jews were exiled, they certainly faced disruptions in their normal spiritual practices and rhythms. They were living in a distant land and their spiritual practices were hindered. Both the exile and the pandemic caused disruptions to the normative spiritual rhythms and signs of health in the local church.

The exile and the pandemic were also similar due to the dispersion of believers. During the quarantine, believers were isolated to their individual homes and could not meet. During the exile, believers were exiled during different time periods and separated into different locations. Mervin Breneman writes about the exile in his commentary, “The Babylonian siege of Jerusalem in 597 B.C. and the first deportation, which included the exile of King Jehoiachin, are generally considered the beginning of the Babylonian captivity (2 Kgs 24:10–17; Ezek 1:2; 33:21; 40:1).”<sup>35</sup> This was the first wave and then almost ten years later, King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and sent out a second wave of Jews to Babylon. Breneman comments, “In 587 B.C. Jerusalem was decimated, and the final deportation of exiles was led to Babylon (2 Kgs 25:8–21). However, Israelite exiles were already in Mesopotamia.”<sup>36</sup> Jews were sent out of Jerusalem at different periods, and it is noted that some Jews remained in Jerusalem.

Breneman writes more on the separation of Jews by stating,

The Babylonians usually settled their captives in different locations in Babylonia in order to provide labor and economic growth as well as for the purpose of strengthening their agriculture (Jer 29:5–7; 2 Kgs 18:32). They also were taken to administrative centers such as Calah, Nineveh, Babylon, Gozan, and Nippur. Psalm 137 mentions the rivers of Babylon. One important Jewish population center was Tel Aviv in the southern part of

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<sup>35</sup> Mervin Breneman, *Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther*, electronic ed., vol. 10, *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 26.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

Babylon (Ezek 1:3; 3:15) on the River Kebar, a river-canal that passed by the large commercial city of Nippur.<sup>37</sup>

Walter Brueggemann identifies the year 587 (some biblical scholars cite the exile in 586) as an important marker that began this time of disorienting. Recalling Brueggemann's framework of orientation, disorientation, and reorientation, we can see traces of this framework in his approach to the exile. Brueggemann states, "The year 587 is the occasion when the temple in Jerusalem was burned, the holy city was destroyed, the Davidic dynasty was terminated, the leading citizens deported. Public life in Judah came to an end."<sup>38</sup> For Brueggemann, this year was the peak for disorientation and letting go of the life that was once familiar. He writes, "Judah had two tasks in this crisis of life and faith. It had to let go of the old world of king and temple that God had now taken from it. It had to receive from God's hand a new world which it did not believe possible and which was not the one it would have preferred or chosen."<sup>39</sup> The year 587 is a metaphor in Brueggemann's book, *Hopeful Imagination: Prophetic Voices in Exile*, for the transformation that took place for the Israelites. They had to learn to let go of the old world in order so they could receive the new world. The two terms he uses to describe this metaphor are *relinquishment* and *receiving*. Certainly, the year 2020 could be viewed with the same metaphor similarities. Like the year of the exile, the year of the pandemic has become a marker in our time. It is a year remembered. Most ministry conversations are posed as before 2020 or after 2020. We are now in the process of moving forward with a new world of spiritual engagement and innovative approaches to ministry. The

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>38</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *Hopeful Imagination: Prophetic Voices in Exile* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 3.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 4.

most important aspect of Brueggemann's metaphor is the truly transformative work that takes place in a person's heart once they experience the grace of Jesus. This is where the metaphor for the exile and pandemic can no longer be called a metaphor. When a person places their trust in Jesus, there is true relinquishment to their old life and a true receiving of the new. Paul illustrates this so well in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"<sup>40</sup>

The exile is not the pandemic and vice versa, but when analyzed, we can identify some similarities. This comparison and similarities are important to note because conversations about the exile usher in conversations about the return. The similarities between the exile and the pandemic unite the two together and allow us to examine the re-entry of the Jewish community and learn from their re-entry process. The return from exile was a guide for this engagement project.

### **The Return:**

The return from exile is the pinnacle of this project. The return sparked the initiative for this project and laid the foundation for the efforts to help a spiritual community re-engage. When we build upon the similarities found between the exile and the pandemic, then the natural transition is to study how the Israelites returned from exile and the careful attention that the spiritual leaders did to help the exiled population return to the familiar. Brueggemann writes about the attention that is needed by spiritual leaders in times of disorientation and reorientation. He states, "Our situation also is one of loss and gift. Our vocation is to relinquish and receive, and to help others to do so. But that vocation is not simply one of "social action,"

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<sup>40</sup> All Scripture quotations in this project are from the NIV.

which might be suggested by such grand themes as relinquishment and reception. Ours is equally a vocation of pastoral action and pastoral care.”<sup>41</sup> Brueggemann mentions that as spiritual leaders, there is a duty to not only relinquish and receive in our personal lives, but to help others do so as well.

We can only imagine some of the feelings that the Jewish community faced as they re-entered Jerusalem. Some possible questions they could have asked were, why would we want to re-enter something that is still fragmented? What will the new structure look like? How long will it take to adjust? What if we fail? Those are some of the same questions many church leaders faced coming out of the pandemic. The fear of adjustment was on everyone’s mind after several months of a global pandemic. This all-encompassing physical and emotional weight is technically known as “re-entry anxiety.” Re-entry anxiety is anxiety caused when re-entering a familiar space after being disconnected for a set amount of time. This could be as massive as returning to Jerusalem after exile or returning to church or work after being isolated for a long duration. Re-entry anxiety can even be prevalent when returning to work after a few days of vacation. It is re-entering a space after being disconnected. When we are disconnected from a familiar space, our minds and bodies begin to adjust to new rhythms, and then when we re-enter, we ask our bodies to rejoin the old rhythms in a short time frame, sometimes instantaneously.

In 2020-2021, many companies launched “back to work” plans to help employees adjust to returning to the office. These plans were often filled with step-by-step details, and it was a gradual process. Christina Mangurian, a UCSF Employee Coping and Resiliency Program

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<sup>41</sup> Brueggemann (1986), 7.



member, wrote an article offering tips for managers to help their employees gradually return to the office and managing tactics to help with re-entry anxiety.<sup>42</sup> Suggested in her plan and adopted by most companies included a hybrid model. The hybrid model suggested that employees work a few days at home and a few days in the office for a certain time period before they were asked to come back into the office full time.

Churches did something similar. Churches announced to their congregation cleaning protocols, mask requirements, and some churches asked their congregation to register to help monitor the crowds. Restaurants even did something similar. Many businesses and churches tried to develop plans that would help ease some of the anxiety for their people and make it easier for people to re-enter their familiar spaces.

When we study the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, we do not see many re-entry strategies. In these books, some people were already living in Jerusalem, and there was no elaborate plan to help grow the Jewish population. However, we notice a strategic plan to help the people in Jerusalem re-engage. Church leaders absolutely needed to announce re-entry protocols as people regathered for worship. Still, as we study the return of the exile, we see a pastoral responsibility to help people re-engage. It's not enough to make the church a place that doesn't spread a virus. It is even more critical and eternally impacting to help lead congregations to re-engage spiritually. This is the type of leadership that Ezra and Nehemiah displayed. They focused more on people re-engaging rather than just being physically present.

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<sup>42</sup> Christina Mangurian, *Re-Entering the Workplace in 2021: A Manager's Guide*, Retrieved from <https://psychiatry.ucsf.edu/sites/psych.ucsf.edu/files/Cope%20Re-Entry%20Guide%20for%20Managers.pdf>.

When our church struggled with many congregants re-engaging in spiritual rhythms and practices, I began to think of times in Scripture when believers faced something similar. I immediately thought of the exile and the return from the exile and how it related to the pandemic and church engagement. I began to study the strategies of Ezra and Nehemiah, primarily Nehemiah, to learn from their intentional leadership. I began to write down the purposeful acts they used, and I began to think of ways our church could model something similar to help our congregation increase engagement. Throughout the book of Nehemiah, we read of activities, repairs, and renewals that helped the Israelites re-habituate to the spiritual practices that were once familiar. I studied these as we led up to this project, and they provided a framework for the engagement activities in which we participated.

### **Leading Through Liminality:**

Leading during challenging times takes a certain type of leadership. Liminality is the ambiguous space between two time periods. Liminality is not what was, but not yet what is to come. How does one lead during this strategic time? Nehemiah, and the Israelite community, give us an example of what it means to lead and live during challenging times. They demonstrate the intentional shifts needed to enter into a new reality and a renewed covenant.

Many Christian leaders have studied Nehemiah and listed his leadership ability as a crucial element for the revitalization of Jerusalem. There is no question that Nehemiah was a great leader, and there are many characteristics that Nehemiah displayed that helped rally a community to reach a common goal. I also think that as we peel back the layers of Nehemiah's leadership, we learn more about what it means to lead in liminal spaces. Susan Beaumont calls

liminality a “sacred” space because it leads us into the newness that God has provided.

Strategic leadership in liminality helps communities reorient to a new chapter in their story.

For Beaumont, the first step of leading through liminality is leading with Presence.

Leading with Presence is not only a physical posture, but it is leading with the truest form of a

leader’s heart. It is not a façade or a positional leader, but it is a leader who leads from within.

Beaumont writes that Presence leadership is “a leadership stance born of the authentic self,

unencumbered by ego, and led to the Divine.”<sup>43</sup> This description of leadership reflects the

nature of Christ, who led with humility and in submission to the Father. This is Christian

leadership in the fullest form. Beaumont continues describing Presence leadership when she

states,

Presence has its roots in the Christian wisdom tradition of Contemplation.

Contemplation is an ongoing discipline of seeing events, people, and issues through the lens of ‘God Consciousness.’ We practice letting go of personal agendas, our own anger, fear, and judgments. In the empty space created by this release, we invite God to speak and we listen. With contemplative hearts, we live openly and lead with mercy and patience. We embrace our own vulnerability and become generous toward the unsettling issues facing us in the here and now.<sup>44</sup>

Leading with Presence leans into consciousness that impacts the actions and decisions

we take. When in tune with Presence leadership, our consciousness and behaviors are guided

by our openness to God in the situation. When this happens, we awaken to the *why* and

purpose. Remembering Simon Sinek’s teaching on understanding the *why* and the Golden

Circle, Beaumont’s teaching on leading with Presence parallels Sinek’s argument. Beaumont

states, “When leading, most of us are aware of *what* we do and what others do. We are also

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<sup>43</sup> Beaumont (2019), 24.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 24.

aware of *how* we do things, the processes that we follow when we act. Most of us are less aware of *why* we do what we do, the inner source from which our actions arise.”<sup>45</sup> Leading with Presence illuminates the *why*.

Nehemiah understood why he was making requests to the king and why he wanted to return to Jerusalem. He understood that the assignment meant more than just rebuilding the walls. He understood what the return of the wall would mean for God’s people. Nehemiah led with Presence. Beaumont suggests three spiritual shifts that a leader can take to invite Presence into a leader’s stance. From the text, it appears that Nehemiah made each of these three shifts.

The first shift is from knowing to unknowing. During this shift, we move aside our knee-jerk reactive thoughts and allow God to reveal to us his will. Beaumont writes, “We slow down our thinking, observe our judgments, and recognize our own compulsions and ego-centric concerns.”<sup>46</sup> When leading, it can be easy to make quick assumptions about a situation and vocalize a plan. Mature leadership, and leading with Presence, is taking a step back from the situation and refraining from making a rash decision. Our culture, certainly during the pandemic, feeds off quick decision-making, but this can often produce fewer effective results. When posed with the question by the king, “What is it you want?” Nehemiah didn’t immediately respond with a productive plan. Nehemiah didn’t say, “here is my five-step plan to rebuild the wall.” After receiving this question from King Artaxerxes, Nehemiah 2:4 reads, “Then I prayed to the God of heaven.” Nehemiah didn’t know how to answer. He didn’t know

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 37.

how to respond to King Artaxerxes until after he prayed. Beaumont teaches us that when we make this first shift and take time to step away from our own thoughts, we can tap into spiritual intuition. She writes, “Traditional practices of leadership expect a leader to apply the best of what they know to an identified problem or challenge. By contrast, leading with Presence invites us to unknow, to drop preconceived certainties about how things ought to unfold, to acknowledge that God’s work within an organization is mysterious.”<sup>47</sup>

The second shift to inviting Presence leadership is to move from advocating to attending. Advocating is more hands-off, while attending is living in the moment. Similar to the previous shift, advocating dictates an action plan without a full understanding of the situation. In liminal seasons, advocacy assumes certainty about a situation that is not fully known or grasped. Advocacy creates a plan just so there is a plan in place. Attending brings oneself to the fullness of the situation and embraces it with totality. Beaumont describes this difference when she states,

By contrast, an attending stance invites me to love God and others in the situation directly in front of me. I avoid adopting an opinion, cause, principle, or targeted outcome. I embrace the fullness of the present moment for all that it might teach me. I open all my senses to experience the situation before me through the divine consciousness that dwells with it and within me. Attending is a capacity for deep seeing and listening. It is an act of being fully present in the moment.<sup>48</sup>

Nehemiah demonstrated this shift. After Nehemiah prayed, here is how he responded to the king, “I answered the king, ‘If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 41.

it.”<sup>49</sup> Nehemiah wanted to be where the people were so he could experience the situation fully. He could have advocated for the people in Jerusalem. He could have asked the king to send supplies or even send people to help rebuild the wall, but Nehemiah wanted to be fully present. Nehemiah directly embraced the situation. He attended; he did not advocate.

The third leadership shift is to move from striving to surrender. There are similarities in each of these shifts as a leader adjusts their leadership stance to welcome Presence. Like the others, “The striving self likes to power through barriers and get things resolved. The striving self is a false self.”<sup>50</sup> When describing what it means to lead with Presence, Beaumont described laying aside our ego and, through contemplation, leaning into the Divine. Perhaps this is one of the most difficult shifts. It seems that in our culture, a leader who portrays a striving stance is more praised than a leader who surrenders. As Christian leaders, we know what it means to surrender, and again, Jesus gives us the perfect example. The cross is the picture of surrender.

Making this shift also allows us to embrace the reality of our circumstances and even the reality of our past. Beaumont states, “Surrender means accepting the past for what it was, embracing the present reality, yielding to the mystery of the future and the mystery of God in that future.”<sup>51</sup> Could you imagine what the people in Jerusalem thought when the cupbearer to the king showed up? Would he be bringing more judgment or restrictions from the king? Perhaps, he would bring liberation? Yet, when Nehemiah arrived, he did not start striving to restore what had been broken. Nehemiah 2:11-12 reads, “I went to Jerusalem, and after staying

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<sup>49</sup> Nehemiah 2:5 NIV

<sup>50</sup> Beaumont (2019), 43.

<sup>51</sup> Beaumont (2019), 43.

there three days I set out during the night with a few others. I had not told anyone what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on.” When Nehemiah arrived, he took three days to see the ruins and listen to the people. He took three days to embrace the destruction, and he snuck out in the middle of the night to examine what had been lost. In these moments of contemplation, Nehemiah had to surrender to the past. When he lurked around the walls at night, he had to replay the destruction in his mind. He had to acknowledge what had happened, and he also had to surrender to the reality of the present. He examined the fallen walls and the broken gates. He allowed this time for God to bring a fuller picture of the work ahead. He took time to learn what was needed so that he could embrace what God would do in the future. He attended to the people and surrendered to the work that God would do for His people.

The movement from disorientation to reorientation takes a leader who leads with Presence and relies on a tremendous amount of work from God. Nehemiah, and the Israelite community, give us an example of what it means to live and lead when we don’t know where we are going. They show us what reorienting looks like and what it means to walk into the new reality that God has paved. By the time the work of Ezra and Nehemiah is completed, we see the transition from exiled living to living within the renewed covenantal promises of God.

### **The Nonanxious Presence:**

Leading during times of social, political, and health challenges can be summed up by stating that we are leading during anxious times. In chapter one, we discussed that there will always be social, political, and health challenges. The Church always has and always will face difficult times because the world is broken. The nature of our culture is broken. Only the first

two chapters of the Bible reveal to us a picture of earthly perfection. Sure, there are beautiful and lovely aspects of our world, but perfection will not come until Jesus returns and brings perfection with Him. In this time of waiting, we need to lean into the comfort and guidance of God's Spirit. This is Beaumont's description of leading with Presence. We lead with this stance while acknowledging the reality of our day and the reality of our human condition. We all carry some sort of anxiety and lead others with anxiety and lead during times that promote anxiety. Clinical psychologist Dr. Harriet Lerner says that to be alive is to have anxiety.<sup>52</sup> We all have some sort of anxiety; it just manifests in different ways for different people.

The Jews in Jerusalem faced a political Persian threat and faced a social threat of having a decimated city. These challenges had to have increased the anxiety level of the exile remnants. Nehemiah's anxiety caused him to mourn for days. There's no question that the exile was an anxious time. Similarly, the pandemic was an anxious time. What can we glean from the return and of Nehemiah's leadership? We know that Nehemiah demonstrated his stance of leading with Presence. Continuing with the theme of leading with presence, Peter Steinke labels it as "leading with a nonanxious presence." For Beaumont, Presence represents God's "presence." It acknowledges God's Spirit in the situation and in the leader. Steinke's description is much of the same. In Steinke's book, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times*, he states that a leader has two options when leading in crisis. The leader can either *react* to the situation or the leader can *respond*. Reactionary leaders face challenging events with immaturity. Steinke writes, "They blame more often; they criticize harshly; they take offense easily; they focus on

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<sup>52</sup> Harriet Lerner, *Fear and Other Uninvited Guests: Tackling the Anxiety, Fear, and Shame That Keeps Us from Optimal Living and Loving* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), p. 59.



others; they want instant solutions; they cannot see the part they play in problems.”<sup>53</sup> Leaders who respond to challenging situations display more maturity. Steinke describes leaders who respond as “more thoughtful and reflective; they act on principle, not instinct; they can stand back and observe.”<sup>54</sup> It is easy to see which of these two types of leaders will have the most positive effect during times of crisis and which type of leader helps their congregation navigate anxious times. Whichever way the leader chooses to lead, their decision can either raise or lower the level of anxiety in a congregation. Steinke states, “The leader’s capacity to be in conscious control over (to respond to) automatic functioning (reaction) affects the wellbeing of the whole community.”<sup>55</sup> The nonanxious presence of a leader can have a calming influence on others who are reactionary.

Nehemiah demonstrated a nonanxious presence, and he had a positive effect on the Israelite community. Nehemiah brought a calming presence when he arrived in Jerusalem. We can recall his three days of observation and conversation. After three days of seeing and listening, Nehemiah communicated his plan, and it motivated the stagnant community to action. After revealing his plan to rebuild the walls and referencing the work of God, the community was ready to begin. Nehemiah 2:18 tells of their response, “They replied, ‘Let us start rebuilding.’ So they began this good work.” Nehemiah responded and so did the people. Nehemiah took time to step back and observe. He took time to contemplate and imagine, and

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<sup>53</sup> Peter L. Steinke, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times: Being Calm and Courageous No Matter What* (Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2006), p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

his leadership presence affected the community's behavior. He was able to lower the level of anxiety and unite people to action.

The pandemic was an anxiety influencer, but there will also be other times in church congregations that will cause anxiety. An effective leader must be prepared to respond. Peter Steinke wrote another book titled, *How Your Church Family Works*, and he mentions, "All relationship systems become anxious. Put people together and inevitably anxiety will arise."<sup>56</sup> Again, when working with people, we can be certain that challenging and anxious times will exist. Mature Christian leaders should demonstrate a response to these situations and not be so overcome that they become reactionary. Steinke states that there isn't a uniform procedure to account for anxious circumstances. He writes, "What precisely triggers anxiety is unique to each system. Common activators are significant changes and losses. They upset the stable patterns and balance of the system."<sup>57</sup> Using terminologies like "losses" and "upset balances of systems," rings familiarity to Brueggemann's teaching of disorientation. This teaches us that anxious times can be linked to disoriented feelings.

Though Steinke does not outline a predictable pattern for anxious times, he does recognize that putting people together is a recipe for increased anxiety. Alongside the flawed nature of people interacting together, I would also note the working of Satan when trying to make Kingdom impact. This recognition will keep us alert and keep our energies focused. When faced with opposition, sometimes we neglect this truth and push our negative energies on other people, which just continues to elevate tensions. In the concluding chapter of Ephesians,

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<sup>56</sup> Peter Steinke, *How Your Church Family Works: Understanding Congregations as Emotional Systems* (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield, 2014), p. 15.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

the Apostle Paul encourages the church in Ephesus to be prepared for Satan's plans. Paul writes, "Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes."<sup>58</sup> This is after Paul previously referenced Satan's presence and work (Eph. 2:2; 4:27). Christian leadership anticipates times of opposition and recognizes Satan's schemes. Opposition can come in the form of people or from Satan working through the words and work of people. Either way, we need to be alert, and of course, we can acknowledge that congregations can dispute from within. Christians can cause opposition for other Christians. Steinke states that most of the time, this happens because people have "experienced traumatization within the last few years. Unable to manage their anxiety, they played it out on the congregational stage, shifting their anxiety to an issue or a person."<sup>59</sup> A lot of times, disputes or anxious situations in Christian communities are a result of someone transferring their frustration from one situation or person to another.

When opposition occurs, it increases the anxiety of the Christian community, causing it to react negatively. This was true for the Israelite community. In Nehemiah, chapter four, the Israelites wanted to quit because the work was too hard, and they began facing opposition from outside of their community. In verse 10, we read, "Meanwhile, the people in Judah said, 'The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall.' Also our enemies said, 'Before they know it or see us, we will be right there among them and will kill them and put an end to the work.' Then the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times over, "Wherever you turn, they will attack us." The work became too

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<sup>58</sup> Ephesians 6:11

<sup>59</sup> Steinke (2014), 51.

heavy, and they started to feel pressure from Sanballat and others. The Israelites were ready to throw in the towel and be comforted by the fact that they at least tried.

A part of Nehemiah's work in rebuilding the walls was providing a systemic change to how the community was operating. The walls were more than a fortress. The walls represented a formed people group and their covenantal relationship with God. The walls were the first step in the systemic change that Nehemiah was leading. Steve Cuss writes in his book *Managing Leadership Anxiety*, "Part of systemic change is learning to be a nonanxious presence in a highly anxious environment."<sup>60</sup>

When describing a nonanxious presence, Cuss connects it to a differentiated leader. Cuss defines differentiation as "the ability to be fully yourself while being fully connected to people. It is gaining clarity on where 'I' end and the 'other' begins. A differentiated person allows space between herself and another, even when that person is highly anxious or asking for rescue. A differentiated leader is clear on her own values and convictions and is not easily swayed from them."<sup>61</sup> A differentiated leader has the proper stance in an anxious situation. The leader knows how the people are feeling, yet the leader isn't so close that they take on others' anxiety. Cuss defines the opposite sides of differentiation as enmeshment and detachment. He writes, "An enmeshed leader is unable to hold any space between himself and the other...The detached leader holds too much space between himself and the other."<sup>62</sup> The leader must balance being too close to the highly anxious person and being too distant from the person. A

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<sup>60</sup> Steve Cuss, *Managing Leadership Anxiety: Yours and Theirs* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2019), p. 105.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

differentiated leader offers a nonanxious presence. Cuss states, “An enmeshed leader offers anxious presence. A detached leader offers nonanxious absence.”<sup>63</sup>

Nehemiah rightly responds to the Israelite’s desire to quit. Verse 14 reads, “After I looked things over, I stood up and said to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people, ‘Don’t be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.’ When our enemies heard that we were aware of their plot and that God had frustrated it, we all returned to the wall, each to our own work.” We must continue to identify the maturity in Nehemiah’s leadership in anxious times. Nehemiah does not irresponsibly react. When put in similar positions, many leaders will bark back orders to continue the work and not acknowledge a real threat. Reactionary leaders cast blame and do not see the full picture. Mature leaders, like Nehemiah, take time to respond. I love how the beginning of verse 14 reminds us that Nehemiah takes time to take intel of the crisis. He takes a moment to contemplate and gather his thoughts, and then he rightly responds. Nehemiah demonstrates differentiation. He does not take on the increased anxiety of the Israelites, yet he is still connected to them and reminds them of their personal motivation. He reminds them of their families and the backing of God. Cuss writes, “Differentiation is the courage to lead people to a difficult place while still being deeply connected. Connected to yourself and your conviction, connected to the people you are leading, and remaining nonanxious in the face of anxious responses. It’s the ability to walk into

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 119.

an anxious situation and lead people into a new reality while maintaining caring connection to them..."<sup>64</sup>

Taking on the task of mentioning and working through anxiety is an anxious task. There are many books, articles, and professions centered around helping people manage anxiety. Why mention anxiety in a writing on an engagement initiative? A leader's stance in anxious times is directly related to the health of a congregation. The pandemic was and continues to be an anxious time for many individuals, leaders, and churches. Many churches are still working towards reorientation. When leading through liminality, it is imperative that the leader remain healthy. A healthy leadership stance does not mean that the leader is void of anxiety. Remember, to be alive is to have anxiety. Cuss writes, "A nonanxious presence does not mean that you no longer battle anxiety, it means your anxiety no longer infects your system, and your capacity to manage others' anxiety is increased."<sup>65</sup> Liminality, by default, is an anxious time. No leader wants to get behind the leadership wheel without the ability to see through the windshield. We all want to know where we are going and how we are going to get there. Liminality promotes anxiety. The healthiest way to lead a congregation through this period is to choose to respond to the situation, not react. The leader's choice to respond will have the greatest impact on the congregation. Steinke writes,

The nonanxious presence of congregational leaders has a positive effect. It leads to less friction, more imagination, and healthier functioning. A person's presence as a leader is incredibly valuable to the welfare of the congregation. How a person handles his anxiety, the anxiety focused on him by others, and the anxiety seeping into the system is vital to the welfare of the congregation. Leadership, often thought to be about action, is more about interaction – that is, regulation of a person's activity when relating to others. Since anxiety can be infectious, the leader does not want to be its source or its

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 121-122.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 124.

transmitter. In today's topsy-turvy emotional world, the leader cannot be as anxious as the people she serves. In effect, the anxious leader leaves the congregation without real leadership.<sup>66</sup>

The past few years have been moments of separation and disorientation. Leadership in the past few years has been uncharted territory. Leaders had to make decisions, and they did not fully know how their decisions would play out. Nehemiah's leadership teaches us that God works in times that are uncertain. God works in the liminality, and as spiritual leaders, our approach to liminal spaces should be leading with the confidence of God's presence. We cannot allow the situation to overcome our dependence on the Lord. With this perspective, leaders can respond to crises and provide a calming effect for the congregation. A nonanxious presence will give the congregation hope, inspiration, and help lower the level of anxiety. This type of stance is the most effective way to help lead a congregation towards reorientation and help congregants re-engage in spirituality.

### **The Holistic Self:**

Moving forward, we will continue to study the book of Nehemiah and the practices used to help the Israelites re-engage. Nehemiah's leadership stance is the truest form of Christian leadership. It is a dependence on God and an understanding that God is in control. God does not leave his people in despair but works to reorient them to a new reality. It is when we let go of the old that we can embrace the new. Furthering our study in Nehemiah, we will practically examine some of the principles that were applied to help the Israelites re-engage. The practices that we will examine will impact the holistic self. The renewal of the covenant with God was a commitment of the entire being.

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<sup>66</sup> Steinke (2006), 34.

## CHAPTER 3 PRACTICES

### Chapter intent:

This chapter seeks to identify the importance formative practices have in directing one's desire toward God. Building off James K.A. Smith's<sup>67</sup> teachings and highlighting some of the practices used in Nehemiah, I describe how the practices we engage, both inwardly and outwardly, influence what we desire. The intentionality of formative practices helped structure the project and identify concepts for measuring spiritual engagement.

### Practices in Nehemiah:

Churches regularly fill their calendar with activities. The theory is that we can reach more people if we do as many activities as possible. This creates a "ministry buffet." Church bulletins and websites look like a buffet where people can pick and choose what appeases their spiritual appetite. This is a very popular ministry approach, and churches have been doing this for years. This approach often leads to ministry burnout by ministers, volunteers, and a church lacking vision. Bart Rendel and Doug Parks write about this buffet approach in their book *Intentional Churches*. They write, "Buffets are those long stretches of ministry upon ministry, each claiming they are the most important yet none living up to expectations. They take a lot to keep going, with constant upkeep, and the church is left with depleted resources and few strategically fed."<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2009).

<sup>68</sup> Bart Rendel and Doug Parks, *Intentional Churches: How Implementing an Operating System Clarifies Vision, Improves Decision Making, and Stimulates Growth* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2020), p. 90.



There are numerous downsides to a crisis, but perhaps one of the benefits of a crisis is that it creates space for a leader to clarify the mission. In the midst of a crisis, leaders often clear the clutter to focus on what is most important. I believe we saw this during the pandemic. When the “ministry buffet” was stopped, churches focused on what mattered most. That’s why during the pandemic, many churches were more intentional about giving. In Fillinger’s article, *Ministry in a (Post) Covid World*, he stated that the researched churches in 2021 cited that the number one aspect of ministry that they were most proud of was “Community Outreach Ministries – serving local needs through various partnerships and programs.”<sup>69</sup>

Across the nation, local food banks were experiencing higher volumes of people, and many churches stepped up and helped keep local food banks stocked. I know this was true in our community. In their August 2021 newsletter<sup>70</sup>, the Worthington Resource Pantry cited a 79 percent increase in families being served compared to their 2019 serving numbers. To accommodate this need, they also cited a 61 percent increase in volunteers. Many people and many churches were helping their community, despite the stop in ministry programs at the building. Over the summer months of 2020-2022, our church collected over 6,000 pounds of food and resources for the Worthington Resource Pantry during each summer drive.

Though crises are difficult, they give time for reflection. It helps us see the broader picture and ask what is most important. Some possible questions to ponder during difficult times might be: What matters most important in my life? What is most important in my family? What is most important in my ministry? What is most important to our church? This type of

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<sup>69</sup> Fillinger (2022, May/June), 31.

<sup>70</sup> July 2021 Service Outcomes (2021, August) *Hungry to Share*. Retrieved from <https://mailchi.mp/worthingtonresourcepantry/augnews>.

reflection gives us a broader picture, and it helps us focus on what really matters. The pandemic provided time for this type of reflection. It allowed leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of ministry practices and to give focus to ministry intent moving forward. It allowed time to re-examine our “ministry buffet” and the complications that might be present in our ministry contexts. Rendel and Parks write, “Herein lies an important truth: yesterday’s solutions always create tomorrow’s problems, and today’s innovations become tomorrow’s challenges. This is why we must develop routine methods of rigorous, honest evaluation, because strategies don’t work forever. Nothing should be sacred – except the gospel – when it comes to Great Commission activation.”<sup>71</sup> A direct response from a leader with a nonanxious presence during challenging times is to simplify and clarify. After this initial step, we must implement strategies moving forward that give an honest evaluation of our ministry approach to determine the effectiveness of helping people move a step closer to Jesus.

A thorough study of Nehemiah reveals a similar leadership approach. We have already established that Nehemiah responded to the wall crisis, he did not react. Nehemiah led with a nonanxious presence. Nehemiah simplified and clarified the actions needed to help the Israelites rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. This response helped the Israelites take their first steps of re-engagement. Here are a few of the ways that Nehemiah and the Israelites responded:

- Nehemiah made prayer the priority.

Nehemiah 1:4, *“When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.”*

Nehemiah 2:4, *“The king said to me, ‘What is it you want?’ Then I prayed to the God of heaven.”*

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<sup>71</sup> Rendel and Parks (2020), 91.

- Nehemiah took time to process what had happened and developed a strategic plan.

Nehemiah 2:13, *“By night I went out through the Valley Gate toward the Jackal Well and the Dung Gate, examining the walls of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire.”*

Nehemiah 2:17, *“Then I said to them, ‘You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.’”*

- The Israelites relied on relational and physical community.

Nehemiah 3:4 – *“Meremoth son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, repaired the next section. Next to him Meshullam son of Berekiah, the son of Meshezabel, made repairs, and next to him Zadok son of Baana also made repairs.”* (Nehemiah chapter three is filled with the phrases “next to them/after them.”)

- They kept the vision in focus despite opposition.

Nehemiah 4:17-18 – *“Those who carried materials did their work with one hand and held a weapon in the other, and each of the builders wore his sword at his side as he worked.”*

- They put their hands to work.

Nehemiah 4:6 – *“So we rebuilt the wall till all of it reached half its height, for the people worked with all their heart.”*

Nehemiah 6:15 – *“So the wall was completed on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days.”*

- They valued numbers that demonstrated engagement.

Nehemiah 7:66 – *“The whole company numbered 42,360.”* (All of Nehemiah chapter seven is data collecting.)

- The Word of God was paramount for their re-engagement.

Nehemiah 8:1-3 – *“all the people came together as one in the square before the Water Gate. They told Ezra the teacher of the Law to bring out the Book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded for Israel. So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.”*

- All of these activities led to spiritual renewal.

Nehemiah 9:38 – *“In view of all this, we are making a binding agreement, putting it in writing, and our leaders, our Levites and our priests are affixing their seals to it.”*

All of these activities and practices were focused, and they all pointed to spiritual renewal and cultivating a people group that desired God. We must remember that there were already people in Jerusalem, yet the walls were not rebuilt, and they were not engaging in spiritual practices. Using a strategic plan that was simple and clear, Nehemiah was able to help the Israelites reach the point of spiritual renewal.

### **Inward focused practices:**

We might think of discipleship as a linear process. We might suggest that we learn something about God through hearing or reading the Word of God, and then what we learn takes root in our hearts and transforms the way we behave. Jesus taught something similar when he taught the Parable of the Sower. In this parable, it is only the seed that takes root in good soil that produces a crop, and the seed is referenced as the Word of God. Jesus states in

Mark 4:20, “like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown.”

This structure has frequently been used for discipleship curricula and church initiatives. Some Christian leaders often think that if people know more about God, they will live in a way that reflects their knowledge. Teachings and programs often reflect trying to help people know more about the Bible so they can reflect Jesus in their lives. This often produces a “heady” type approach to ministry and heavy reliance on trying to get congregants to “know more.” In James K. A. Smith’s book, *Desiring the Kingdom*, he suggests a different approach.<sup>72</sup> He suggests that it is not necessarily how much people know that influences their behavior, but it is the practices that they participate in that help form the person. Smith suggests that Christian education, both in the local church and in the Christian University, should shift from trying to transform a worldview through head knowledge and focus more on creating formative experiences that aim to shape the heart of the individual. For Smith, formation is greater than information, and the target for formation is the *kardia*, the heart or gut of a person. The formative practices that target the heart and shape the desire of a person are the liturgies the person participates in. Smith broadens liturgies to include the spiritual daily functions (both in the church and in the culture) that shape a person and writes that for true formative discipleship, Christian leaders should re-examine the usefulness of formative practices. Smith writes, “The core claim of this book is that liturgies – whether ‘sacred’ or ‘secular’ – shape and constitute our identities by

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<sup>72</sup> James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2009).

forming our most fundamental desires and our most basic attunement to the world. In short, liturgies make us certain kinds of people, and what defines us is what we *love*.<sup>73</sup>

Reflecting on Smith's dynamic shift, the shift is not necessarily creating more programs to help people "know more" but designing experiences for people to be formed in their hearts by God. Smith writes, "What would the church's practices have to look like if they're going to form us as the kind of people who desire something entirely different – who desire the kingdom?"<sup>74</sup> The heart is the target for formation, and formation leads to the greatest life change. This is why Smith suggests that leaders work to incorporate more engaging practices rather than depending solely on the growth of head knowledge. Smith writes, "Our ultimate love/desire is shaped by practices, not ideas that are merely communicated to us."<sup>75</sup> When the heart is the target for Christian practices, the heart helps direct the desire of the individual.

I believe Smith's concept of formation aligns with Jesus' parable of the Sower. In the Parable of the Sower, it was the surroundings that affected the results of the crop. In all four scenarios, the same seed was distributed, but there were differences surrounding the seed that determined if it was fruitful. If we compare the Parable of the Sower to Smith's teaching of formation and information, all four scenarios received the same information, but not all four scenarios were successful. In Jesus' explanation of the parable, He teaches his disciples that the seed did not take root in much of the soil because the person was distracted by other instances of life. Smith would state that the seeds that did not produce crop were distracted by what they thought would be the "good life." Whether it was through persecution, the desire for other

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 27.

things, or the distraction of wealth, the person was focused on what they perceived to be the “good life.” Smith describes humans as intentional beings, so the “good life” is our intentional target. Smith states, “As intentional, love always has a target, something that it intends or aims at. So as we inhabit the world primarily in a noncognitive, affective mode of intentionality, implicit in that love is an end, or *telos*. In other words, what we love is a specific vision of the good life, an implicit picture of what we think human flourishing looks like.”<sup>76</sup>

Each of us lives with a desired target, and the target is the “kingdom” or the “good life.” The kingdom can be different things for different people depending on what they perceive to be the desired goal. How we involve ourselves in the world and in habitual practices will directly influence how we define the target at which we are aiming our life. Smith sums this up by stating,

This love or desire – which is unconscious or noncognitive – is always aimed at some vision of the good life, some particular articulation of the kingdom. What primes us to be so oriented – and act accordingly – is a set of habits or dispositions that are formed in us through affective, bodily means, especially bodily practices, routines, or rituals that grab hold of our hearts through our imagination, which is closely linked to our bodily senses.<sup>77</sup>

Smith teaches that we all possess a vision of what we define as the good life, and this vision is our life’s target. The activities we engage in are forming our target, and the more we repeat these behaviors, the more our target gets formed. Over time, these develop our noncognitive desire. The question becomes, can a person adjust their vision of the good life? Can a person desire another “kingdom?” This is a profound theological and philosophical question; can a person adjust their heart's desire? I am reminded of Paul’s words in the book of

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 52.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 62-63.

Colossians, when he writes, “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.”<sup>78</sup> According to Paul, a person can adjust their target, their vision of the “good life,” especially after the person has experienced the “new life” in Christ. Paul states, “Just as you have been raised with Christ.”

Smith would also agree, hence the theme of his book, that a person can desire something different but would argue that a different desire would have to come from incorporating different practices. Smith demonstrates this by writing, “What we do (practices) is intimately linked to what we desire (love).”<sup>79</sup> In short, to change the desire, we would need to change practical behavior.

All of this is not void of intellect. I took Smith’s teaching as if the pendulum has swung in Christian education to rely solely on head knowledge and implementing a “Christian Worldview.” His argument is that since desire comes from the *kardia*, a shift to address practices that shape the heart is what can direct desire towards the Kingdom. Christian education should not just be informative but should include practices that are formational.

This concept was influential to this project. Our church engagement initiative was filled with practices that aimed to help form the person. The practices touched on the holistic self. I believe Nehemiah’s approach was similar. After the completion of the wall, Ezra read from the book of the law of Moses from “daybreak till noon.” Aligning with Smith’s teaching, reading from the law would have been an informative and formative practice. Though reading and

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<sup>78</sup> Colossians 3:1-2

<sup>79</sup> Smith (2009), 70.



hearing the Word seems geared towards head knowledge, there is power in hearing the Word read audibly and how it connects to the heart. In addition, reading the Word of God is a formative practice that Smith would later define in his book as liturgy. After reading from the law, the Israelites were led in several formative rituals and practices, including reinstating celebrations and confessions.

In Smith's writing, he uses the terms rituals, practices, and liturgies as formative activities. He broadens the term "liturgies" to include formative secular activities that target the heart, but he distinguishes between the terms. He states,

What is the relationship between practices, rituals, and liturgies? *Ritual* can be used in a very broad sense to refer to routines (as in the rituals of a batter before he steps into the batter's box)...practices are a species of the genus ritual. What, then, of liturgies? Not all rituals would be liturgies; not even all practices would be liturgies...Liturgies, then, are a certain species of practice. More specifically, I want to distinguish liturgies as *rituals of ultimate concern*: rituals that are formative for identity, that inculcate particular visions of the good life, and do so in a way that means to trump other ritual formations...Liturgies are the most loaded forms of ritual practice because they are after nothing less than our hearts. They want to determine what we love ultimately.<sup>80</sup>

Very much like Simon Sinek's *Golden Circle*, Smith illustrates the same concentric circle diagram with rituals being the broadest circle, practices narrowing in one circle size, and then liturgies filling the core circle. All three are influential in spiritual formation, but liturgical practices mostly impact desire.

The rituals, practices, and liturgies in our engagement initiative sought first to impact the person's inner being. Jesus quoted the Shema when he said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength."<sup>81</sup> This is

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 86-87.

<sup>81</sup> Mark 12:30

the first and greatest commandment, and after we have internally desired God, we begin to demonstrate that inward desire outwardly. The head and heart are closely related in Scripture, and they are internally linked in desire. Dr. Alan Ahlgrim writes in his book *Soul Strength*, “Fundamentally it is God who is the essential source of our heart health and strength. But how does God actually increase our heart health and strength? He does that through the only two things that are eternal: His Word and His people!”<sup>82</sup> This is the exact approach we took with the engagement initiative, we relied on the teaching of the Word of God, and we heavily promoted encouraging relationships. We attempted to accomplish this increase through several practices and liturgies that worked on redirecting the desire of one’s heart.

In all of the activities throughout this initiative, we encouraged activities to be done in community. Smith writes, “practices are *communal*,”<sup>83</sup> and Ahlgrim emphasizes community by stating, “No one can ever be heart healthy alone. We all need others to sharpen, encourage, resource, and connect us.”<sup>84</sup>

The first priority for increasing engagement was dealing with the matters of the heart and the head. They are closely linked to discipleship, which is the first step toward creating a desire for Kingdom. Opening ourselves up in these areas takes willingness and vulnerability, which are paramount to spiritual growth. As Ahlgrim says, “heart work is hard work.”<sup>85</sup> After prioritizing an inward focus, we continued to learn from Nehemiah’s approach and incorporated outward-focused formative activities.

### **Outward focus practices:**

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<sup>82</sup> Dr. Alan Ahlgrim, *Soul Strength: Rhythms for Thriving* (Littleton: Illumify Media Global, 2022), p. 31.

<sup>83</sup> Smith (2009), 62.

<sup>84</sup> Ahlgrim (2022), 31.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

A desire for God awakens the Spirit's role in a person's life. Often when we desire something outside of God, we suppress the Spirit of God within us. When the target of our heart is to be in a close relationship with God, we begin to feel the Spirit of God stirring within us, calling and motivating us to live a life that is full of the Spirit. Demonstrating that the Kingdom of God is our target, we respond in a way that presents this valid truth. The outward acts of our hands and feet demonstrate an inward connection and desire to be near to God. Where our feet are and what our hands are doing often reflect what is most important in our lives. They often reflect the decisions and commitments we make. When God is our desire, we make the commitment to be near Him and His people. Our first commitment is always to God. When God becomes our target, the first representation of that is when someone gives their whole self over to God, experiencing the grace and fullness that is represented in the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. As a part of the salvation process, a believer participates in the sacrament of baptism. This is a step of commitment and renewal. Smith writes, "Our baptism signals that we are new creatures, with new desires, a new passion for a very different kingdom; thus we renounce (and keep renouncing) our former desires."<sup>86</sup> Baptism was an integral part of the New Testament church and a demonstration of the commitment to both God and the Church. In his book titled *Paul's Idea of Community*, Robert J. Banks describes baptism as a sign of fellowship with God and fellowship with the Christian community. Banks writes, "Baptism is not an outward representation of an already formed inner decision; it is the way in which a decision is made (Acts 16:33-34). Nor does it automatically guarantee to anyone who undergoes it the

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<sup>86</sup> Smith (2009), 189.

benefits God attaches to it. Paul's linking of faith with baptism indicates that it was by immersion in water that an individual or family *actually committed* themselves to God."<sup>87</sup> Baptism is not a symbol, it is a sacred commitment. Mark Moore puts it this way, "*Baptism connects us to God*. It is not merely a symbol. It's a sacrament. Symbols merely represent something; a sacrament accomplishes something. Sacraments connect us to heavenly realities."<sup>88</sup> Treating baptism as a sacrament invites God to work within the act. Symbols can be practiced without spirituality, sacraments themselves are spiritual acts. Clark Pinnock, in his book on the Holy Spirit, declares, "God acts in the sacraments in the context of the response to faith."<sup>89</sup> When those at Pentecost wanted to respond to their faith, they asked what they were supposed to do next. They were cut to the heart (demonstrating a new desire) and Peter responded, "Repent, and be baptized."<sup>90</sup> In Peter's declaration, he united baptism with the coming of the Holy Spirit. Though there is not a consistent linear process in receiving the Spirit in the book of Acts, there is familiarity with water and Spirit. Pinnock writes, "In experience the Spirit may be manifested before baptism, as with Cornelius, but water remains the public sign of the Spirit's coming (Acts 10:44-48). The Spirit is normally given with water in response to faith. This makes baptism a sacrament and means of grace."<sup>91</sup>

My emphasis in stressing baptism as an outward act is to emphasize the inward desire that Smith was describing. Smith's progression to desiring the Kingdom is to participate in

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<sup>87</sup> Robert J. Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: Spirit and Culture in Early House Churches* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), p. 68.

<sup>88</sup> Mark Moore, *Core 52* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2019), p. 266.

<sup>89</sup> Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1996), p. 127.

<sup>90</sup> Acts 2:37-38

<sup>91</sup> Pinnock (1996), 124.

activities that shape the inward desire and then are manifested in our outward actions. Baptism is a representation of a heart that desires God. And baptism is not a symbol, but a sacred act where one gives their whole self to God. This decision to go “all in” invites the Spirit to dwell within the person and the Spirit leads to other acts that are manifested by a desire to be in relationship with God. Baptism and Spirit are closely connected. Pinnock cites the early church father Tertullian who stated, “‘The act of baptism is carnal, in that we are plunged in water, but the effect is spiritual, in that we are freed from sins’ (*On Baptism 7*).’ As the Spirit came upon Jesus as he came up out of the water, so water and Spirit baptism are associated.”<sup>92</sup>

The Spirit's indwelling is vital in how one participates in the world. The Spirit of God connects us with other believers and empowers us to use the granted gifts to impact the world we inhabit. Perhaps gathering physically with other believers has been overlooked due to the past few years. The casual and convenient approach of being physically united with believers has the potential for us to overlook the importance of gathering. Continuing with the theme of baptism, Banks writes, “Baptism also embodies something broader: a person or family beginning a relationship with others who have taken the same step.”<sup>93</sup> Desiring the Kingdom of God is both eternal and communal. For us to be healthy, both inwardly and outwardly, we need to be in physical community with other believers. Reflecting on the health of the heart, as Alan Ahlgrim reminds us, “No one can ever be heart healthy alone.” He goes on to state, “At times we even need others to challenge us to listen to our hearts so that we can lead from our hearts.”<sup>94</sup> The most intimate encouragement takes place in circles of people whom we trust the

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<sup>92</sup> Pinnock (1996), 125.

<sup>93</sup> Banks (2020), 68.

<sup>94</sup> Ahlgrim (2022), 31.

most. These relationships are usually made from our corporate church gatherings. There has been a decline in close relationships for the last few decades, but the events of the last few years have accelerated this relational calamity. A report in 2021, by the American Survey Center, revealed that over the last 30 years, both men and women have declined by 50 percent in claiming to have close friendships. The report cited that only one in four men claimed to have six or more close friends, and less than four in ten women claimed to have six or more close friends. Daniel Cox writes in this 2021 article, “As the pandemic recedes, the American economy will recover. Most businesses will adapt, evolve, and ultimately thrive. The future of American social life looks much bleaker. Our social circles are smaller, and friendship groups are depleted. The social recovery may take much longer, or it may not happen at all.”<sup>95</sup> For some Christians, their social life looks bleaker because the approach to gathering with other Christians, both in smaller groups and corporately, has been bleak. We cannot forget the Spirit that unites and empowers believers. Uniting and empowering are communal acts. When we gather, we answer the call to worship God and the call to live intentionally in our communities. Stanley Hauerwas words it this way, “Gathering indicates that Christians are called from the world, from their homes, from their families, to be constituted into a community capable of praising God.”<sup>96</sup>

To restate, this engagement project was not a project to increase church attendance, but a part of this project was to help people re-engage in community. There is a whole chapter

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<sup>95</sup> Daniel A. Cox, *Men’s Social Circles are Shrinking* <https://www.americansurveycenter.org/why-mens-social-circles-are-shrinking/> (Retrieved February 24, 2023).

<sup>96</sup> Stanley Hauerwas, *Liturgical Shape of the Christian Life: Teaching Christian Ethics as Worship, in In Good Company: The Church as Polis* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), p. 157.

dedicated in Nehemiah that lists a census of people in Jerusalem. Their spiritual revitalization was communal. Nehemiah wanted to know who was in Jerusalem and who was committed to renewal. As the Israelites were rebuilding the wall in Nehemiah chapter 3, the chapter is full of the phrase “next them/after them,” emphasizing that the work could not be done in isolation. The wall could not have been rebuilt without the commitment of being together, side-by-side and shoulder-to-shoulder. Perhaps some believers have lost sight of the importance of gathering due to convenience. I love how James K. A. Smith puts it:

We should consider something that easily slips from notice: the very fact that we’re here – that on a Sunday morning, one of the few times the city’s streets are quiet and even the steady hum of consumption and production gets a bit quieter, here we find people streaming into a space to gather for worship of the triune God. Singles and families, seniors and toddlers, make the effort to gather together at an appointed time not of their choosing. We could be still snug in our beds at home, or enjoying the *New York Times Magazine* with a coffee on our front porch. But instead we are part of – let’s be honest – a rather motley crew that has made its way here. Families have wrestled with children to make them presentable, and some probably argued in the car on the way here; students have perhaps only just felt the warmth of bed after a Saturday night of entertainment when they ‘have’ to emerge, bleary-eyed, and ‘go to church’; senior citizens who find themselves secluded in nursing homes have been craving this day all week, when a deacon or friend drops by to pick them up to gather with the saints for worship.

Week after week, for millennia and around the globe, a peculiar people is gathered by a *call* to worship – a call that, in a sense goes out before the service even begins, but that is then formally declared in the opening of the service in the ‘call to worship,’ often from the Psalms:

*Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, and flock under his care. (Ps. 95:6-7 NIV)*<sup>97</sup>

God is calling us to gather and to worship. When the desire of our heart is to be in relationship with God, we answer the call. We answer the call as a community and we gather together as one. Paul rightly describes the church in 1 Corinthians 12:12-14, “Just as a body,

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<sup>97</sup> Smith (2009), 159-160.

though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.” For Paul, unity is in community.

The Spirit calls us together to worship and empowers us to carry out the mission of Jesus. Smith writes, “When we gather, we are responding to a call to worship; that call is an echo and renewal of the call of creation to be God’s image bearers for the world, and we fulfill the mission of being God’s image bearers by undertaking the work of culture making.”<sup>98</sup> Smith then goes on to describe that we cannot fully understand the work of culture making unless we answer the call to gather. He describes the gathering as a “covenant renewal ceremony” in which we worship and agree to be God’s image bearers in the world. The gathering and sending are congruent to Paul’s writing to the house churches New Testament. Jürgen Moltmann describe the Spirit’s work in the believer and the church when he writes, “For the people who experience themselves in the presence of God’s Spirit, two different movements follow, movements which are related but alternate:

1. The gathering of Christians in the church,
2. The sending out of the church to Christianity in the world.”<sup>99</sup>

We gather to worship the one true God, we gather to encourage one another in the faith, and we gather to be renewed by the mission of God, powered by the Spirit. This engagement initiative sought to bring this reality to life. It was to help “set the sights” of our hearts to aim

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<sup>98</sup> Smith (2009), 165.

<sup>99</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of Life* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), p. 95.



toward God. It was to awaken the need for relational community and to awaken the Spirit's gifting in our lives.

When describing our inward desire, I cited Jesus when he quoted the Shema. Jesus continued his statement by describing the second greatest commandment. Jesus said, "The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." Our love for one another is fueled by the Spirit. Just as Luke 4 describes the Spirit fueling Jesus' ministry, the Spirit has gifted every believer to continue Jesus' mission. Leonardo Boff wrote in *Come, Holy Spirit*, "'Love your neighbor as yourself' – must be understood as an expression of the spirit of Jesus... whoever I come near to is a neighbor, regardless of his or her beliefs, ethnicity, and moral condition. It is up to me to make others my neighbors, and to love them as I love myself."<sup>100</sup> I love that phrase, "expression of the spirit of Jesus." Outwardly we express the grace and working of the Spirit that has taken place inwardly. Mark Moore words it this way, "When we become the tangible hands and feet of Jesus, it becomes clear where our loyalties lie. By this we demonstrate that we love God with all we are."<sup>101</sup> Being the hands and feet means being in tune with the Spirit of God working in us and the gifting the Spirit gives each of us. As Christians, we need to roll up our sleeves and get to work because that's how Jesus lived. Jesus, fueled by the Spirit, was in the ministry trenches each and every day. The Spirit can do the same for us. Describing the Spirit's work within the New Testament church communities, Robert J. Banks writes, "Each person in the community is granted a ministry to others. No one can operate in isolation...God has so designed things that every person is necessary for its

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<sup>100</sup> Leonardo Boff, *Come, Holy Spirit: Inner Fire, Giver of Life & Comforter of the Poor* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2015), p. 172.

<sup>101</sup> Moore (2019), 212.

proper functioning (1 Cor. 12:14-21). Each member has a unique role to play but is dependent on everyone else.”<sup>102</sup> I think Banks rightly sums up Paul’s writing in 1 Corinthians 12. Though we are many members and possess different gifts, we depend on each other to continue the mission of God. Paul lays out the Spirit’s work at the beginning of the chapter and then describes the unity among the diverse work of the Spirit. Each member of the body has at least one gift from the Spirit. Boff describes this gift when he writes, “The First and Second Testaments use the word ‘gifts’ to describe the presence of the Spirit in the human community and in individuals. These gifts are not something extraordinary but a part of everyday life, when life is lived with justice and with attention to the movement of the Spirit. A gift represents a specific action of the Spirit in the person.”<sup>103</sup>

When we leave our worship gathering, we are sent to live on mission. Most of the miracles and conversations Jesus had happened as he was “along the way.” Jesus did not look at people from an outward appearance, but he saw them by their hearts. Each day he lived, he lived intentionally. May our prayer be that we have the eyes to see people the way Jesus saw people and to allow the Spirit to work through us in our everyday encounters.

### **Moving forward:**

This chapter identified the importance formative practices have on shaping our desires. In the next chapter, I will describe how this framework shaped the practices we used during our engagement initiative. I will also describe the methods of research used in this project and how the results of the research answered my overarching question.

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<sup>102</sup> Banks (2020), 52.

<sup>103</sup> Boff (2015), 175.

## CHAPTER 4 THE PROJECT

### Chapter Intent:

The previous chapter discussed the importance that formative practices have on shaping one's desire. This chapter discusses the project and the formative activities used to help direct our desire toward God. After describing the framework of this project, I will discuss the method of research and the results. This chapter will pull together all the elements of the engagement initiative and provide the information needed to answer the overarching question.

### The Project:

This project sought to answer the overarching question: ***In what ways will an engagement initiative help our congregants grow in their spiritual involvement?*** The project was a 14-week initiative that consisted of several activities and teachings. Each of the activities and teachings touched on an aspect of the inward and outward desires of a person. Furthering the inward and outward descriptions, I outlined four categories to use for measuring growth in engagement, and these four categories gave structure to the project practices. The four categories are head, heart, hands, and feet, and they expound on the re-engagement tactics led by Nehemiah and the formative practices described by James K. A. Smith.

- *Head* – The growth in understanding of God, His Word, and what it means to live relationally with Him. An example of this is how Nehemiah and Ezra helped the Israelites understand their covenantal promises by reading Scripture and rethinking life's importance.
- *Heart* – Our growth in communal relationships and the longing to be with God and others for spiritual edification and encouragement. In Nehemiah chapter three, 31 times

the phrase “next to them/after them” is mentioned emphasizing the need to be connected with others. Our heart is where we desire to be in a relationship with God and the people of God.

- *Hands* – Reflecting on the practices of Nehemiah, ultimately, the Israelites put their hands to work. A major part of Nehemiah’s ministry was the rebuilding of the Jerusalem wall, and the community came together in service to help rebuild. God has given each of us a gift to use to benefit His Church and to help anyone in need.
- *Feet* – Our feet follow our commitments. Nehemiah takes a census of all of those who have returned to Jerusalem and tallies the total number of those present. He wanted to know who was physically there, and part of their renewal was a commitment to be physically present with the whole church body. Nehemiah 10:39 reads, “We will not neglect the house of our God.”

The structure of the head, heart, hands, and feet sum up the inward and outward practices used in this project and were the four categories used to measure growth in engagement.

This project benefited the entire church, but to give insight into the research, I narrowed in on a group of participants. I will describe this process in more detail later in the chapter, but the participants were surveyed before the initiative began and then again after the completion of the formative practices. The surveys sought whether the participants demonstrated growth in each of these four categories. After the surveys, I put together a focus group that further explored the practices and effectiveness of the project. An analysis of the focus group transcript brought forth five key themes that gave insight into the overarching

question. The results of the surveys and the focus group discussion round out the information in this chapter.

### **Engage Sunday:**

To kickoff this engagement initiative, we held an “Engage Sunday” event on Sunday, August 28.<sup>104</sup> This event created an awareness of our fall ministry season and the intentionality to help our church re-engage in spiritual rhythms and practices. The Engage Sunday had a heightened feel compared to other Sundays of worship. Our church building has a large front porch with a canopy covering the entrance. For this Sunday, we had stations on the front porch for donuts and coffee and music playing in the background. This environment is not normal for us, so as people came to worship that day, they anticipated something different as they arrived on church property. People entered the building with more energy as they could feel that something unique was happening. In the weeks leading up to the Engage Sunday, we promoted the fall emphasis and how we were going to be strategic with the fall sermons and activities. We mentioned that we would have an upcoming Engage Sunday, but many of the details were left out, so as people arrived for church, it was encouraging to see their excitement for the day.

The worship service also pointed to the day’s emphasis. The welcome video mentioned the engagement priority, and in the introduction to the sermon, the Lead Minister highlighted the emphasis for the day and reassured the congregation of the proactive direction our church was taking in the coming weeks.

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<sup>104</sup> The outline of this project can be found in Appendix A.

Another element of the day included our conclusion to the summer giving drive our church participated in to help our local food pantry. Our summer goal was to collect 6,000 pounds of food and resources for the Worthington Resource Pantry. The drive ran from Memorial Day to Labor Day. As we promoted the Engage Sunday, we instructed our congregation to bring in supplies for the Worthington Resource Pantry. Since this Sunday was a week before Labor Day, we especially emphasized bringing in supplies to help reach our goal. Leading into this week, we had collected 5,485 pounds and after this Sunday, we reached our goal by collecting over 6,000 pounds of food and resources.

Along with the theme of interacting with local mission organizations and helping kickstart the engagement initiative, we asked our impact partners to join us on this Engage Sunday and provide opportunities for our congregation to serve. I will speak more about this later in the chapter, but our impact partners are partnerships we have with community organizations that serve the people of our community. These partners filled the atrium of our church with displays of their organization and a representative from each partnership was in attendance.

This Sunday event was a great way to start the engage initiative, and it created excitement for our church. This event helped unify our church around our fall emphasis, and it was a great marker to signify that moving forward, we would be intentional at re-engaging.

#### **Inward-focused practices (Head and Heart):**

##### **Engage: Stories from the Book of Acts**

A few weeks after the Engage Sunday event, we did a preaching series titled Engage: Stories through the Book of Acts. The premise of the series was to answer the question, “How

did the early church engage?” The basis of this teaching series was to help our congregation see the values that were meaningful to the first Christian community. We studied key themes in Acts to help emphasize the need to engage in ways the early church did. This teaching series also expounded on the four categories of growth: head, heart, hands, and feet.

One of the greatest benefits of this series was the video testimonies used to help highlight each category. Four families were identified within our church that exemplified an area in each category and they were asked to share their stories to help inspire others to engage. There were four videos, one for each growth category: head, heart, hands, and feet. We showed one story each Sunday during this series, and each story would either align with the sermon emphasis or the theme of the day.

Here is a brief breakdown of the sermon series:<sup>105</sup>

Week 1 – The sermon title was “Engaged with the Same Mission (Acts 1:6-8).” The premise of this sermon was how the Holy Spirit empowered the first believers to carry on the mission of Jesus. The video we showed this Sunday shared how a family in our church was loving and reaching their neighborhood. They discussed how they would have people from their neighborhood over for dinner to intentionally build relationships and how they were inviting some of their neighbors to church. Though there could be some theme crossover throughout each story, this video was categorized in the “head” category as they were understanding and aligning with the mission of Jesus.

Week 2 – The sermon title was “Engaged with the Same Baptism (Acts 2:36-41).” The premise of this sermon emphasized baptism and the power that was at work in the person and in the

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<sup>105</sup> Watch the sermons and stories here <https://worthingtoncc.org/media/series/6cs93sk/engage>.

community. The video we showed on this Sunday aligned with a greater theme of the day. On this day, we partnered with Habitat for Humanity and framed the walls of a house in our church parking lot. I will write more about this in the description of the outward-focused practices, but the video we showed emphasized serving and fit into the “hands” category. The person who shared their story in this video is the health and wellness officer for the entire Columbus Police Department. This person exemplifies servanthood and volunteers in multiple areas of our church.

Week 3 – The sermon title was “Engaged in Community (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32).” The premise of this sermon emphasized the need for relational community. The video on this Sunday was from the “heart” category and featured a married couple sharing about the impact their small group has had on their life. This couple faced a tragedy in 2021-2022 when they cared for their adult daughter as she went through a divorce and cancer treatments at the same time. In the video, the couple shared how their small group supported them. Personally, I remember calling the husband when their daughter was going through this crisis, and I asked him if I could help in any way. He responded to me that his group was taking care of them, and they had everything they needed. They communicated the same message in the video, which was inspiring for others to seek relational community.

Week 4 – The sermon title was “Engaged with the Same Belief (Acts 17:22-32).” In Acts 17, Paul references all of the different gods in Athens. The Athenians even had an altar to an “unknown god.” In his speech at the meeting of the Areopagus, Paul tells them about God. The passage ends with some on the council believing in Paul’s message. The premise of this sermon was to answer the question, “What do I believe to be true about God?” The video that showed this



Sunday featured the “feet” category and focused on being physically present with other believers. A father and his five-year-old son shared their story in this video. They shared how they missed being physically present for worship in 2020 and how God led them to join Worthington Christian Church. The father shared how he wanted his son to grow up in church and learn about the Bible. He also shared why he thought it was important to gather as a Christian community.

The sermons were encouraging during this series, but the videos were the most impactful. It was helpful for our congregation to hear from other congregants on how they engaged in spiritual life. Scott Cormode writes in his book, *The Innovative Church*, “People do not latch on to a plan or abstract statements of doctrine. That does not change them. Instead, people are transformed when they participate in a story – a story that sets them on a specific trajectory.”<sup>106</sup> Cormode goes on to state, “Shared stories create a connection. And that story-shaped connection builds community.”<sup>107</sup> This sermon series was a community and culture builder, and it was a great start to our engagement initiative. The video stories were inspiring and helped cultivate the vision of spiritual engagement.

### **Groups**

Corresponding with the Engage: Stories from the Book of Acts sermon series, we encouraged our church to join a small group. Relational community looked different in the last few years, and coming out of the pandemic, this was something that our congregation needed. There was a “group relaunch” emphasis over the period of four weeks, and this relaunch

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<sup>106</sup> Scott Cormode, *The Innovative Church: How Leaders and Their Congregation Can Adapt in an Ever-Changing World*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), p. 13.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

coincided with the engage sermon series. There were new groups available, and each group was provided material to discuss that went along with that week's preaching theme.

### **Prayer**

On Engage Sunday, before the service or any activities began, I met with our prayer team, and we spent time lifting this initiative up in prayer. We prayed for the structure of the initiative, the leaders guiding the initiative, and the participants. Our prayer was that we would all grow in our spiritual involvement. There was one specific prayer from one of our prayer team members that stood out. She prayed that everyone in our church would find their "place on the wall" just like those did in Nehemiah. This was a prayer of connection and belonging, and I felt this was something everyone needed coming out of the pandemic.

As a part of the inward-focused practices, we held an "Outdoor Prayer Journey." There is a wonderful metro park just a few miles north of our church called Highbanks Metro Park, and Highbanks is filled with beautiful nature trails. One of our prayer team members organized an interactive prayer journey at Highbanks that gave space for prayer and contemplation, capitalizing on prayer in God's creation. This prayer journey was guided but self-led. Each participant was given a guide that prompted opportunities for contemplation and prayer as they walked along the nature trails. One of the focus group participants, Informant 3, joined the Outdoor Prayer Journey and commented, "It was great to be out in nature by myself and pray in ways that I never had before."

### **Nehemiah Study**

The premise of this study was to answer the question, "How did the Old Testament church re-engage after a period of disruption?" This midweek study lasted four weeks and

covered some of the main themes in Nehemiah, again emphasizing the four categories used to measure spiritual growth. This study took place over the Facebook live platform and targeted the available lunch hour of the participants. In the focus group discussion, Informant 9 stated, “We really enjoyed the mid-week Facebook study through Nehemiah...It was a great 15-20 minutes to talk through a different chapter in the Bible. Brittany and I ended up blocking our calendars each week so we could watch the live video together.”

**Outward-focused practices (Hands and Feet):**

**Habitat Build**

During this initiative, one of the marquee events was our Habitat for Humanity wall build. This gave an opportunity for our congregation to use their “hands.” Habitat is one of our impact partners, and we had not partnered with them since the pandemic. This event was crucial to the project as it rallied our church and affected our culture with energy and excitement. It was a key moment that really helped our congregants grow in their engagement at church, translating to their fervor to grow in daily spiritual rhythms.

The event took place on Sunday, September 18, and operated during our three worship service hours. The worship service continued as normal, but we encouraged congregants to serve at an alternate hour. The wall build occurred in the church parking lot and did affect normal service programming.

To maximize the number of people included in this project, registration was organized so people would sign up to serve at a designated station for one hour. The stations were led by trained volunteers serving as station captains. The captains were also in charge of correctly reading the blueprints and helping the people who signed up to serve at their stations.

Here is an example of how the captains were used and how people could sign up: a person could register to serve on the orange team during the 8:30 hour, or a person could serve on the green team during the 9:45 hour, and so on. There were 12 color-designated stations and six people could serve at each station. We maxed out the event with 216 registered volunteers and an additional 26 volunteering as captains and other leaders.

One of the reasons this was a marquee event of the project was that it permeated throughout the whole church. The family receiving the home had young children, so we built and painted a playhouse to go along with the house. This allowed us to incorporate the kids in our church since Habitat had an age restriction for those who could work on building the house walls. The kid's ministry painted the playhouse during their class time in the same parking lot we were building the walls. There were over 70 children and teachers involved with the playhouse. It was a great picture to look out over the parking lot, filled with adults, teens, and children engaging together.

There were a few neat elements to this event. We were blessed with the opportunity for the family receiving the house to join us on that Sunday morning and help us build the walls. This was a unique scenario, and it was great to see how our church family interacted with the family receiving the home. It was a blessed opportunity.

Also, a member of our church owns a local cupcake business and wanted to enhance the morning experience by providing cupcakes to everyone involved with the build and the playhouse. I thought this was a great example of someone seeing the vision of the fall engagement theme and taking the initiative to find ways to support and engage in the church mission.

### **Impact Partnerships**

On the Engage Sunday kickoff, we asked all of our impact partners to join us and provide opportunities where they needed help. The partnerships that were present on this day were: Worthington Christian Village, Ronald McDonald House, Slate Hill Elementary School, Pregnancy Decision Health Center, Habitat for Humanity, Worthington Resource Pantry, and LifeWise Academy. Each of these partnerships serves our community in unique ways, and they provided serving opportunities for our church to participate during the fall months. Some of these opportunities included flipping mattresses and washing windows for residents at the Worthington Christian Village, cleaning the flowerbeds at the elementary school, and providing a meal to families at the Ronald McDonald House. LifeWise Academy was a brand-new partnership, and their organization teaches character traits in the public school through a biblical lens. This was their first exposure to our church, and 60 people signed up as new volunteers to help them in the Worthington school community.

Two other missions we support annually include collecting Operation Christmas Child boxes and Thanksgiving baskets for the Columbus Dream Center. The Operation Christmas Child boxes are shoeboxes filled with items for Christmas gifts that are sent to children in need throughout the globe. We collect these boxes each fall and during this engagement initiative, we collected 412, which was more than we have collected in previous years.

The Thanksgiving baskets are laundry baskets filled with all the items needed for a Thanksgiving meal. Individuals or families in our church committed to providing all the items needed to fill 132 baskets. It was the most Thanksgiving baskets our church has ever collected.

### **Ministry Highlights**

To incorporate ways for people to serve in the church, we organized “ministry highlight” Sundays. These Sundays featured a ministry in the church, areas where the ministry needed help, and the commitments needed to fill the need. During these weeks, we highlighted one ministry area in our church atrium and the setup was very similar to how we highlighted our community impact partners. Each ministry area had a creative display that drew attention to their ministry's special aspects and current needs. Each Sunday during the welcome time of the service, we made sure to mention the ministry that was being highlighted and encouraged people to stop by the ministry display to get more information. To help with clarity and conciseness, each ministry used the same format when providing handouts of their ministry’s serving opportunities.<sup>108</sup> These Sundays provided easy onboarding for our congregation to join a ministry and fill a need. Our ministerial staff loved the opportunity to showcase their ministry and have organic conversations about serving.

### **Fall Festival**

One of the great church-wide celebration events that we usually enjoy is our annual Fall Festival. We did not host this festival in 2020, and the event was a bit modified in 2021. Entering this initiative, we had made plans to have our Fall Festival in full swing. We had several aspects of this festival that demonstrated that we were operating the festival in ways we did prior to the pandemic. We rented different bounce house inflatables, gave away pumpkins, had a petting zoo, and we rented a pony for pony rides. We also had kids’ carnival games, and the local Christian radio station came to provide music. All of these activities took place in the backyard of our church. It was a great event that gave space for our church to be

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<sup>108</sup> Each ministry handout is included in Appendix D.

together, eat together, and laugh together. It is hard to measure numerical growth from something this large and with an open timeframe, but from the eye test, we had more people at this festival than we had prior to the pandemic.

### **Thanksgiving Dinner**

Another celebration event occurred later in the fall when we had our church-wide Thanksgiving dinner. Like the Fall Festival, this event allowed our church to be together. We did not have this dinner in 2020, but we did have a modified dinner in 2021. This event was the bookend to this project. It was the last event of the fall, and it brought the project together. There were several families present at the dinner, representing the demographic that ended up being the targeted demographic surveyed. An elder of the church observed this when he stated that he thought there was a larger demographic of young families at the dinner, more than he could remember joining before. More people attended this meal than ever before, including in the years before the pandemic. We held the event in our gym and maxed out capacity.

### **Methodology (Informants):**

The inward and outward focus laid the foundation for my methodology, but I had to define the people group I would be studying. To get the most effective data and the most participation I could in the research, I needed to narrow the demographic. I decided to study the age demographic 20-49. The reason for choosing this demographic was because this age demographic consisted of the majority of people in our community (referring to our community demographics report). This age range was the largest in our community, and it appeared to be the least engaged group in our church. The hypothesis for this statement refers to the number

of children and teens active in our church. The children's and teens' involvement are dependent on their parents' involvement in church. A data reference for this is the average Sunday morning attendance in the kids and youth ministry compared to pre-covid and post-2020. Here is a breakdown of the numbers:

- The average Sunday morning children's ministry attendance for 2019 was 185 children.
- The average Sunday morning children's ministry attendance for 2021 was 69 children.
- The average Sunday morning teen ministry attendance for 2019 was 49 teens.
- The average Sunday morning teen ministry attendance for 2021 was 37 teens.

A third reason for choosing this age demographic was based on the eye test. Leading into this engagement initiative, we just were not seeing this age group as involved as other age groups in the church. These three reasons: the largest age group in our community, the kids' ministry and youth ministry numbers, and the eye test, were why I narrowed in on studying this age demographic.

**(Methodology) Data Collection:**

After narrowing in on the age demographic, I selected 30 family units from this demographic to participate in a pre-and post-survey.<sup>109</sup> There were 20 survey questions, which were broken into the categories of head, heart, hands, and feet. There were five questions to measure each category, though the participants did not know the question structure.

Sheri Jones, a member of our church and author of *Impact & Excellence: Data-Driven Strategies for Aligning Mission, Culture, and Performance in Nonprofit and Government Organizations*, helped me organize the questions and identify the survey scale. The participants

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<sup>109</sup> The survey questions and results are located in Appendix C.



were asked to respond to the survey using a five-point Likert Scale. (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree). This survey provided the quantitative data needed.

The pre-survey was sent on August 29 and the post-survey on November 28; each survey was open for five days. The pre-survey had 35 responses and the post-survey had 32 responses. There were three fewer people who participated in the post-survey, but the numbers were close enough to give me an accurate depiction of the results.

### **Pre-survey and results:**

#### Head

1. In my desire to be aligned with the mission of Jesus, I believe I am making good progress. (77% included agree and strongly agree)
2. I actively seek to learn more about the mission of Jesus. (76% included agree and strongly agree)
3. I follow a reading plan to help me read the Bible. (33% included agree and strongly agree)
4. I use other resources outside of the Bible to help me understand some of what is written in the Bible. (71% included agree and strongly agree)
5. I almost always read the Bible at least three days a week. (25% included agree and strongly agree)

#### Heart

6. I am a part of a group within our church that spiritually and emotionally encourages me. (19% included agree and strongly agree)

7. I feel a close connection to three or more members of the church. (42% included agree and strongly agree)
8. I feel a longing to be with others who will help me in my spiritual journey. (87% included agree and strongly agree)
9. I encourage others in their spiritual journey. (53% included agree and strongly agree)
10. In order for me to fully follow Jesus in my life I need the support of other believers. (90% included agree and strongly agree)

#### Hands

11. I am comfortable using my spiritual gifts for the benefit of the church. (70% included agree and strongly agree)
12. When there is a need at the church, I feel a desire to help. (73% included agree and strongly agree)
13. I feel that I am using my spiritual gifts in my daily life. (50% included agree and strongly agree)
14. I give of my time to help the mission of the church. (17% included agree and strongly agree)
15. I give of my resources to help the mission of the church. (70% included agree and strongly agree)

#### Feet

16. When I miss our church gathering, I feel I am missing something important to me. (90% included agree and strongly agree)
17. I often invite people to join me at church. (28% included agree and strongly agree)

18. When the church gathers, I know there will be encouraging people with whom I will be able to interact. (70% included agree and strongly agree)
19. There are very few reasons why I would miss a church gathering. (62% included agree and strongly agree)
20. I am excited to be a part of this church. (96% included agree and strongly agree)

**Post-survey and results:**

Head

1. In my desire to be aligned with the mission of Jesus, I believe I am making good progress. (86% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 9% increase.)
2. I actively seek to learn more about the mission of Jesus. (96% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 20% increase.)
3. I follow a reading plan to help me read the Bible. (49% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 16% increase.)
4. I use other resources outside of the Bible to help me understand some of what is written in the Bible. (77% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 6% increase.)
5. I almost always read the Bible at least three days a week. (56% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 31% increase.)

Heart

6. I am a part of a group within our church that spiritually and emotionally encourages me. (49% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 30% increase.)

7. I feel a close connection to three or more members of the church. (58% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 16% increase.)
8. I feel a longing to be with others who will help me in my spiritual journey. (93% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 6% increase.)
9. I encourage others in their spiritual journey. (68% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 15% increase.)
10. In order for me to fully follow Jesus in my life I need the support of other believers. (100% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 10% increase.)

#### Hands

11. I am comfortable using my spiritual gifts for the benefit of the church. (80% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 10% increase.)
12. When there is a need at the church, I feel a desire to help. (96% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 23% increase.)
13. I feel that I am using my spiritual gifts in my daily life. (74% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 24% increase.)
14. I give of my time to help the mission of the church. (52% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 35% increase.)
15. I give of my resources to help the mission of the church. (80% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 10% increase.)

#### Feet

16. When I miss our church gathering, I feel I am missing something important to me. (96% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 6% increase.)

17. I often invite people to join me at church. (37% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 9% increase.)
18. When the church gathers, I know there will be encouraging people with whom I will be able to interact. (90% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 20% increase.)
19. There are very few reasons why I would miss a church gathering. (87% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 25% increase.)
20. I am excited to be a part of this church. (90% included agree and strongly agree, demonstrating a 6% decrease.)

#### **Survey Observations:**

The survey was meant to measure any growth in the four categories. The survey results revealed an increased percentage in 19 of the 20 questions. The largest percentage of growth from the head category came from question five, "I almost always read the Bible at least three days a week." 56% of the responses included agree and strongly agree. This was an increase of 31%. The largest percentage of growth in the heart category came from question six, "I am a part of a group within our church that spiritually and emotionally encourages me." 49% of the responses included agree and strongly agree. This was an increase of 30%.

Perhaps the increased results in both categories are related. The "Engage" sermon series went through a few key themes in the book of Acts, highlighting how the early church engaged, and during this series, we encouraged people to follow along by reading through the book of Acts. The online Nehemiah study additionally encouraged weekly Bible reading. I think studying these two books helped promote Scripture engagement.

Included in the initiative was an increase in people participating in group life. In these groups, participants gather to read and discuss the Word of God. Since an increasing number of people joined a group, I believe this helped lead to the increase of people reading the Bible at least three days a week. This increase was also brought up in our focus group discussion. In the focus group discussion, Informant 5 stated, "I think I have been more intentional with my faith and reading the Bible."

The largest percentage of growth in the hand category came from question 14, "I give of my time to help the mission of the church." 52% of the responses included agree and strongly agree. This was an increase of 35%. This large increase could be attributed to the Habitat for Humanity wall build and the Engage Sunday event. The exposure of service opportunities within our impact partners gave an increased opportunity for people to use their hands. It is difficult to compare this category to previous years because the serving events in this initiative gave opportunities for over 350 people to serve. Additionally, the Sundays we highlighted specific ministries within our church gave people a direct step to serve in a desired ministry area.

The last set of five questions fell into the feet category. The largest percentage of growth in this category came from question 19, "There are very few reasons why I would miss a church gathering." 87% of the responses included agree and strongly agree. This was an increase of 25%. This increase became apparent in the focus group discussion. Informant 4 from the focus group stated, "I think church attendance has been a change in perspective over the last few years. I want to be at church more now."

The highlighted increases were the largest in each of the four categories, and the highlighted increases were significant. The results might seem a bit abnormal in normal survey circumstances, but re-engaging after a global pandemic is not a normal circumstance. In the pre-survey, many participants responded from feelings of the previous two years when many ministry practices were halted, and spiritual rhythms were disrupted. From the participants' perspective, they might have felt as if they went from doing very little over the last few years to being intentional at re-engaging. This would be a reason for such a significant increase in these categories.

Here is how each of the categories averaged out in the pre-and post-surveys:

#### Head

- Pre-survey, 56.4% of the participants selected agree and strongly agree.
- Post-survey, 72.8% of the participants selected agree and strongly agree. This was an overall increase of 16.4%.

#### Heart

- Pre-survey, 58.2% of the participants selected agree and strongly agree.
- Post-survey, 73.6% of the participants selected agree and strongly agree. This was an overall increase of 15.4%.

#### Hands

- Pre-survey, 56% of the participants selected agree and strongly agree.
- Post-survey, 76.4% of the participants selected agree and strongly agree. This was an overall increase of 20.4%, and this was the largest increase in any category.

#### Feet

- Pre-survey, 69.2% of the participants selected agree and strongly agree.
- Post-survey, 80% of the participants selected agree and strongly agree. This was an increase of 10.8%.

The largest increase came from the hands category and revealed that the events and opportunities to serve were most beneficial for growth. Outside of the opportunities to serve in ministry areas within the church, over 400 congregants served within our impact partnerships. Also, the donations to Operation Christmas Child and our Thanksgiving basket drive were the most items collected than in previous years. These increased opportunities may have reflected the largest increase coming from the hand category.

**Focus Group:**

After the pre-and post-surveys, I asked ten individuals, representing five couples that participated in the surveys, to join me in a focus group to discuss the effectiveness of the engagement initiative. Each of these couples was in their thirties with children, and three of the couples had just started attending our church within the last year. We gathered on Sunday, December 11, for a light breakfast, and I expounded on my secondary questions to help answer the overarching question of this project. I recorded the conversation and then transcribed the recording.

**Interview Questions:**

1. Reflecting on this fall, what were some things you felt were helpful or difficult to our engagement initiative?
2. Reflecting on the past few years, can you share about your spiritual journey from the pandemic until now?
3. As a church, how did we help you feel encouraged or discouraged to get more involved this fall?



4. Will you share how your perspective has changed in these last few years?
5. Could you share how you are experiencing your life in this church since we started this engagement initiative?

#### **Treatment of the Data:**

The methodology of this research identified five key themes from the transcribed interviews. These themes were arrived at by multiple readings of the entire document and noticing particular terms or ideas that seemed to be reoccurring. That was followed by additional readings of the transcriptions with each individual theme in mind. If the theme seemed prominent, the transcript was read again, noticing each recurrence of the theme.

This collection of themes was “triangulated” by asking an individual familiar with this method of research to perform the same steps of the process without knowing the themes I originally identified. I compared my identified themes with the consultant’s themes to determine if there were any similarities or differences. The consultant’s themes arrived at similar conclusions, though some of our terminologies differed, our themes remained the same.

As an additional measure of triangulation, another individual familiar with the process was asked to read the transcripts and the five identified themes. This individual was asked to read as “a devil’s advocate” seeking to challenge inconsistencies or biases in the researcher’s conclusions. Those perspectives were then taken into account as I arrived at the final themes reported in this document. The five themes were identified in the responses to the focus group discussion.

#### **Results and Discussion:**

The five final themes identified were (The 5 C’s):

1. Culture – a growth in understanding the culture of Worthington Christian Church.
2. Courage – stepping out of comfort zones and taking steps of faith in new ways.
3. Community – an awareness of the importance and growth in participating in encouraging relationships.
4. Commitment – an increased dedication to spiritually enriching activities.
5. Clarity – developing a clearer perspective of life’s importance.

### **Culture**

The participants were really impressed and adaptive to the culture of Worthington Christian Church. The vision of our church is to Follow Jesus Together. We often phrase it this way before the congregation: “We believe the greatest decision we can make on this side of eternity is to follow Jesus, and the best way to do that is together.” The focus group informants commented on our culture several times. Informant 1 stated, “Culture-wise, this is a great place...you don’t feel excluded...the culture aspect, it is very welcoming.” Informant 8 commented, “When we started coming here, we really appreciated the feel of the church.” Informant 9 commented on our vision, “I think the church’s vision of Following Jesus Together is a perfect mantra because it is so accurate to the Christian life.” Informant 6 also highlighted the church vision. “the vision or mantra of this church, Follow Jesus Together. I think that is what it is all about. It’s a great way to live your life.” Informant 6 also stated, “We are new to the church and the feel here has been very wholesome and it feels like a place that I want to raise my kids in.”

### **Courage**

The participants also mentioned an increased amount of courage from the initiative. They spoke from a place of spiritual fervor and excitement. Informant 3 told the group, “I have been more courageous with my faith and sharing my faith journey with other people.” Informant 3 said they started sharing their faith at work and said, “I never had this amount of courage in my previous job.” Informant 6 stated, “I have been more comfortable talking about my faith...You see God working in your life when you have the courage to share your faith and then you are encouraged to do it again.” I could see the spiritual progression in Informant 9 when they stated, “I really had to push myself to come out of my shell in terms of speaking about Scripture and speaking about my overall spiritual journey. I pushed myself this fall to come out of my shell.”

### **Community**

The theme of community included joining a small group, serving opportunities with others, and joining our church-wide celebration events. This theme was apparent as the informants commented on the importance of being in relational community with others. Informant 6 stated, “It was really nice to have a lot of events to meet people at and really get involved.” Informant 5 shared something similar, “It was really good to have events to bring people together after the last couple of years and allow people to be in a more relaxed environment.” Some of the participants commented on their new involvement in a group. Informant 10 stated, “We joined a small group that meets on Thursdays.” Informant 9 said, “I joined a Wednesday morning men’s Bible study, and my wife and I have also joined a Thursday night couples group.” Similarly, Informant 3 commented, “My wife and I just recently joined a

new group that meets on Sundays during the third service and it's great because our kids can be in the kid's ministry while we are participating in a group."

### **Commitment**

The highlighted commitment theme manifested itself in different ways for the informants. Some felt more committed to coming to church, and others commented on their commitment to growing spiritually. Informant 4 stated, "I think one of the survey questions mentioned something like are you sad when you miss church? Do you feel like you miss something when you are not here and I said yes, every time. I get so much out of coming to church and I get so sad when I miss it...I want to be at church more now." Informant 5 commented something similar, "We make church attendance a priority and we want to be here as a family." Along the same lines, Informant 9 stated, "We have been regularly attending since the beginning of the year and now I read the Bible every morning and it has been a complete 180 for my life." Informant 9 went on to state, "My wife and I ended up blocking our calendars each week so we could watch the live Nehemiah video together." Informant 5 also commented on their commitment to reading Scripture, "I have tried to read my Bible app every day."

### **Clarity**

It seemed everyone concurred that they had a renewed perspective on life. I think two key factors to this were that each couple had young children, and their children were a primary reason for their spiritual growth. Several commented that they wanted to be a good spiritual influence on their families. I also think the reality of the global pandemic caused everyone to take a spiritual inventory of their life. Informant 5 stated, "Now, as my kids are growing, I feel the desire to strengthen my faith, not just for me but also for my kids." Informant 4 also

commented, “Our kids are watching what we do and say and how we treat people, so I want to give them a good example of Jesus and that motivates me to grow in my faith.” Reflecting on the pandemic, Informant 5 stated, “I feel like we have been more cognizant of our time and relationships...we have been more intentional with people...It has just caused me to focus more.” Informant 6 stated, “The perspective with covid is that time is short...Each day is what you have and to live it intentionally.”

### **Focus Group Conclusions:**

My favorite part of the research was the focus group meeting. The participants eagerly showed up and were ready to discuss our church initiative. I thought the themes were congruent with some of the quantitative data from the surveys. I did not include this in the methodology report, but informant 9 was baptized the Sunday after the focus group meeting. His men’s group and the small group that he and his wife were a part of gathered around the baptistry while he was being baptized. I thought he was the perfect prototype for this engagement initiative. He was relatively new to our church, and the initiative prompted him to take steps of engagement.

His story, and other stories of engagement, motivated others to grow spiritually. Following the focus group meeting, Informant 2 stopped me on her way out. She spoke early on in our discussion but had been quiet most of the time. I thought what she said to me profoundly related to our discussion and the mission behind this project. Informant 2 said to me, “After listening to everyone talk over the last hour, I realize that I need to be more engaged.” I hope that the mission behind this project continues and that she will be inclined to be more spiritually engaged.

It is hard to quantify the focus group discussion, but I believe the five themes represented growth in each of the head, heart, hands, and feet categories. The focus group informants were pleased to share their experience and it seemed like the variety of events throughout this initiative were most beneficial. This is congruent with the increase in the survey results and the hands category being the largest category of growth. In both the quantitative and qualitative data, it was revealed that the number and variety of events were most beneficial for increased engagement.

Throughout this chapter, I laid the foundation of the formative activities that we partook in and reported the researched findings. This chapter gave tangibility to the biblical and theological foundations and why the activities were organized in a particular way. The next chapter will bring together the entire project as I lay out my conclusions and answer my overarching question.

## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

### **Chapter Intent:**

The purpose of this chapter is to bookend our journey on spiritual engagement and expound my conclusions from our initiative. In this chapter, I will further examine the results from the focus group discussion and answer the overarching question. I will conclude with how the data gained from this project will benefit our church moving forward.

### **The Overarching Question:**

***In what ways will an engagement initiative help our congregants grow in their spiritual involvement?***

Throughout this project, I have sought to answer this overarching question. The format of this question implies growth, but this open-ended question leaves room for specificity. The cultural assumption made was that the pandemic weighed heavily on everyone, and having an initiative like this project seemed to be at just the right time for our congregation. In the focus group discussion, Informant 5 stated, “It was really good to have events to bring people together after the last couple of years and allow people to be in a more relaxed environment.” Similarly, Informant 9 felt the timing was right by stating, “I just really appreciate that the church has put an emphasis on engagement this fall, and it was really helpful for people who have come to the church since Covid, and it has given us an easy step forward.”

I have organized my conclusions to the overarching question around the five themes drawn from the focus group discussion – culture, courage, community, commitment, and clarity. These five themes best answered the overarching question of this project. These themes represent the spiritual journey of the participants, and the expression of these themes

demonstrates the ways this engagement initiative helped our congregants grow in their spiritual involvement.

### **A culture of relatability.**

The participants felt an increased sense of relatability. The focus group participants were all in their thirties with children, representing the largest demographic that was most hesitant to re-engage after the pandemic. There was a homogenous makeup of people in the focus group, which could speak to their emphasis on relatability, but their demographic makes up the largest demographic in our community. Also, the difficulties of the pandemic escaped no one, so there was the commonality of the last few years.

Several in the group commented on the culture of the church and the vision of *Following Jesus Together*. The participants were very encouraged to be doing life with others who were in similar positions. Informant 3 commented, "I think having an organization with a culture of flexibility is huge. Like here, our kids are roaming around and playing on the kid's slide, going down way too many times, and there are other families going through the same thing. It feels like everyone is going through the chaos of parenting, and that is so comforting." Informant 7 had a similar take when they stated, "As a young parent, it's also good to see other young families who are in the same boat and going through the same things."

### **Courage to share my faith.**

Many of the participants noted increased courage to share their faith. Some of the factors for this could be from the Engage sermon series when we looked at how the early church was engaged with the same mission in Acts 1:6-8. The video that week centered on how a family in our church was intentionally reaching their neighborhood. The video shared how



they would have people from their neighborhood over for dinner to build relationships and how they would invite some of their neighbors to church. Informant 7 commented on the benefits of the study, “I also think the Engage series we did earlier this fall was really nice. It was great to see people in the videos share about how they personally get involved.”

Informant 3 stated, “I never had this amount of courage in my previous job to talk about my faith.” Informant 6 more deeply commented,

Along the same lines, I have been more comfortable talking about my faith. I feel like I didn't have a great understanding of my faith and the Bible for the longest time, so that has grown recently. I think that being here, too, has made it more comfortable to talk about it, and we are encouraged to talk about it at work or with our friends. You see God working in your life when you do have the courage to share your faith, and then you are encouraged to do it again. You see those changes that I didn't realize I was missing in my life.

It became clear that the participants responded to an encouragement to share their faith and appreciated the example of how others were doing it through the video testimonies. This helped the participants feel like it was something they could do too.

### **The need for relational community.**

Perhaps the largest theme carrying this project was the theme of community. The inward and outward practices centered on community, and the teachings in Nehemiah and Acts touched on the theme as well. It became clear that after a long period of isolation, people were looking for ways to connect with others. I continue to reflect on Alan Ahlgrim's statement, “No one can ever be heart healthy alone.” That statement seemed to ring true for the focus group participants.

It became clear that the participants sought ways to experience life with others. In the survey results, the greatest growth in the heart category came from an increase in relational

community. The growth in question six in the survey portrayed this reality, “I am a part of a group within our church that spiritually and emotionally encourages me.” This question received the greatest increase in this category, increasing by 30%. As noted in the focus group results in the previous chapter, many of the focus group participants joined a group for the first time throughout this project. All of the focus group participants emphasized the desire to have friends that could help them follow Jesus. This was also highlighted in the post-survey. In the post-survey, 100% of the survey participants agreed and strongly agreed to question 10, “In order for me to fully follow Jesus in my life I need the support of other believers.” The need for relational community was a resounding response to the overarching question of this project.

#### **A commitment to spiritual growth.**

There were two different ways the participants expressed their commitment to spiritual growth. The participants expressed a commitment to reading Scripture regularly and serving in new ways. It is encouraging that their responses to commitment in the focus group represented the questions with the largest growth in the post-survey. The two questions with the largest growth came from questions five and six. Question five states, “I almost always read the Bible at least three days a week.” This was an increase of 31% and was the second largest increased response. The largest growth of any survey question came from question 14, “I give of my time to help the mission of the church.” The post-survey revealed a 35% increase.

These increases translated to the focus group discussion. Many of the participants discussed how they were committed to reading their Bible more often and how they contributed to some of the serving opportunities represented in this project. I think a response that sums up both of these commitments to spiritual growth came from Informant 4 when they

stated, “I think for us, we are more involved with things now than we ever have before...I feel like we aren’t just attending anymore, which is great.”

### **A clarified view of importance.**

The crises of the global pandemic and the intentionality of this project gave opportunities for the participants to renew their focus on life. As stated earlier, each of the focus group participants had children. Their children proved to be a driving factor for their renewed focus. The participants expressed a desire to lead their families well and demonstrate a lifestyle of faith to their children.

### **Conclusions to the research:**

I was amazed at how the post-survey responses aligned with the responses in the focus group. The greatest areas of growth in the survey corresponded with the prominent themes in the focus group. These results taught me that our congregation responds best when there are multiple opportunities for engagement. Moving forward, this data will help our church leadership structure events and formative practices that align with the themes – the 5 C’s: culture, courage, community, commitment, and clarity.

A few weeks after this project ended, Informant 9 sent me a handwritten note, which I believe summed up the heart behind this engagement initiative. The note stated, “Brittany and I are incredibly blessed to have found this wonderful church in January of this past year. Whatever nerves or anxiety we might have felt entering a church for the first time in almost two years were quickly suppressed, and we have never felt more a part and more welcome as

part of the Worthington Christian Church community.”<sup>110</sup> This feeling of engagement is the exact thing this project sought to accomplish.

**Encouragement to the reader:**

There were two parts of this project that I thought would transcend any environment. The first was the writings on a nonanxious presence. One thing is certain, there will always be challenging times. Sometimes our life, or areas of leadership, will feel like we are in a season of liminality. The writings of Peter Steinke encouraged us to approach these seasons with a nonanxious presence. The second was the importance of formative practices written by James K. A. Smith. Smith taught us to enhance activities that would help shape a person's heart, ultimately aiming our hearts toward God. My encouragement to the reader, and the information that I learned from this project, is that it is okay to nudge our congregants in the direction of spiritual engagement. Nehemiah taught us that when he helped the Israelite community re-engage after a challenging season.

The last few years have reminded us how important Christian leadership is to the Church. We must lean into the Spirit of God to strengthen us each day. My favorite verse in Nehemiah comes from Nehemiah 8:1, “all the people came together as one.” This was definitely true for the people of Worthington Christian Church. This project united our church family, and it was needed to help us get through a difficult season. My prayer is that the principles and practices found in this writing will do the same for whatever challenging season is ahead.

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<sup>110</sup> Personal note written on December 18, 2022.

## **APPENDIX A PROJECT OUTLINE**

### **Fall 2022**

#### **August**

- 28 – Engage Sunday
- 28 – Leadership Prayer Gathering
- 28 – Impact Partnership

#### **September**

- 10 – Outdoor Prayer Journey
- 11 – Engage: Stories from the Book of Acts
- 11 – Group Sign Ups
- 15 – Ronald McDonald House Impact Project
- 17 – Habitat for Humanity Wall Build Pre-Cut
- 16 – Worthington Christian Village Impact Project
- 18 – Engage: Stories from the Book of Acts
- 18 – Group Sign Ups
- 18 – Habitat for Humanity Wall Build
- 24 – Slate Hill Elementary Impact Project
- 25 – Engage: Stories from the Book of Acts
- 25 – Group Sign Ups

#### **October**

- 2 – Engage: Stories from the Book of Acts
- 2 – Group Sign Ups
- 9 – Fall Festival (Celebration Event)
- 11 – Nehemiah: Passion (Nehemiah 1:1-4; 2:1-9;17-18) Facebook Live Study
- 18 – Nehemiah: Community (Nehemiah 3) Facebook Live Study
- 23 – Ministry Highlight: Youth and Kids Ministry
- 30 – Ministry Highlight: Care Ministry

#### **November**

- 1 – Nehemiah: Perseverance (Nehemiah 4:1-16) Facebook Live Study
- 6 – Ministry Highlight: Worship and Tech Ministry
- 8 – Nehemiah: Renewal (Nehemiah 8:1-3;17; 9:38; 10:39) Facebook Live Study
- 13 – Ministry Highlight: First Impression Ministry
- 13 – Operation Christmas Child Impact Project (OCC Boxes Due Date)
- 16 – Thanksgiving Dinner (Celebration Event)
- 18 – Thanksgiving Dinner Impact Project (Thanksgiving Basket Due Date)

**APPENDIX B  
COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS REPORT**



**KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY  
REPORT**





KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY  
REPORT

**You are reading one of the most important reports for your church.**

If you don't know your community, then it is difficult to reach your community.

**What makes the *Know Your Community* report so important?**

Your church's address is not an accident. God sovereignly placed your church there to reach the people around you. Do you know them? This report will help you understand your neighbors. Jesus' Great Commandment (Matthew 22:34-40) gives clear instructions: Love your neighbor. Knowing your neighbor is the first step to loving your neighbor.

**What is in this report?**

The following pages will reveal what makes your community unique. This report includes two key attributes often used to describe a particular group of people: 1) Demographics and 2) Psychographics.

Demographics are *who* people are. Common demographics include age, gender, and ethnicity. These attributes are often external features not related to what a person believes or how a person behaves.

Psychographics are *what* people prefer. Common psychographics include motivations, beliefs, and priorities. These attributes are often internal features that are impossible to know without asking.

**How should you read this report?**

Undoubtedly, there is a lot of information here! You may need to read the report several times to process everything. Start with the first section, which includes several infographics. They make the data more accessible. Then move to the more detailed section. Look for surprises and confirmations. Surprises are those pieces of data you did not expect. Confirmations will corroborate what you already believe about your community.

[www.ChurchAnswers.com](http://www.ChurchAnswers.com)



KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY  
REPORT

### **What should you do with surprises and confirmations?**

Surprises reveal areas of needed ministry. For example, if your community is younger than anticipated, then you should examine your ministries to see if they are aligned with reaching this demographic.

Confirmations reveal areas of focus. If you know your community is ethnically diverse, and this report corroborates your perception, then your church should stay focused on ethnic diversity.

### **How is the community defined?**

In most cases, we use drive time to determine the boundaries of the community. Common drive times are ten minutes (for more dense communities) and twenty minutes (for less dense communities). We use drive time for a few reasons:

- Other reports use a radius around the location to determine the community. But a radius definition often draws in features that distort data. A large lake or a major highway can alter the results when included in a radius. Drive time works around these distortions for a clearer picture of the actual community.
- Drive time is an easy way to grasp your community. Other reports use zip codes to determine the community, but most people do not quickly recall where one zip code ends and another begins.

In select cases, we will use either a radius or zip codes to determine the boundaries of the community. Some locations require a different approach than drive time.

### **How accurate is the data?**

We partner with ESRI to produce these reports. ESRI's software is the most powerful mapping and spatial data analytics technology available.

[www.ChurchAnswers.com](http://www.ChurchAnswers.com)



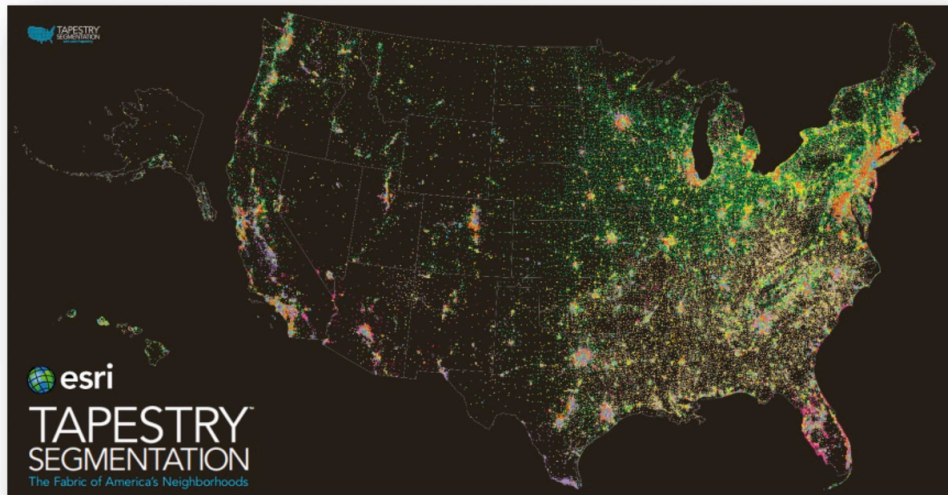
  
KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY  
REPORT

**How was the *Know Your Community* report created?**

Our team spent months developing a proprietary process that assembles the most relevant data for your church. Billions of data points exist within ESRI's systems. We've streamlined an approach that brings you the most pertinent features of your community in a way that is understandable.

**What is tapestry segmentation?**

A special report called "Tapestry Segmentation" is in the detailed section following the infographics. It's one of the unique features of the *Know Your Community* report. Tapestry segmentation classifies neighborhoods into sixty-seven unique segments based on both demographics and psychographics. Several easy-to-understand terms are used to describe communities. You will read terms like "Rooted Rural" and "Rustbelt Traditions" and "Up and Coming Families." The below picture demonstrates the uniqueness of communities in the United States. Tapestry segmentation is a way to understand the nuances of your neighborhood.



[www.ChurchAnswers.com](http://www.ChurchAnswers.com)



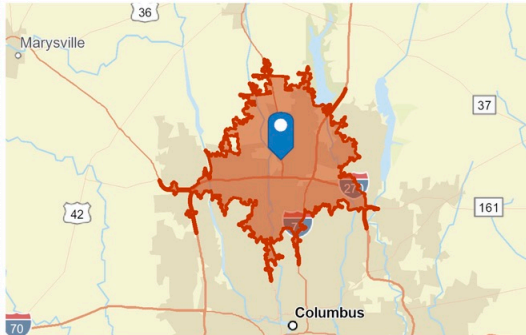
KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY  
REPORT

Look at your top ten tapestry segmentations. Likely, the top ten segments make up most of your community. Then [click here](#) to find many more details about each segment. Read about your top ten segments and take notes about what surprises you and what confirms your perceptions about your community. This exercise may take a couple of hours, but you will learn a lot about the people in your community.

[www.ChurchAnswers.com](http://www.ChurchAnswers.com)

## Worthington Christian Church Columbus

8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235



### EDUCATION



No High School Diploma



16%  
High School Graduate



25%  
Some College

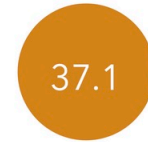


56%  
Bachelor's/Grad/Prof Degree

### KEY FACTS

223,671

Population



Median Age



Average Household Size

\$80,517

Median Household Income

### BUSINESS



10,263

Total Businesses

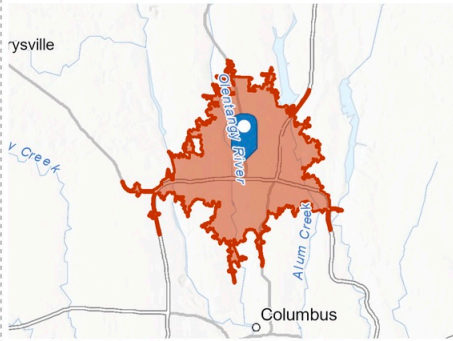


162,446

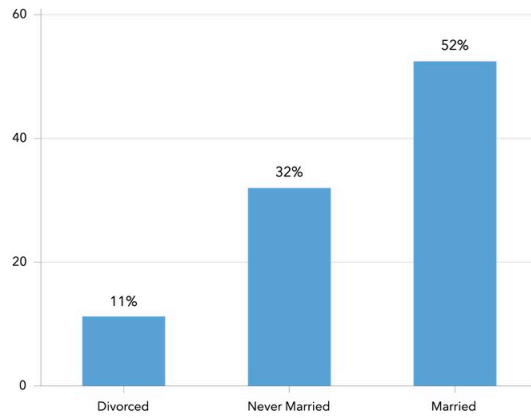
Total Employees

## Worthington Christian Church

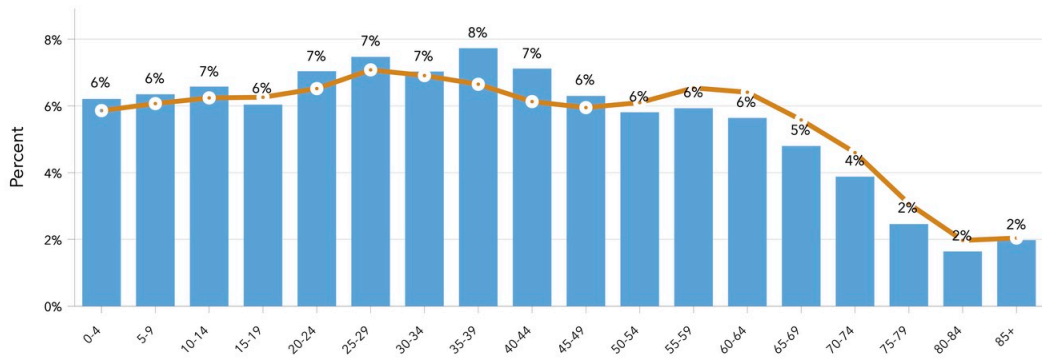
8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235



## 2021 Adult Marriage Figures

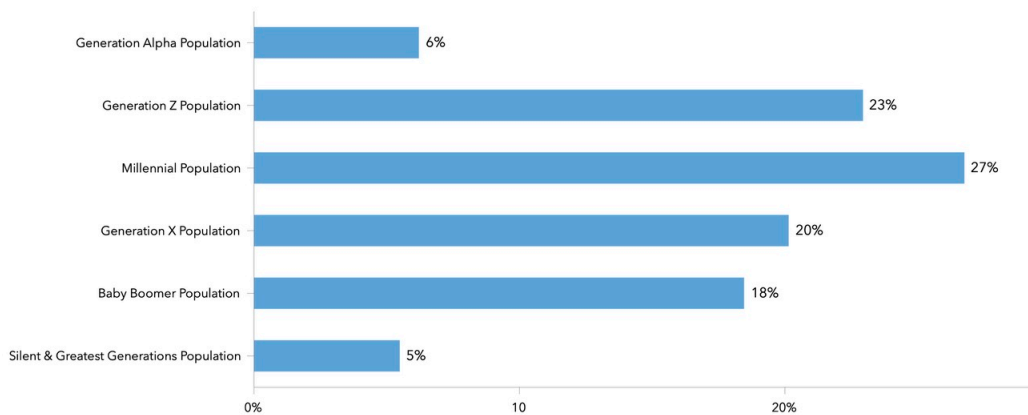


## Age Profile



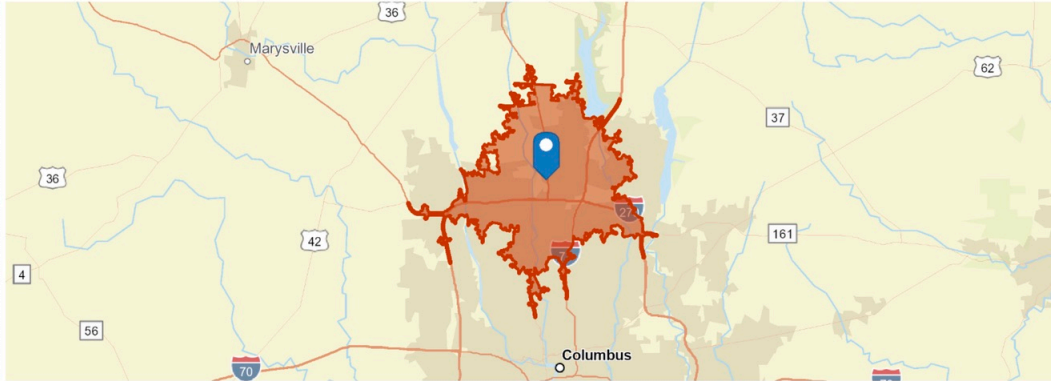
Dots show comparison to United States

## Generations

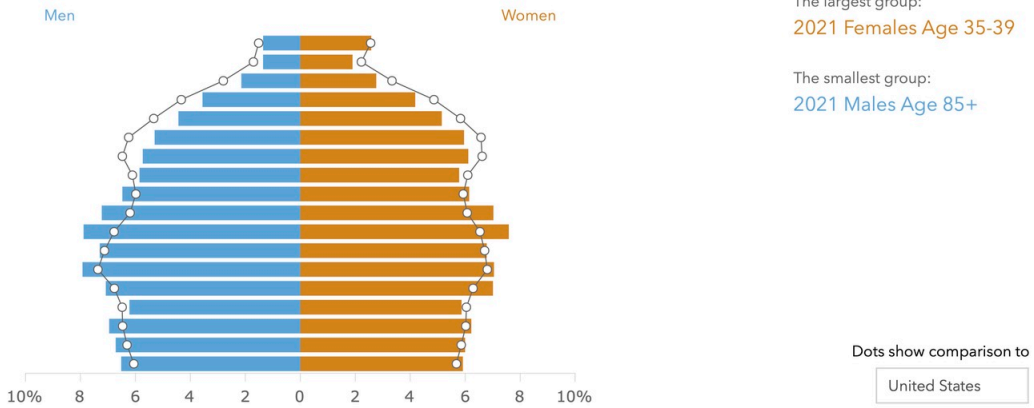


## Worthington Christian Church Columbus

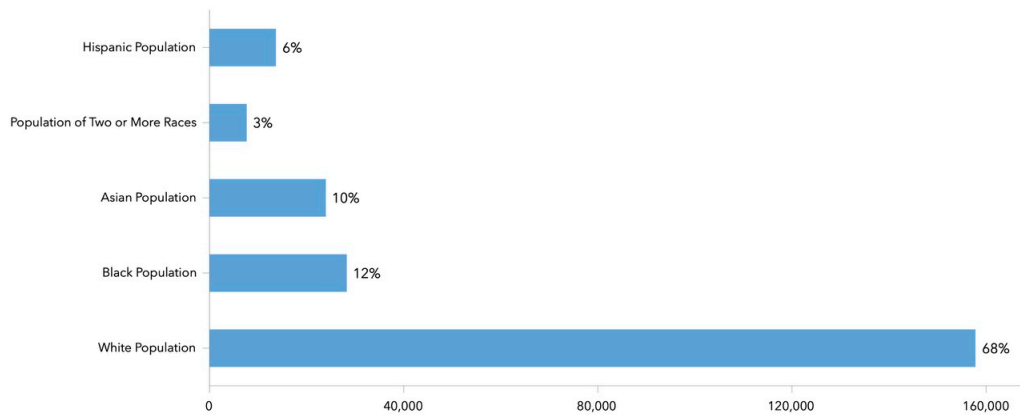
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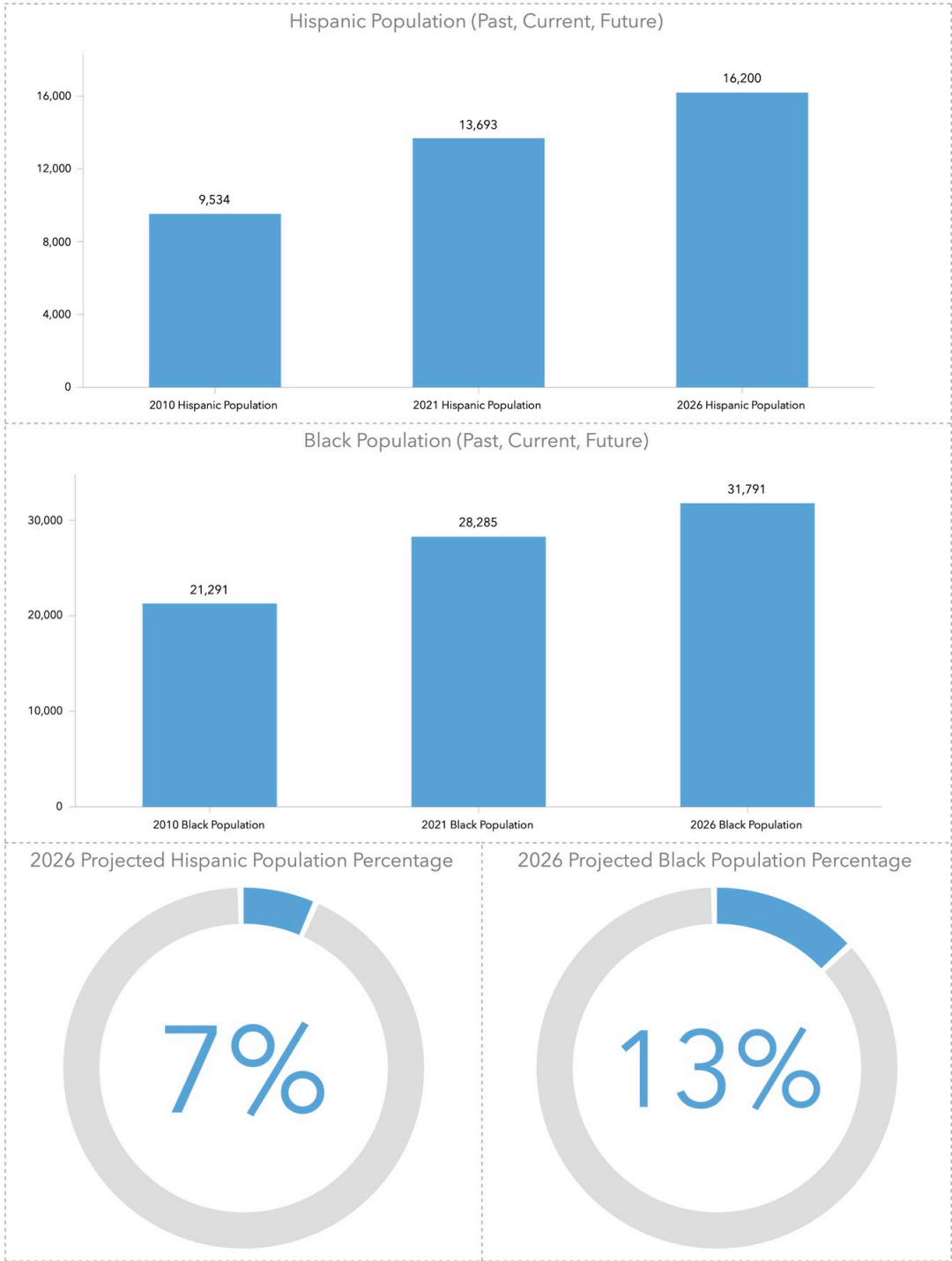


### Age Pyramid



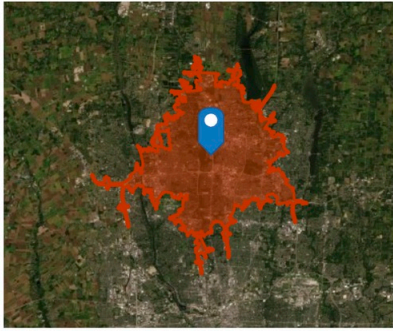
### Current Population by Race





## Worthington Christian Church

8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235



### Households By Income

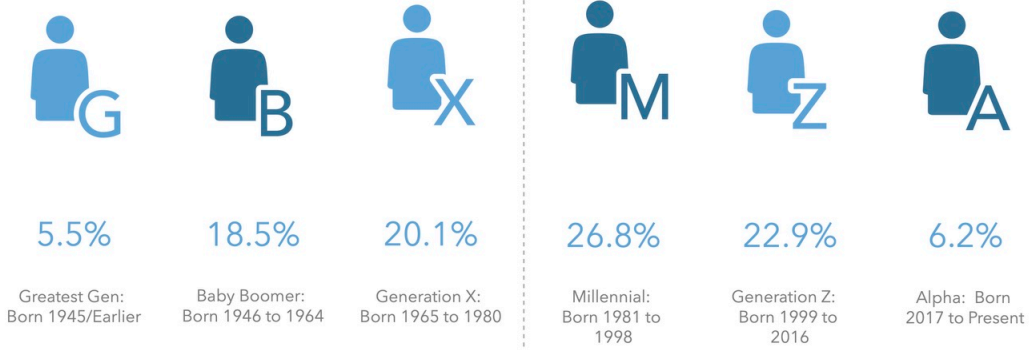
The largest group: \$100,000 - \$149,999 (19.4%)

The smallest group: <\$15,000 (4.3%)

Indicator ▲	Value	Diff
<\$15,000	4.3%	-5.5%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	6.0%	-2.2%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	6.6%	-1.8%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	10.9%	-1.0%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.5%	+1.2%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	13.8%	+1.0%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	19.4%	+3.6%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	10.1%	+2.9%
\$200,000+	10.5%	+2.0%

Bars show deviation from United States

### POPULATION BY GENERATION



### Race and Ethnicity

The largest group: White Alone

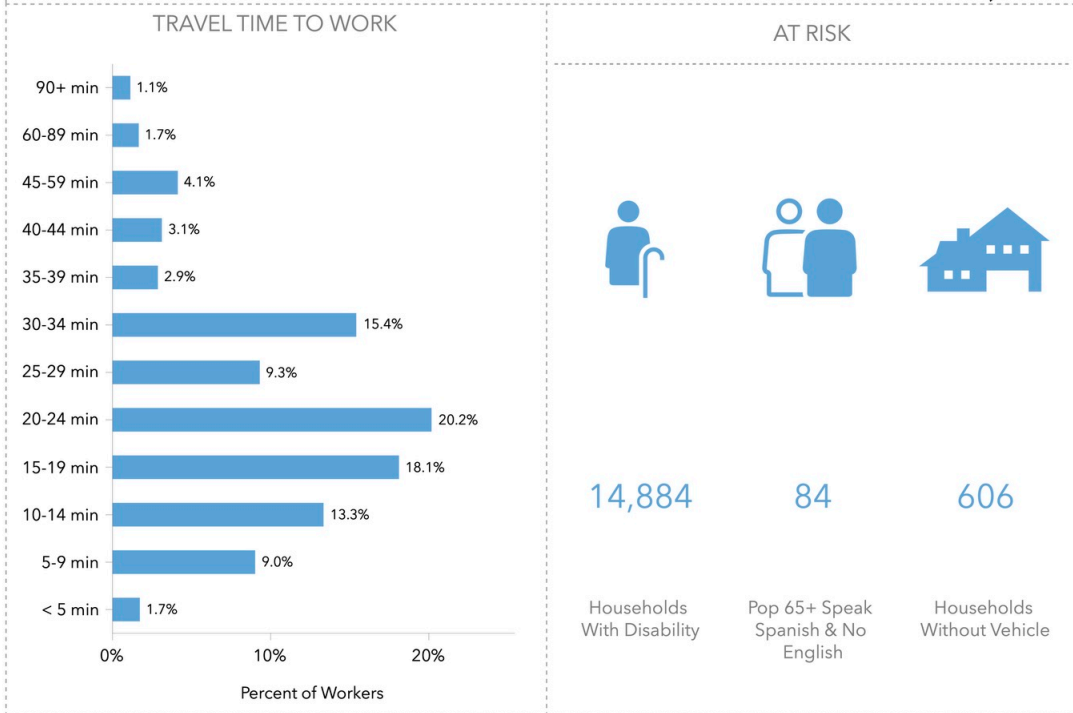
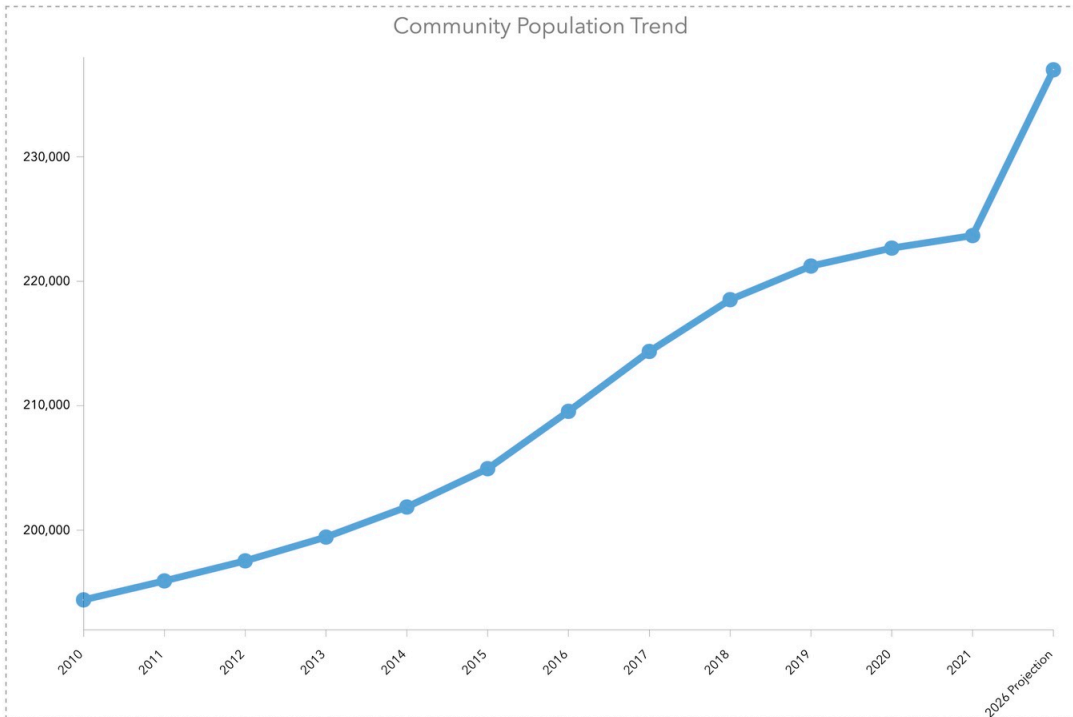
(70.55)

The smallest group: Pacific Islander Alone

(0.04)

Indicator ▲	Value	Diff
White Alone	70.55	+1.38
Black Alone	12.65	-0.34
American Indian/Alaska Native Alone	0.16	-0.83
Asian Alone	10.72	+4.79
Pacific Islander Alone	0.04	-0.16
Other Race	2.45	-4.66
Two or More Races	3.43	-0.18
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	6.12	-12.80

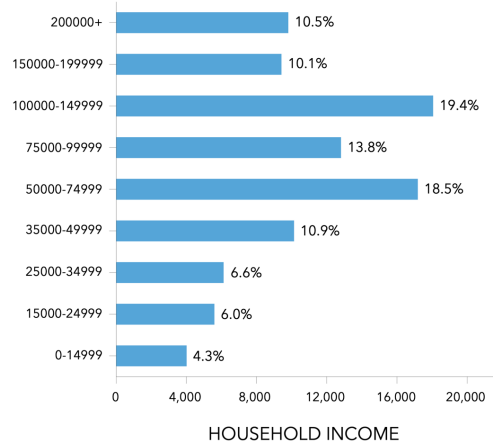
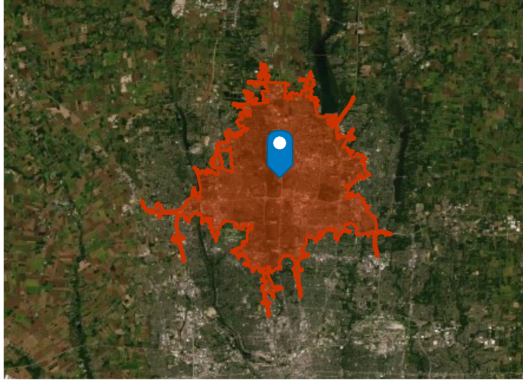
Bars show deviation from United States





## Worthington Christian Church Columbus

8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235



### HOUSING STATS



**\$264,615**

Median Home Value



**\$11,761**

Average Spent on Mortgage & Basics



**\$896**

Median Contract Rent



**\$80,517**

Median Household Income



**\$44,524**

Per Capita Income



**\$156,017**

Median Net Worth

### EMPLOYMENT



White Collar

79%



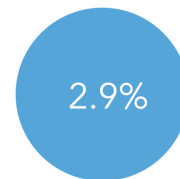
Blue Collar

12%



Services

9%



Unemployment Rate

### ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD SPENDING



\$2,507

Apparel & Services



\$202

Computers & Hardware



\$4,485

Eating Out



\$6,250

Groceries



\$6,947

Health Care

### PETS



Household Owns a Dog

37%



Household Owns a Cat

20%



Household Owns Any Pet

50%

### ANNUAL LIFESTYLE SPENDING



\$2,953

Travel



\$94

Theatre/Operas/ Concerts



\$110

Movies/Museums/ Parks



\$75

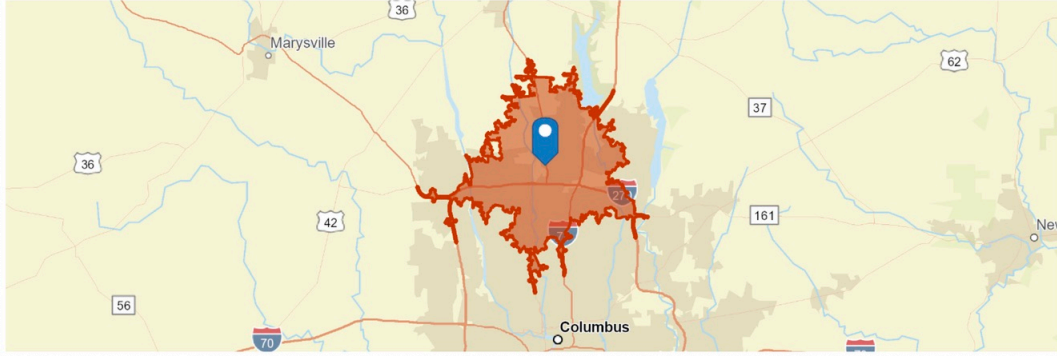
Sports Events



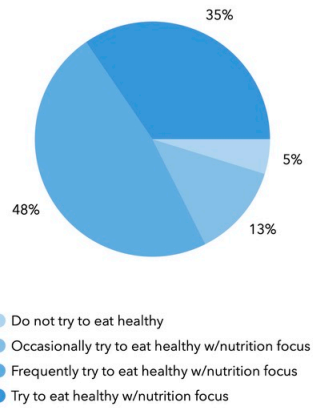
\$8

Online Games

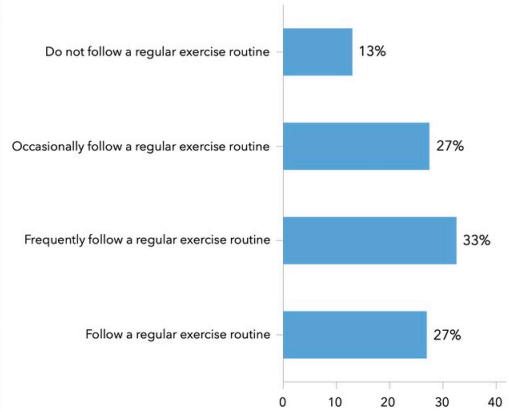
## Worthington Christian Church Columbus



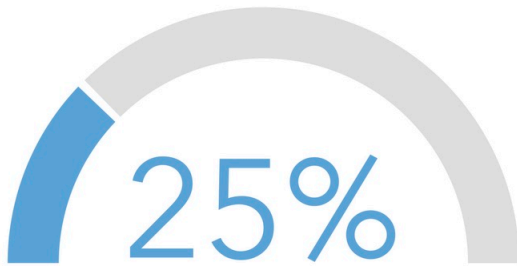
### Eating Healthy



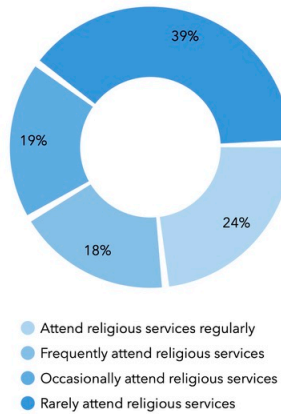
### Follow a Regular Exercise Routine



### Contributed to a Religious Org Last 12 Months

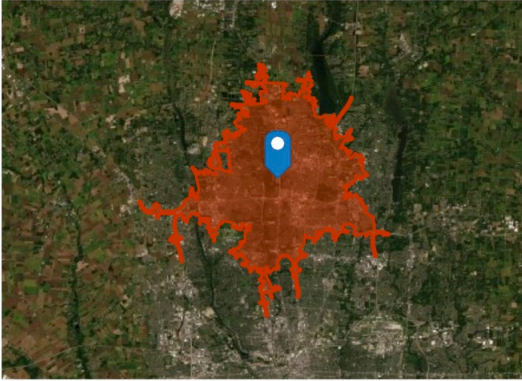


### Attending Religious Services

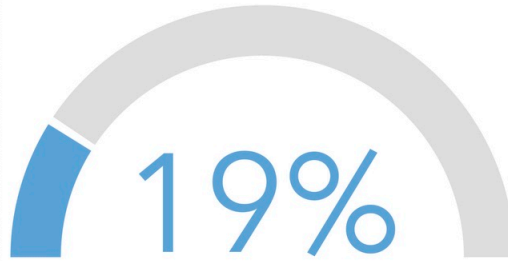


### Worthington Christian Church Columbus

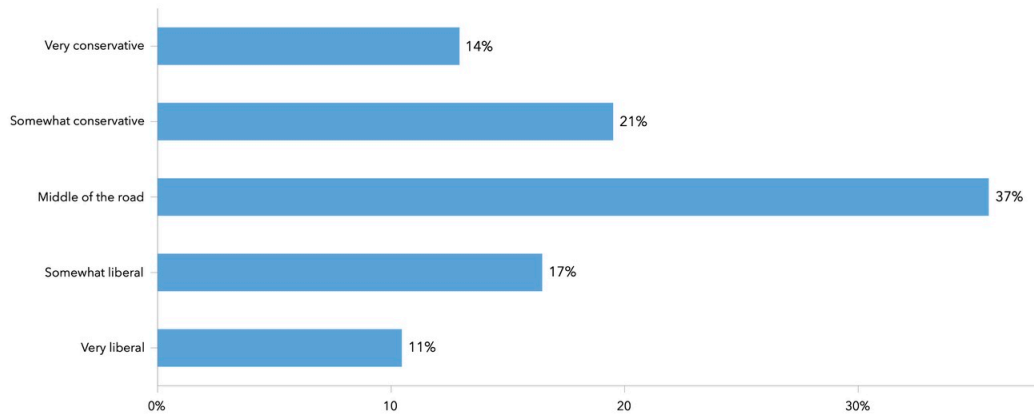
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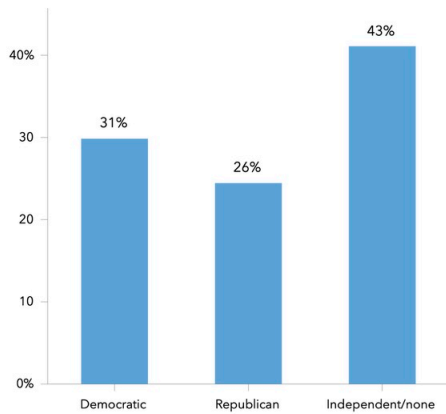
### Volunteered for a Charitable Org Last 12 Months



### Political Leaning



### Political Affiliation



Know Your Community

Report Powered By:



ChurchAnswers.com



# ACS Population Summary

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
 Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
 Latitude: 40.13113  
 Longitude: -83.01845

	2015 - 2019 ACS Estimate	Percent	MOE(±)	Reliability
<b>TOTALS</b>				
Total Population	213,740		3,418	■■
Total Households	85,525		1,093	■■
Total Housing Units	91,541		1,104	■■
<b>POPULATION AGE 3+ YEARS BY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT</b>				
Total	203,864	100.0%	3,229	■■
Enrolled in school	54,947	27.0%	1,656	■■
Enrolled in nursery school, preschool	4,082	2.0%	379	■■
Public school	1,792	0.9%	268	■■
Private school	2,290	1.1%	272	■■
Enrolled in kindergarten	3,109	1.5%	377	■■
Public school	2,549	1.3%	334	■■
Private school	560	0.3%	155	■
Enrolled in grade 1 to grade 4	12,106	5.9%	731	■■
Public school	10,787	5.3%	701	■■
Private school	1,320	0.6%	215	■■
Enrolled in grade 5 to grade 8	10,528	5.2%	680	■■
Public school	9,631	4.7%	658	■■
Private school	897	0.4%	185	■
Enrolled in grade 9 to grade 12	10,097	5.0%	651	■■
Public school	9,062	4.4%	621	■■
Private school	1,035	0.5%	196	■■
Enrolled in college undergraduate years	10,822	5.3%	658	■■
Public school	8,245	4.0%	605	■■
Private school	2,577	1.3%	291	■■
Enrolled in graduate or professional school	4,202	2.1%	410	■■
Public school	2,943	1.4%	333	■■
Private school	1,260	0.6%	236	■■
Not enrolled in school	148,918	73.0%	2,050	■■
<b>POPULATION AGE 65+ BY RELATIONSHIP AND HOUSEHOLD TYPE</b>				
Total	27,514	100.0%	858	■■
Living in Households	26,625	96.8%	829	■■
Living in Family Households	17,776	64.6%	773	■■
Householder	8,686	31.6%	413	■■
Spouse	7,180	26.1%	370	■■
Parent	1,427	5.2%	285	■
Parent-in-law	291	1.1%	97	■
Other Relative	114	0.4%	65	■
Nonrelative	78	0.3%	46	■
Living in Nonfamily Households	8,850	32.2%	467	■■
Householder	8,374	30.4%	437	■■
Nonrelative	476	1.7%	122	■
Living in Group Quarters	889	3.2%	217	■

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Reliability: ■■ high ■ medium ■ low

March 23, 2022



## ACS Population Summary

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.13113  
Longitude: -83.01845

	2015 - 2019 ACS Estimate	Percent	MOE(±)	Reliability
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE AND SIZE</b>				
Family Households	53,786	62.9%	1,025	High
2-Person	22,576	26.4%	749	High
3-Person	13,529	15.8%	711	High
4-Person	11,286	13.2%	598	High
5-Person	4,353	5.1%	372	High
6-Person	1,544	1.8%	245	High
7+ Person	498	0.6%	151	Medium
Nonfamily Households	31,739	37.1%	941	High
1-Person	25,127	29.4%	863	High
2-Person	5,708	6.7%	478	High
3-Person	643	0.8%	153	Medium
4-Person	217	0.3%	150	Low
5-Person	22	0.0%	27	Low
6-Person	22	0.0%	35	Low
7+ Person	0	0.0%	0	
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY PRESENCE OF PEOPLE UNDER 18 YEARS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE</b>				
Households with one or more people under 18 years	28,570	33.4%	881	High
Family households	28,345	33.1%	880	High
Married-couple family	20,134	23.5%	705	High
Male householder, no wife present	1,959	2.3%	315	High
Female householder, no husband present	6,251	7.3%	544	High
Nonfamily households	225	0.3%	122	Medium
Households with no people under 18 years	56,955	66.6%	1,047	High
Married-couple family	21,387	25.0%	693	High
Other family	4,054	4.7%	383	High
Nonfamily households	31,514	36.8%	937	High
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY PRESENCE OF PEOPLE 65 YEARS AND OVER, HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND HOUSEHOLD TYPE</b>				
Households with Pop 65+	19,298	22.6%	580	High
1-Person	7,929	9.3%	426	High
2+ Person Family	10,762	12.6%	464	High
2+ Person Nonfamily	607	0.7%	122	Medium
Households with No Pop 65+	66,227	77.4%	1,098	High
1-Person	17,199	20.1%	781	High
2+ Person Family	43,024	50.3%	998	High
2+ Person Nonfamily	6,004	7.0%	501	High

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Reliability: High Medium Low

March 23, 2022



# ACS Population Summary

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
 Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
 Latitude: 40.13113  
 Longitude: -83.01845

	2015 - 2019 ACS Estimate	Percent	MOE(±)	Reliability
<b>POPULATION AGE 5+ YEARS BY LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME AND ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH</b>				
Total	198,033	100.0%	3,131	High
<b>5 to 17 years</b>				
Speak only English	30,588	15.4%	1,381	High
Speak Spanish	1,764	0.9%	397	Medium
Speak English "very well" or "well"	1,648	0.8%	377	Medium
Speak English "not well"	98	0.0%	101	Low
Speak English "not at all"	19	0.0%	29	Low
Speak other Indo-European languages	1,161	0.6%	292	Medium
Speak English "very well" or "well"	1,054	0.5%	274	Medium
Speak English "not well"	107	0.1%	76	Low
Speak English "not at all"	0	0.0%	1	Low
Speak Asian and Pacific Island languages	1,395	0.7%	244	High
Speak English "very well" or "well"	1,318	0.7%	234	High
Speak English "not well"	77	0.0%	52	Low
Speak English "not at all"	0	0.0%	2	Low
Speak other languages	1,276	0.6%	387	Medium
Speak English "very well" or "well"	1,262	0.6%	378	Medium
Speak English "not well"	9	0.0%	14	Low
Speak English "not at all"	4	0.0%	14	Low
<b>18 to 64 years</b>				
Speak only English	109,533	55.3%	2,152	High
Speak Spanish	5,106	2.6%	723	High
Speak English "very well" or "well"	4,077	2.1%	547	High
Speak English "not well"	724	0.4%	223	Medium
Speak English "not at all"	305	0.2%	130	Medium
Speak other Indo-European languages	6,459	3.3%	650	High
Speak English "very well" or "well"	6,066	3.1%	582	High
Speak English "not well"	363	0.2%	129	Medium
Speak English "not at all"	30	0.0%	46	Low
Speak Asian and Pacific Island languages	8,141	4.1%	764	High
Speak English "very well" or "well"	7,387	3.7%	689	High
Speak English "not well"	618	0.3%	188	Medium
Speak English "not at all"	136	0.1%	97	Low
Speak other languages	5,096	2.6%	675	High
Speak English "very well" or "well"	4,597	2.3%	612	High
Speak English "not well"	463	0.2%	139	Medium
Speak English "not at all"	36	0.0%	31	Low
<b>65 years and over</b>				
Speak only English	25,117	12.7%	802	High
Speak Spanish	394	0.2%	197	Medium
Speak English "very well" or "well"	293	0.1%	128	Medium
Speak English "not well"	17	0.0%	18	Low
Speak English "not at all"	84	0.0%	93	Low
Speak other Indo-European languages	1,093	0.6%	231	Medium
Speak English "very well" or "well"	825	0.4%	175	Medium
Speak English "not well"	220	0.1%	118	Medium
Speak English "not at all"	48	0.0%	46	Low
Speak Asian and Pacific Island languages	711	0.4%	183	Medium
Speak English "very well" or "well"	399	0.2%	131	Medium
Speak English "not well"	221	0.1%	96	Medium
Speak English "not at all"	92	0.0%	58	Medium
Speak other languages	198	0.1%	108	Medium
Speak English "very well" or "well"	193	0.1%	108	Medium
Speak English "not well"	5	0.0%	12	Low
Speak English "not at all"	0	0.0%	0	Low

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Reliability: High Medium Low

March 23, 2022



# ACS Population Summary

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
 Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
 Latitude: 40.13113  
 Longitude: -83.01845

	2015 - 2019 ACS Estimate	Percent	MOE(±)	Reliability
<b>WORKERS AGE 16+ YEARS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>				
Total	116,077	100.0%	2,066	High
Worked in state and in county of residence	88,175	76.0%	1,854	High
Worked in state and outside county of residence	27,302	23.5%	968	High
Worked outside state of residence	599	0.5%	166	Medium
<b>SEX BY CLASS OF WORKER FOR THE CIVILIAN EMPLOYED POPULATION 16 YEARS AND OVER</b>				
Total:	118,118	100.0%	2,096	High
Male:	61,287	51.9%	1,386	High
Employee of private company	45,087	38.2%	1,313	High
Self-employed in own incorporated business	2,531	2.1%	296	High
Private not-for-profit wage and salary workers	3,957	3.4%	344	High
Local government workers	2,144	1.8%	282	High
State government workers	3,513	3.0%	334	High
Federal government workers	660	0.6%	138	Medium
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	3,274	2.8%	363	High
Unpaid family workers	120	0.1%	119	Low
Female:	56,831	48.1%	1,337	High
Employee of private company	36,679	31.1%	1,177	High
Self-employed in own incorporated business	892	0.8%	146	High
Private not-for-profit wage and salary workers	7,980	6.8%	559	High
Local government workers	3,776	3.2%	327	High
State government workers	3,991	3.4%	377	High
Federal government workers	612	0.5%	161	Medium
Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers	2,866	2.4%	329	High
Unpaid family workers	36	0.0%	33	Low
<b>POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS AND PRESENCE OF A COMPUTER</b>				
Total	211,018	100.0%	3,413	High
Population <18 in Households	51,865	24.6%	1,813	High
Have a Computer	51,623	24.5%	1,812	High
Have NO Computer	242	0.1%	105	Medium
Population 18-64 in Households	132,527	62.8%	2,289	High
Have a Computer	130,737	62.0%	2,287	High
Have NO Computer	1,791	0.8%	367	Medium
Population 65+ in Households	26,625	12.6%	829	High
Have a Computer	23,857	11.3%	797	High
Have NO Computer	2,769	1.3%	301	High
<b>HOUSEHOLDS AND INTERNET SUBSCRIPTIONS</b>				
Total	85,525	100.0%	1,093	High
With an Internet Subscription	79,660	93.1%	1,102	High
Dial-Up Alone	115	0.1%	51	Medium
Broadband	72,238	84.5%	1,098	High
Satellite Service	3,353	3.9%	301	High
Other Service	379	0.4%	105	Medium
Internet Access with no Subscription	1,174	1.4%	179	High
With No Internet Access	4,692	5.5%	392	High

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Reliability: High Medium Low

March 23, 2022





# ACS Population Summary

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
 Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
 Latitude: 40.13113  
 Longitude: -83.01845

	2015 - 2019 ACS Estimate	Percent	MOE(±)	Reliability
<b>WORKERS AGE 16+ YEARS BY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK</b>				
Total	116,077	100.0%	2,066	■■■
Drove alone	97,372	83.9%	1,937	■■■
Carpooled	7,933	6.8%	717	■■■
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	1,250	1.1%	215	■■■
Bus or trolley bus	1,198	1.0%	211	■■■
Light rail, streetcar or trolley	29	0.0%	33	■
Subway or elevated	20	0.0%	24	■
Long-distance/Commuter Train	2	0.0%	15	■
Ferryboat	0	0.0%	0	
Taxicab	158	0.1%	88	■
Motorcycle	76	0.1%	50	■
Bicycle	279	0.2%	91	■
Walked	1,599	1.4%	279	■■■
Other means	547	0.5%	148	■
Worked at home	6,863	5.9%	534	■■■
<b>WORKERS AGE 16+ YEARS (WHO DID NOT WORK FROM HOME) BY TRAVEL TIME TO WORK</b>				
Total	109,214	100.0%	2,026	■■■
Less than 5 minutes	1,885	1.7%	299	■■■
5 to 9 minutes	9,848	9.0%	678	■■■
10 to 14 minutes	14,572	13.3%	768	■■■
15 to 19 minutes	19,783	18.1%	918	■■■
20 to 24 minutes	22,027	20.2%	905	■■■
25 to 29 minutes	10,171	9.3%	624	■■■
30 to 34 minutes	16,833	15.4%	885	■■■
35 to 39 minutes	3,133	2.9%	354	■■■
40 to 44 minutes	3,405	3.1%	352	■■■
45 to 59 minutes	4,510	4.1%	450	■■■
60 to 89 minutes	1,812	1.7%	259	■■■
90 or more minutes	1,235	1.1%	279	■
Average Travel Time to Work (in minutes)	N/A		N/A	■
<b>FEMALES AGE 20-64 YEARS BY AGE OF OWN CHILDREN AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>				
Total	66,041	100.0%	1,384	■■■
Own children under 6 years only	7,080	10.7%	518	■■■
In labor force	5,204	7.9%	431	■■■
Not in labor force	1,876	2.8%	300	■■■
Own children under 6 years and 6 to 17 years	5,084	7.7%	430	■■■
In labor force	3,636	5.5%	360	■■■
Not in labor force	1,448	2.2%	258	■■■
Own children 6 to 17 years only	13,870	21.0%	687	■■■
In labor force	11,786	17.8%	669	■■■
Not in labor force	2,084	3.2%	229	■■■
No own children under 18 years	40,008	60.6%	1,215	■■■
In labor force	32,523	49.2%	1,085	■■■
Not in labor force	7,485	11.3%	555	■■■

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Reliability: ■■■ high ■■■ medium ■ low

March 23, 2022



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 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
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	2015 - 2019 ACS Estimate	Percent	MOE(±)	Reliability
<b>CIVILIAN NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION BY AGE &amp; TYPES OF HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE</b>				
Total	212,535	100.0%	3,413	■■■
Under 19 years:	54,209	25.5%	1,843	■■■
One Type of Health Insurance:	49,496	23.3%	1,763	■■■
Employer-Based Health Ins Only	35,997	16.9%	1,343	■■■
Direct-Purchase Health Ins Only	2,215	1.0%	339	■■■
Medicare Coverage Only	43	0.0%	42	■
Medicaid Coverage Only	11,024	5.2%	1,222	■■■
TRICARE/Military Hlth Cov Only	218	0.1%	125	■■■
VA Health Care Only	0	0.0%	0	
2+ Types of Health Insurance	2,442	1.1%	450	■■■
No Health Insurance Coverage	2,271	1.1%	482	■■■
19 to 34 years:	51,075	24.0%	1,666	■■■
One Type of Health Insurance:	43,922	20.7%	1,515	■■■
Employer-Based Health Ins Only	34,928	16.4%	1,396	■■■
Direct-Purchase Health Ins Only	3,673	1.7%	435	■■■
Medicare Coverage Only	48	0.0%	25	■■■
Medicaid Coverage Only	5,050	2.4%	575	■■■
TRICARE/Military Hlth Cov Only	71	0.0%	31	■■■
VA Health Care Only	152	0.1%	116	■
2+ Types of Health Insurance	1,972	0.9%	311	■■■
No Health Insurance Coverage	5,181	2.4%	646	■■■
35 to 64 years:	80,607	37.9%	1,661	■■■
One Type of Health Insurance:	71,507	33.6%	1,543	■■■
Employer-Based Health Ins Only	59,308	27.9%	1,417	■■■
Direct-Purchase Health Ins Only	5,934	2.8%	504	■■■
Medicare Coverage Only	855	0.4%	173	■■■
Medicaid Coverage Only	4,982	2.3%	531	■■■
TRICARE/Military Hlth Cov Only	181	0.1%	71	■■■
VA Health Care Only	248	0.1%	132	■■■
2+ Types of Health Insurance	3,888	1.8%	407	■■■
No Health Insurance Coverage	5,212	2.5%	587	■■■
65+ years:	26,643	12.5%	829	■■■
One Type of Health Insurance:	9,142	4.3%	577	■■■
Employer-Based Health Ins Only	1,037	0.5%	227	■■■
Direct-Purchase Health Ins Only	169	0.1%	76	■■■
Medicare Coverage Only	7,905	3.7%	536	■■■
TRICARE/Military Hlth Cov Only	1	0.0%	21	■
VA Health Care Only	30	0.0%	47	■
2+ Types of Health Insurance:	17,375	8.2%	682	■■■
Employer-Based & Direct-Purchase Health Insurance	38	0.0%	30	■
Employer-Based Health & Medicare Insurance	5,978	2.8%	429	■■■
Direct-Purchase Health & Medicare Insurance	5,532	2.6%	420	■■■
Medicare & Medicaid Coverage	1,020	0.5%	208	■■■
Other Private Health Insurance Combos	0	0.0%	0	
Other Public Health Insurance Combos	308	0.1%	90	■■■
Other Health Insurance Combinations	4,498	2.1%	340	■■■
No Health Insurance Coverage	127	0.1%	50	■■■

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Reliability: ■■■ high ■■■ medium ■ low

March 23, 2022



# ACS Population Summary

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

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	2015 - 2019 ACS Estimate	Percent	MOE(±)	Reliability
<b>POPULATION BY RATIO OF INCOME TO POVERTY LEVEL</b>				
Total	210,787	100.0%	3,406	High
Under .50	7,677	3.6%	1,220	High
.50 to .99	11,355	5.4%	1,297	High
1.00 to 1.24	5,592	2.7%	985	High
1.25 to 1.49	5,475	2.6%	818	High
1.50 to 1.84	9,327	4.4%	1,080	High
1.85 to 1.99	3,655	1.7%	619	High
2.00 and over	167,705	79.6%	2,989	High
<b>CIVILIAN POPULATION AGE 18 OR OLDER BY VETERAN STATUS</b>				
Total	161,757	100.0%	2,351	High
Veteran	9,320	5.8%	558	High
Nonveteran	152,437	94.2%	2,305	High
Male	77,581	48.0%	1,531	High
Veteran	8,478	5.2%	514	High
Nonveteran	69,103	42.7%	1,492	High
Female	84,176	52.0%	1,481	High
Veteran	842	0.5%	211	Medium
Nonveteran	83,334	51.5%	1,471	High
<b>CIVILIAN VETERANS AGE 18 OR OLDER BY PERIOD OF MILITARY SERVICE</b>				
Total	9,320	100.0%	558	High
Gulf War (9/01 or later), no Gulf War (8/90 to 8/01), no Vietnam Era	1,375	14.8%	250	High
Gulf War (9/01 or later) and Gulf War (8/90 to 8/01), no Vietnam Era	447	4.8%	126	Medium
Gulf War (9/01 or later), and Gulf War (8/90 to 8/01), and Vietnam Era	25	0.3%	29	Low
Gulf War (8/90 to 8/01), no Vietnam Era	1,294	13.9%	265	Medium
Gulf War (8/90 to 8/01) and Vietnam Era	109	1.2%	48	Medium
Vietnam Era, no Korean War, no World War II	2,873	30.8%	274	High
Vietnam Era and Korean War, no World War II	31	0.3%	30	Low
Vietnam Era and Korean War and World War II	0	0.0%	0	Low
Korean War, no Vietnam Era, no World War II	529	5.7%	130	Medium
Korean War and World War II, no Vietnam Era	35	0.4%	27	Low
World War II, no Korean War, no Vietnam Era	432	4.6%	117	Medium
Between Gulf War and Vietnam Era only	1,358	14.6%	220	High
Between Vietnam Era and Korean War only	724	7.8%	130	High
Between Korean War and World War II only	64	0.7%	33	Medium
Pre-World War II only	25	0.3%	31	Low
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY POVERTY STATUS</b>				
Total	85,525	100.0%	1,093	High
Income in the past 12 months below poverty level	6,375	7.5%	498	High
Married-couple family	1,154	1.3%	220	High
Other family - male householder (no wife present)	347	0.4%	108	Medium
Other family - female householder (no husband present)	1,792	2.1%	313	High
Nonfamily household - male householder	1,227	1.4%	224	High
Nonfamily household - female householder	1,855	2.2%	233	High
Income in the past 12 months at or above poverty level	79,151	92.5%	1,103	High
Married-couple family	40,367	47.2%	879	High
Other family - male householder (no wife present)	2,891	3.4%	376	High
Other family - female householder (no husband present)	7,235	8.5%	545	High
Nonfamily household - male householder	13,556	15.9%	724	High
Nonfamily household - female householder	15,102	17.7%	682	High

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Reliability: High Medium Low

March 23, 2022



# ACS Population Summary

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.13113  
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	2015 - 2019 ACS Estimate	Percent	MOE(±)	Reliability
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY OTHER INCOME</b>				
Social Security Income	18,040	21.1%	574	High
No Social Security Income	67,485	78.9%	1,118	High
Retirement Income	14,353	16.8%	535	High
No Retirement Income	71,172	83.2%	1,141	High
<b>GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS</b>				
<10% of Income	1,409	4.0%	275	High
10-14.9% of Income	4,647	13.1%	447	High
15-19.9% of Income	6,106	17.2%	529	High
20-24.9% of Income	5,432	15.3%	480	High
25-29.9% of Income	3,677	10.4%	406	High
30-34.9% of Income	2,575	7.3%	339	High
35-39.9% of Income	2,033	5.7%	324	High
40-49.9% of Income	2,498	7.0%	360	High
50+% of Income	5,920	16.7%	500	High
Gross Rent % Inc Not Computed	1,147	3.2%	244	Medium
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS</b>				
Total	85,525	100.0%	1,093	High
With public assistance income	895	1.0%	183	Medium
No public assistance income	84,630	99.0%	1,100	High
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY FOOD STAMPS/SNAP STATUS</b>				
Total	85,525	100.0%	1,093	High
With Food Stamps/SNAP	4,543	5.3%	448	High
With No Food Stamps/SNAP	80,982	94.7%	1,101	High
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY DISABILITY STATUS</b>				
Total	85,525	100.0%	1,093	High
With 1+ Persons w/Disability	14,884	17.4%	672	High
With No Person w/Disability	70,641	82.6%	1,166	High

**Data Note:** N/A means not available. Population by Ratio of Income to Poverty Level represents persons for whom poverty status is determined. Household income represents income in 2017, adjusted for inflation.

**2015-2019 ACS Estimate:** The American Community Survey (ACS) replaces census sample data. Esri is releasing the 2015-2019 ACS estimates, five-year period data collected monthly from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2019. Although the ACS includes many of the subjects previously covered by the decennial census sample, there are significant differences between the two surveys including fundamental differences in survey design and residency rules.

**Margin of error (MOE):** The MOE is a measure of the variability of the estimate due to sampling error. MOEs enable the data user to measure the range of uncertainty for each estimate with 90 percent confidence. The range of uncertainty is called the confidence interval, and it is calculated by taking the estimate +/- the MOE. For example, if the ACS reports an estimate of 100 with an MOE of +/- 20, then you can be 90 percent certain the value for the whole population falls between 80 and 120.

**Reliability:** These symbols represent threshold values that Esri has established from the Coefficients of Variation (CV) to designate the usability of the estimates. The CV measures the amount of sampling error relative to the size of the estimate, expressed as a percentage.

- High Reliability: Small CVs (less than or equal to 12 percent) are flagged green to indicate that the sampling error is small relative to the estimate and the estimate is reasonably reliable.
- Medium Reliability: Estimates with CVs between 12 and 40 are flagged yellow-use with caution.
- Low Reliability: Large CVs (over 40 percent) are flagged red to indicate that the sampling error is large relative to the estimate. The estimate is considered very unreliable.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Reliability: High medium Low

March 23, 2022



## Demographic and Income Profile

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.13113  
Longitude: -83.01845

Summary	Census 2010		2021		2026	
Population	193,939		223,671		236,990	
Households	81,064		93,155		98,696	
Families	49,276		55,041		57,900	
Average Household Size	2.36		2.37		2.37	
Owner Occupied Housing Units	48,423		53,406		56,607	
Renter Occupied Housing Units	32,641		39,749		42,089	
Median Age	34.9		37.1		37.6	
Trends: 2021-2026 Annual Rate	Area		State		National	
Population	1.16%		0.21%		0.71%	
Households	1.16%		0.26%		0.71%	
Families	1.02%		0.11%		0.64%	
Owner HHs	1.17%		0.43%		0.91%	
Median Household Income	1.66%		1.83%		2.41%	
Households by Income	Census 2010		2021		2026	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<\$15,000	4,014	4.3%	3,492	3.5%		
\$15,000 - \$24,999	5,597	6.0%	4,994	5.1%		
\$25,000 - \$34,999	6,121	6.6%	5,853	5.9%		
\$35,000 - \$49,999	10,136	10.9%	9,816	9.9%		
\$50,000 - \$74,999	17,189	18.5%	17,539	17.8%		
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12,812	13.8%	13,509	13.7%		
\$100,000 - \$149,999	18,062	19.4%	20,495	20.8%		
\$150,000 - \$199,999	9,418	10.1%	11,532	11.7%		
\$200,000+	9,807	10.5%	11,466	11.6%		
Median Household Income			\$80,517		\$87,430	
Average Household Income			\$107,449		\$118,405	
Per Capita Income			\$44,524		\$49,052	
Population by Age	Census 2010		2021		2026	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0 - 4	13,997	7.2%	13,882	6.2%	14,781	6.2%
5 - 9	13,495	7.0%	14,192	6.3%	14,567	6.1%
10 - 14	12,257	6.3%	14,709	6.6%	14,584	6.2%
15 - 19	11,387	5.9%	13,503	6.0%	14,031	5.9%
20 - 24	13,482	7.0%	15,749	7.0%	16,955	7.2%
25 - 34	32,676	16.8%	32,437	14.5%	34,678	14.6%
35 - 44	28,736	14.8%	33,213	14.8%	34,169	14.4%
45 - 54	26,857	13.8%	27,100	12.1%	28,751	12.1%
55 - 64	21,081	10.9%	25,865	11.6%	25,190	10.6%
65 - 74	10,501	5.4%	19,415	8.7%	21,745	9.2%
75 - 84	6,295	3.2%	9,167	4.1%	12,545	5.3%
85+	3,177	1.6%	4,438	2.0%	4,993	2.1%
Race and Ethnicity	Census 2010		2021		2026	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	151,145	77.9%	157,790	70.5%	159,277	67.2%
Black Alone	21,291	11.0%	28,285	12.6%	31,791	13.4%
American Indian Alone	328	0.2%	366	0.2%	390	0.2%
Asian Alone	11,917	6.1%	23,976	10.7%	30,052	12.7%
Pacific Islander Alone	82	0.0%	100	0.0%	107	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	3,954	2.0%	5,487	2.5%	6,291	2.7%
Two or More Races	5,221	2.7%	7,667	3.4%	9,081	3.8%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	9,534	4.9%	13,694	6.1%	16,200	6.8%

**Data Note:** Income is expressed in current dollars.

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

March 23, 2022

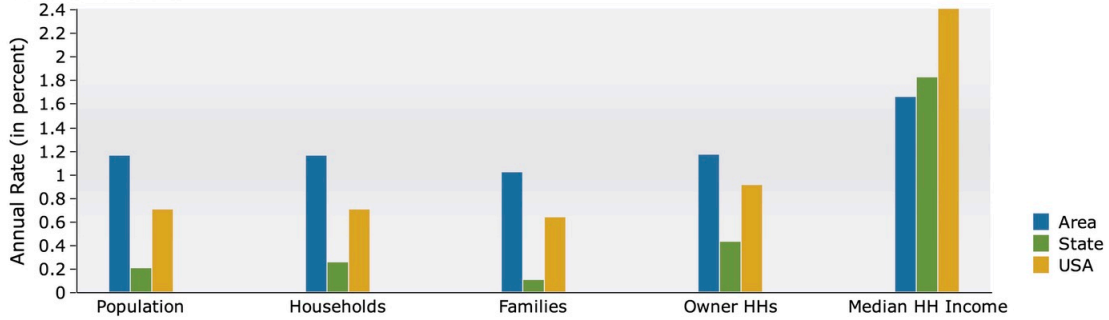


# Demographic and Income Profile

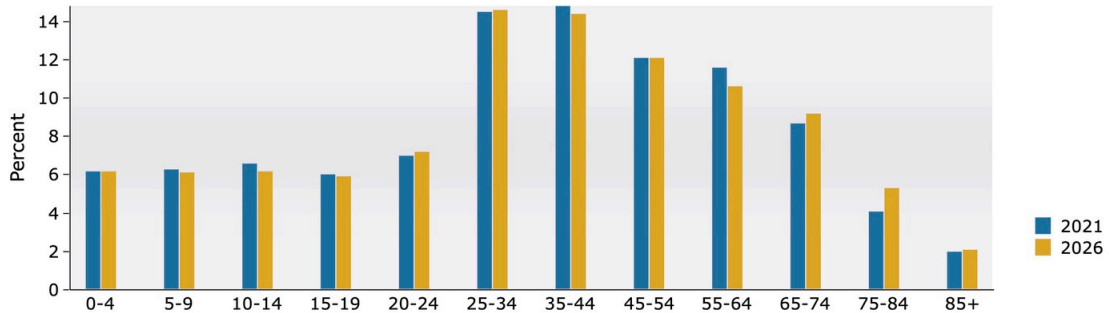
Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
 Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
 Latitude: 40.13113  
 Longitude: -83.01845

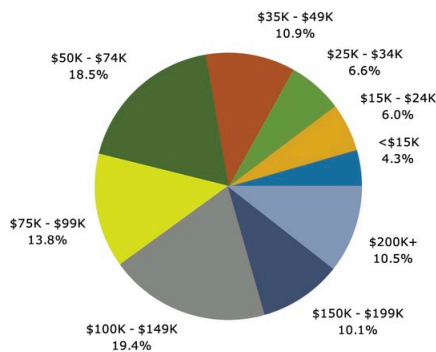
Trends 2021-2026



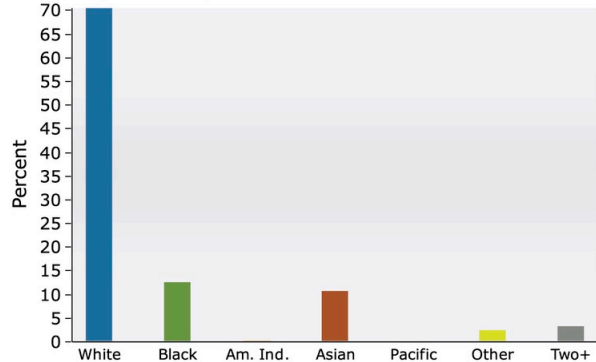
Population by Age



2021 Household Income



2021 Population by Race



2021 Percent Hispanic Origin: 6.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.



## Market Profile

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
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Drive Time: 12.5 minute radii

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.13113  
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	<b>12.5 minutes</b>
<b>Population Summary</b>	
2000 Total Population	171,665
2010 Total Population	193,939
2021 Total Population	223,671
2021 Group Quarters	2,823
2026 Total Population	236,990
2021-2026 Annual Rate	1.16%
2021 Total Daytime Population	259,725
Workers	164,789
Residents	94,936
<b>Household Summary</b>	
2000 Households	72,348
2000 Average Household Size	2.34
2010 Households	81,064
2010 Average Household Size	2.36
2021 Households	93,155
2021 Average Household Size	2.37
2026 Households	98,696
2026 Average Household Size	2.37
2021-2026 Annual Rate	1.16%
2010 Families	49,276
2010 Average Family Size	3.00
2021 Families	55,041
2021 Average Family Size	3.03
2026 Families	57,900
2026 Average Family Size	3.04
2021-2026 Annual Rate	1.02%
<b>Housing Unit Summary</b>	
2000 Housing Units	76,258
Owner Occupied Housing Units	55.7%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	39.1%
Vacant Housing Units	5.1%
2010 Housing Units	87,007
Owner Occupied Housing Units	55.7%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	37.5%
Vacant Housing Units	6.8%
2021 Housing Units	98,453
Owner Occupied Housing Units	54.2%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	40.4%
Vacant Housing Units	5.4%
2026 Housing Units	103,934
Owner Occupied Housing Units	54.5%
Renter Occupied Housing Units	40.5%
Vacant Housing Units	5.0%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	
2021	\$80,517
2026	\$87,430
<b>Median Home Value</b>	
2021	\$264,615
2026	\$291,513
<b>Per Capita Income</b>	
2021	\$44,524
2026	\$49,052
<b>Median Age</b>	
2010	34.9
2021	37.1
2026	37.6

**Data Note:** Household population includes persons not residing in group quarters. Average Household Size is the household population divided by total households. Persons in families include the householder and persons related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. Per Capita Income represents the income received by all persons aged 15 years and over divided by the total population.

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

March 23, 2022



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		<b>12.5 minutes</b>
<b>2021 Households by Income</b>		
Household Income Base		93,155
<\$15,000		4.3%
\$15,000 - \$24,999		6.0%
\$25,000 - \$34,999		6.6%
\$35,000 - \$49,999		10.9%
\$50,000 - \$74,999		18.5%
\$75,000 - \$99,999		13.8%
\$100,000 - \$149,999		19.4%
\$150,000 - \$199,999		10.1%
\$200,000+		10.5%
Average Household Income		\$107,449
<b>2026 Households by Income</b>		
Household Income Base		98,696
<\$15,000		3.5%
\$15,000 - \$24,999		5.1%
\$25,000 - \$34,999		5.9%
\$35,000 - \$49,999		9.9%
\$50,000 - \$74,999		17.8%
\$75,000 - \$99,999		13.7%
\$100,000 - \$149,999		20.8%
\$150,000 - \$199,999		11.7%
\$200,000+		11.6%
Average Household Income		\$118,405
<b>2021 Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value</b>		
Total		53,393
<\$50,000		0.7%
\$50,000 - \$99,999		2.1%
\$100,000 - \$149,999		8.9%
\$150,000 - \$199,999		14.7%
\$200,000 - \$249,999		18.7%
\$250,000 - \$299,999		16.9%
\$300,000 - \$399,999		18.9%
\$400,000 - \$499,999		9.8%
\$500,000 - \$749,999		7.8%
\$750,000 - \$999,999		1.0%
\$1,000,000 - \$1,499,999		0.3%
\$1,500,000 - \$1,999,999		0.0%
\$2,000,000 +		0.1%
Average Home Value		\$302,537
<b>2026 Owner Occupied Housing Units by Value</b>		
Total		56,593
<\$50,000		0.3%
\$50,000 - \$99,999		0.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999		4.7%
\$150,000 - \$199,999		10.9%
\$200,000 - \$249,999		17.6%
\$250,000 - \$299,999		18.9%
\$300,000 - \$399,999		22.2%
\$400,000 - \$499,999		12.3%
\$500,000 - \$749,999		10.6%
\$750,000 - \$999,999		1.1%
\$1,000,000 - \$1,499,999		0.4%
\$1,500,000 - \$1,999,999		0.1%
\$2,000,000 +		0.1%
Average Home Value		\$334,801

**Data Note:** Income represents the preceding year, expressed in current dollars. Household income includes wage and salary earnings, interest dividends, net rents, pensions, SSI and welfare payments, child support, and alimony.

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

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## Market Profile

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
 Drive Time: 12.5 minute radii

Prepared by Esri  
 Latitude: 40.13113  
 Longitude: -83.01845

		<b>12.5 minutes</b>
<b>2010 Population by Age</b>		
Total		193,938
0 - 4		7.2%
5 - 9		7.0%
10 - 14		6.3%
15 - 24		12.8%
25 - 34		16.8%
35 - 44		14.8%
45 - 54		13.8%
55 - 64		10.9%
65 - 74		5.4%
75 - 84		3.2%
85 +		1.6%
18 +		75.8%
<b>2021 Population by Age</b>		
Total		223,670
0 - 4		6.2%
5 - 9		6.3%
10 - 14		6.6%
15 - 24		13.1%
25 - 34		14.5%
35 - 44		14.8%
45 - 54		12.1%
55 - 64		11.6%
65 - 74		8.7%
75 - 84		4.1%
85 +		2.0%
18 +		77.3%
<b>2026 Population by Age</b>		
Total		236,989
0 - 4		6.2%
5 - 9		6.1%
10 - 14		6.2%
15 - 24		13.1%
25 - 34		14.6%
35 - 44		14.4%
45 - 54		12.1%
55 - 64		10.6%
65 - 74		9.2%
75 - 84		5.3%
85 +		2.1%
18 +		78.0%
<b>2010 Population by Sex</b>		
Males		94,062
Females		99,877
<b>2021 Population by Sex</b>		
Males		108,688
Females		114,983
<b>2026 Population by Sex</b>		
Males		115,040
Females		121,950

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

March 23, 2022



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		<b>12.5 minutes</b>
<b>2010 Population by Race/Ethnicity</b>		
Total		193,938
White Alone		77.9%
Black Alone		11.0%
American Indian Alone		0.2%
Asian Alone		6.1%
Pacific Islander Alone		0.0%
Some Other Race Alone		2.0%
Two or More Races		2.7%
Hispanic Origin		4.9%
Diversity Index		43.5
<b>2021 Population by Race/Ethnicity</b>		
Total		223,671
White Alone		70.5%
Black Alone		12.6%
American Indian Alone		0.2%
Asian Alone		10.7%
Pacific Islander Alone		0.0%
Some Other Race Alone		2.5%
Two or More Races		3.4%
Hispanic Origin		6.1%
Diversity Index		53.5
<b>2026 Population by Race/Ethnicity</b>		
Total		236,989
White Alone		67.2%
Black Alone		13.4%
American Indian Alone		0.2%
Asian Alone		12.7%
Pacific Islander Alone		0.0%
Some Other Race Alone		2.7%
Two or More Races		3.8%
Hispanic Origin		6.8%
Diversity Index		57.6
<b>2010 Population by Relationship and Household Type</b>		
Total		193,939
In Households		98.8%
In Family Households		78.0%
Householder		25.3%
Spouse		19.3%
Child		28.9%
Other relative		2.7%
Nonrelative		1.8%
In Nonfamily Households		20.8%
In Group Quarters		1.2%
Institutionalized Population		0.6%
Noninstitutionalized Population		0.6%

**Data Note:** Persons of Hispanic Origin may be of any race. The Diversity Index measures the probability that two people from the same area will be from different race/ethnic groups.

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

March 23, 2022



## Market Profile

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
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Prepared by Esri  
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	<b>12.5 minutes</b>
<b>2021 Population 25+ by Educational Attainment</b>	
Total	151,636
Less than 9th Grade	1.4%
9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma	2.0%
High School Graduate	14.4%
GED/Alternative Credential	1.5%
Some College, No Degree	17.9%
Associate Degree	6.9%
Bachelor's Degree	34.3%
Graduate/Professional Degree	21.5%
<b>2021 Population 15+ by Marital Status</b>	
Total	180,889
Never Married	32.0%
Married	52.4%
Widowed	4.3%
Divorced	11.2%
<b>2021 Civilian Population 16+ in Labor Force</b>	
Civilian Population 16+	133,399
Population 16+ Employed	97.1%
Population 16+ Unemployment rate	2.9%
Population 16-24 Employed	14.1%
Population 16-24 Unemployment rate	3.8%
Population 25-54 Employed	63.4%
Population 25-54 Unemployment rate	2.7%
Population 55-64 Employed	15.2%
Population 55-64 Unemployment rate	2.2%
Population 65+ Employed	7.3%
Population 65+ Unemployment rate	3.5%
<b>2021 Employed Population 16+ by Industry</b>	
Total	129,591
Agriculture/Mining	0.2%
Construction	3.8%
Manufacturing	6.8%
Wholesale Trade	2.4%
Retail Trade	10.9%
Transportation/Utilities	4.2%
Information	2.0%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	13.7%
Services	52.2%
Public Administration	3.8%
<b>2021 Employed Population 16+ by Occupation</b>	
Total	129,591
White Collar	76.8%
Management/Business/Financial	24.3%
Professional	32.3%
Sales	9.6%
Administrative Support	10.6%
Services	11.6%
Blue Collar	11.6%
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	0.1%
Construction/Extraction	2.1%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	1.5%
Production	2.9%
Transportation/Material Moving	4.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

March 23, 2022



## Market Profile

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
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 Drive Time: 12.5 minute radii

Prepared by Esri  
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	<b>12.5 minutes</b>
<b>2010 Households by Type</b>	
Total	81,064
Households with 1 Person	30.4%
Households with 2+ People	69.6%
Family Households	60.8%
Husband-wife Families	46.4%
With Related Children	22.3%
Other Family (No Spouse Present)	14.4%
Other Family with Male Householder	4.0%
With Related Children	2.4%
Other Family with Female Householder	10.4%
With Related Children	7.2%
Nonfamily Households	8.8%
All Households with Children	32.2%
Multigenerational Households	2.0%
Unmarried Partner Households	6.9%
Male-female	6.0%
Same-sex	0.9%
<b>2010 Households by Size</b>	
Total	81,064
1 Person Household	30.4%
2 Person Household	33.3%
3 Person Household	15.7%
4 Person Household	13.1%
5 Person Household	5.1%
6 Person Household	1.7%
7 + Person Household	0.7%
<b>2010 Households by Tenure and Mortgage Status</b>	
Total	81,064
Owner Occupied	59.7%
Owned with a Mortgage/Loan	48.2%
Owned Free and Clear	11.5%
Renter Occupied	40.3%
<b>2021 Affordability, Mortgage and Wealth</b>	
Housing Affordability Index	136
Percent of Income for Mortgage	13.8%
Wealth Index	120
<b>2010 Housing Units By Urban/ Rural Status</b>	
Total Housing Units	87,007
Housing Units Inside Urbanized Area	99.7%
Housing Units Inside Urbanized Cluster	0.0%
Rural Housing Units	0.3%
<b>2010 Population By Urban/ Rural Status</b>	
Total Population	193,939
Population Inside Urbanized Area	99.7%
Population Inside Urbanized Cluster	0.0%
Rural Population	0.3%

**Data Note:** Households with children include any households with people under age 18, related or not. Multigenerational households are families with 3 or more parent-child relationships. Unmarried partner households are usually classified as nonfamily households unless there is another member of the household related to the householder. Multigenerational and unmarried partner households are reported only to the tract level. Esri estimated block group data, which is used to estimate polygons or non-standard geography.

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

March 23, 2022



## Market Profile

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Prepared by Esri  
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**12.5 minutes**

Top 3 Tapestry Segments	
1.	Enterprising Professionals (2D)
2.	Young and Restless (11B)
3.	Bright Young Professionals (8C)
2021 Consumer Spending	
Apparel & Services: Total \$	\$233,526,261
Average Spent	\$2,506.86
Spending Potential Index	118
Education: Total \$	\$193,848,034
Average Spent	\$2,080.92
Spending Potential Index	121
Entertainment/Recreation: Total \$	\$343,162,905
Average Spent	\$3,683.78
Spending Potential Index	114
Food at Home: Total \$	\$582,223,567
Average Spent	\$6,250.05
Spending Potential Index	115
Food Away from Home: Total \$	\$417,772,374
Average Spent	\$4,484.70
Spending Potential Index	118
Health Care: Total \$	\$647,165,367
Average Spent	\$6,947.19
Spending Potential Index	111
HH Furnishings & Equipment: Total \$	\$243,772,344
Average Spent	\$2,616.85
Spending Potential Index	116
Personal Care Products & Services: Total \$	\$98,156,999
Average Spent	\$1,053.70
Spending Potential Index	117
Shelter: Total \$	\$2,217,336,219
Average Spent	\$23,802.65
Spending Potential Index	118
Support Payments/Cash Contributions/Gifts in Kind: Total \$	\$255,190,187
Average Spent	\$2,739.41
Spending Potential Index	115
Travel: Total \$	\$275,054,992
Average Spent	\$2,952.66
Spending Potential Index	117
Vehicle Maintenance & Repairs: Total \$	\$119,419,719
Average Spent	\$1,281.95
Spending Potential Index	116

**Data Note:** Consumer spending shows the amount spent on a variety of goods and services by households that reside in the area. Expenditures are shown by broad budget categories that are not mutually exclusive. Consumer spending does not equal business revenue. Total and Average Amount Spent Per Household represent annual figures. The Spending Potential Index represents the amount spent in the area relative to a national average of 100.

**Source:** Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2018 and 2019 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Esri.

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026 Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography.

March 23, 2022



# Tapestry Segmentation Area Profile

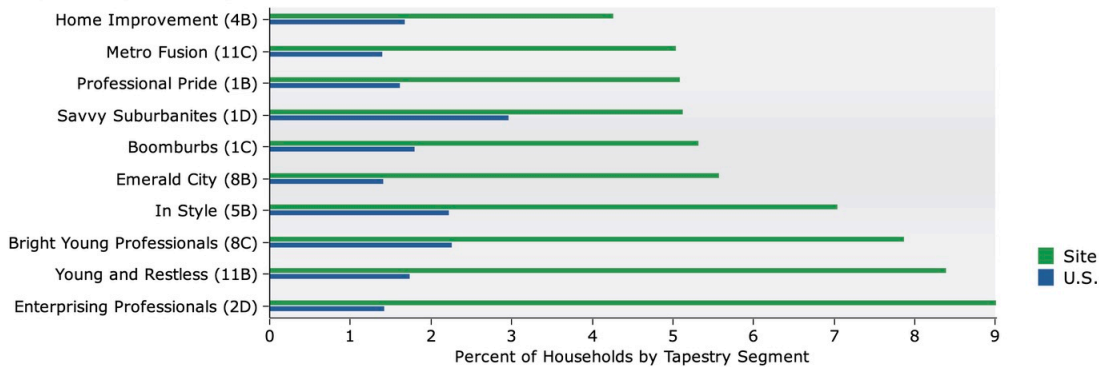
Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
 8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
 Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
 Latitude: 40.13113  
 Longitude: -83.01845

## Top Twenty Tapestry Segments

Rank	Tapestry Segment	2021 Households		2021 U.S. Households		Index
		Percent	Cumulative Percent	Percent	Cumulative Percent	
1	Enterprising Professionals (2D)	9.0%	9.0%	1.4%	1.4%	630
2	Young and Restless (11B)	8.4%	17.4%	1.8%	3.2%	479
3	Bright Young Professionals (8C)	7.9%	25.3%	2.3%	5.5%	348
4	In Style (5B)	7.1%	32.4%	2.2%	7.7%	315
5	Emerald City (8B)	5.6%	37.9%	1.4%	9.1%	394
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>38.0%</b>		<b>9.1%</b>		
6	Boomburbs (1C)	5.3%	43.3%	1.8%	10.9%	295
7	Savvy Suburbanites (1D)	5.1%	48.4%	3.0%	13.9%	173
8	Professional Pride (1B)	5.1%	53.5%	1.6%	15.5%	312
9	Metro Fusion (11C)	5.0%	58.5%	1.4%	16.9%	360
10	Home Improvement (4B)	4.3%	62.8%	1.7%	18.6%	253
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>24.8%</b>		<b>9.5%</b>		
11	Workday Drive (4A)	3.4%	66.2%	3.0%	21.6%	113
12	Old and Newcomers (8F)	3.2%	69.4%	2.3%	23.9%	141
13	Exurbanites (1E)	3.1%	72.5%	1.9%	25.8%	160
14	Set to Impress (11D)	3.0%	75.5%	1.4%	27.2%	215
15	Metro Renters (3B)	2.9%	78.4%	1.7%	28.9%	171
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>15.6%</b>		<b>10.3%</b>		
16	Parks and Rec (5C)	2.4%	80.8%	2.0%	30.9%	122
17	Rustbelt Traditions (5D)	2.3%	83.2%	2.2%	33.0%	108
18	Golden Years (9B)	2.1%	85.3%	1.3%	34.4%	161
19	Up and Coming Families (7A)	1.8%	87.1%	2.6%	37.0%	70
20	Urban Chic (2A)	1.7%	88.8%	1.3%	38.3%	132
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>10.3%</b>		<b>9.4%</b>		
<b>Total</b>		<b>88.8%</b>		<b>38.3%</b>		<b>232</b>

## Top Ten Tapestry Segments Site vs. U.S.



**Data Note:** This report identifies neighborhood segments in the area, and describes the socioeconomic quality of the immediate neighborhood. The index is a comparison of the percent of households or Total Population 18+ in the area, by Tapestry segment, to the percent of households or Total Population 18+ in the United States, by segment. An index of 100 is the US average.  
**Source:** Esri

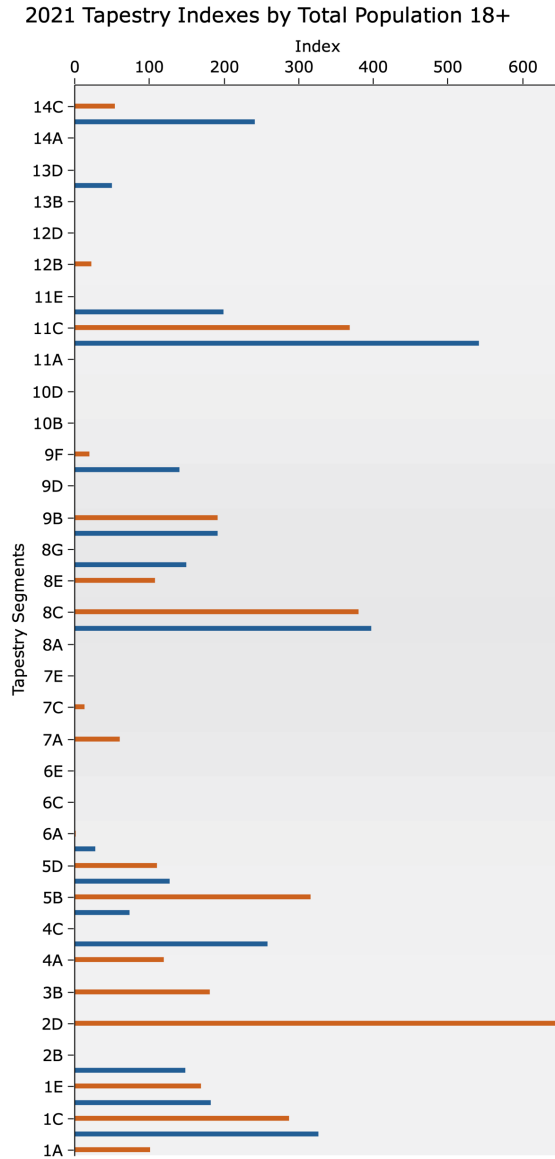
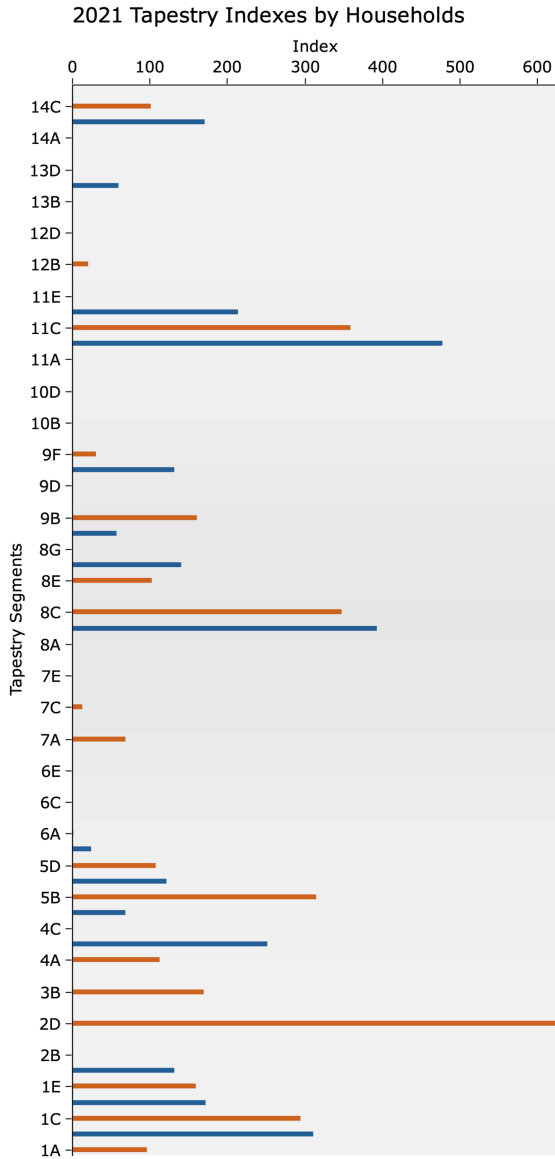
March 23, 2022



# Tapestry Segmentation Area Profile

Worthington Christian Church Columbus  
8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.13113  
Longitude: -83.01845



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**Source:** Esri

March 23, 2022



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8145 N High St, Columbus, Ohio, 43235  
Drive Time: 12.5 minute radius

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Tapestry LifeMode Groups	2021 Households			2021 Adult Population		
	Number	Percent	Index	Number	Percent	Index
<b>Total:</b>	93,155	100.0%		172,954	100.0%	
<b>1. Affluent Estates</b>	<b>18,877</b>	<b>20.3%</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>38,995</b>	<b>22.5%</b>	<b>211</b>
Top Tier (1A)	1,504	1.6%	97	3,114	1.8%	102
Professional Pride (1B)	4,746	5.1%	312	10,396	6.0%	327
Boomburbs (1C)	4,969	5.3%	295	9,585	5.5%	288
Savvy Suburbanites (1D)	4,781	5.1%	173	10,219	5.9%	184
Exurbanites (1E)	2,877	3.1%	160	5,681	3.3%	170
<b>2. Upscale Avenues</b>	<b>9,993</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>18,247</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>182</b>
Urban Chic (2A)	1,591	1.7%	132	3,157	1.8%	149
Pleasantville (2B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Pacific Heights (2C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Enterprising Professionals (2D)	8,402	9.0%	630	15,090	8.7%	654
<b>3. Uptown Individuals</b>	<b>2,748</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>4,205</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>77</b>
Laptops and Lattes (3A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Metro Renters (3B)	2,748	2.9%	171	4,205	2.4%	182
Trendsetters (3C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>4. Family Landscapes</b>	<b>7,119</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14,762</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>107</b>
Workday Drive (4A)	3,135	3.4%	113	6,582	3.8%	120
Home Improvement (4B)	3,984	4.3%	253	8,180	4.7%	259
Middleburg (4C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>5. GenXurban</b>	<b>13,122</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>23,871</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	<b>128</b>
Comfortable Empty Nesters (5A)	1,587	1.7%	70	3,144	1.8%	75
In Style (5B)	6,575	7.1%	315	11,446	6.6%	317
Parks and Rec (5C)	2,216	2.4%	122	4,204	2.4%	128
Rustbelt Traditions (5D)	2,176	2.3%	108	3,926	2.3%	111
Midlife Constants (5E)	568	0.6%	25	1,151	0.7%	29
<b>6. Cozy Country Living</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
Green Acres (6A)	47	0.1%	2	79	0.0%	1
Salt of the Earth (6B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
The Great Outdoors (6C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Prairie Living (6D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Rural Resort Dwellers (6E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Heartland Communities (6F)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>7. Sprouting Explorers</b>	<b>1,902</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3,365</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>23</b>
Up and Coming Families (7A)	1,705	1.8%	70	2,971	1.7%	62
Urban Villages (7B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Urban Edge Families (7C)	197	0.2%	14	394	0.2%	14
Forging Opportunity (7D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Farm to Table (7E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Southwestern Families (7F)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0

**Data Note:** This report identifies neighborhood segments in the area, and describes the socioeconomic quality of the immediate neighborhood. The index is a comparison of the percent of households or Total Population 18+ in the area, by Tapestry segment, to the percent of households or Total Population 18+ in the United States, by segment. An index of 100 is the US average.  
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March 23, 2022





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Tapestry LifeMode Groups	2021 Households			2021 Adult Population		
	Number	Percent	Index	Number	Percent	Index
<b>Total:</b>	93,155	100.0%		172,954	100.0%	
<b>8. Middle Ground</b>	<b>17,070</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>29,813</b>	<b>17.2%</b>	<b>172</b>
City Lights (8A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Emerald City (8B)	5,198	5.6%	394	8,342	4.8%	399
Bright Young Professionals (8C)	7,342	7.9%	348	13,461	7.8%	382
Downtown Melting Pot (8D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Front Porches (8E)	1,512	1.6%	103	2,840	1.6%	109
Old and Newcomers (8F)	3,018	3.2%	141	5,170	3.0%	151
Hometown Heritage (8G)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>9. Senior Styles</b>	<b>4,127</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>7,341</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>85</b>
Silver & Gold (9A)	432	0.5%	58	734	0.4%	59
Golden Years (9B)	1,988	2.1%	161	3,907	2.3%	193
The Elders (9C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Senior Escapes (9D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Retirement Communities (9E)	1,475	1.6%	132	2,458	1.4%	142
Social Security Set (9F)	232	0.2%	31	242	0.1%	21
<b>10. Rustic Outposts</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
Southern Satellites (10A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Rooted Rural (10B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Economic BedRock (10C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Down the Road (10D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Rural Bypasses (10E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>11. Midtown Singles</b>	<b>15,297</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>25,567</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>272</b>
City Strivers (11A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Young and Restless (11B)	7,822	8.4%	479	13,138	7.6%	542
Metro Fusion (11C)	4,704	5.0%	360	8,350	4.8%	370
Set to Impress (11D)	2,771	3.0%	215	4,079	2.4%	200
City Commons (11E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>12. Hometown</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>699</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>7</b>
Family Foundations (12A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Traditional Living (12B)	395	0.4%	22	699	0.4%	23
Small Town Simplicity (12C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Modest Income Homes (12D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>13. Next Wave</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>10</b>
Diverse Convergence (13A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Family Extensions (13B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
NeWest Residents (13C)	438	0.5%	61	745	0.4%	51
Fresh Ambitions (13D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
High Rise Renters (13E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>14. Scholars and Patriots</b>	<b>2,020</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>5,265</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>134</b>
Military Proximity (14A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
College Towns (14B)	1,535	1.6%	172	4,342	2.5%	243
Dorms to Diplomas (14C)	485	0.5%	102	923	0.5%	55
Unclassified (15)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0

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March 23, 2022



## Tapestry Segmentation Area Profile

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Tapestry Urbanization Groups	2021 Households			2021 Adult Population		
	Number	Percent	Index	Number	Percent	Index
<b>Total:</b>	93,155	100.0%		172,954	100.0%	
<b>1. Principal Urban Center</b>	<b>3,186</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>4,950</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>43</b>
Laptops and Lattes (3A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Metro Renters (3B)	2,748	2.9%	171	4,205	2.4%	182
Trendsetters (3C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Downtown Melting Pot (8D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
City Strivers (11A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
NeWest Residents (13C)	438	0.5%	61	745	0.4%	51
Fresh Ambitions (13D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
High Rise Renters (13E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>2. Urban Periphery</b>	<b>14,419</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>26,131</b>	<b>15.1%</b>	<b>86</b>
Pacific Heights (2C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Rustbelt Traditions (5D)	2,176	2.3%	108	3,926	2.3%	111
Urban Villages (7B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Urban Edge Families (7C)	197	0.2%	14	394	0.2%	14
Forging Opportunity (7D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Southwestern Families (7F)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
City Lights (8A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
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Family Foundations (12A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Modest Income Homes (12D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Diverse Convergence (13A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Family Extensions (13B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>3. Metro Cities</b>	<b>31,018</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>53,679</b>	<b>31.0%</b>	<b>186</b>
In Style (5B)	6,575	7.1%	315	11,446	6.6%	317
Emerald City (8B)	5,198	5.6%	394	8,342	4.8%	399
Front Porches (8E)	1,512	1.6%	103	2,840	1.6%	109
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<b>Total:</b>	93,155	100.0%		172,954	100.0%	
<b>4. Suburban Periphery</b>	<b>44,485</b>	<b>47.8%</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>88,115</b>	<b>50.9%</b>	<b>155</b>
Top Tier (1A)	1,504	1.6%	97	3,114	1.8%	102
Professional Pride (1B)	4,746	5.1%	312	10,396	6.0%	327
Boomburbs (1C)	4,969	5.3%	295	9,585	5.5%	288
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Enterprising Professionals (2D)	8,402	9.0%	630	15,090	8.7%	654
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The Elders (9C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Military Proximity (14A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>5. Semirural</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
Middleburg (4C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Heartland Communities (6F)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Farm to Table (7E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Senior Escapes (9D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Down the Road (10D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Small Town Simplicity (12C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
<b>6. Rural</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0</b>
Green Acres (6A)	47	0.1%	2	79	0.0%	1
Salt of the Earth (6B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
The Great Outdoors (6C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Prairie Living (6D)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Rural Resort Dwellers (6E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Southern Satellites (10A)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Rooted Rural (10B)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Economic BedRock (10C)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Rural Bypasses (10E)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0
Unclassified (15)	0	0.0%	0	0	0.0%	0

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March 23, 2022

## APPENDIX C SURVEY RESULTS

### Constant Contact Survey Results

**Campaign Name:** Increasing Engagement (part 1) Aug 2022

**Survey Starts:** 83

**Survey Submits:** 35

**Export Date:** 09/06/2022 09:54 AM

#### MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. In my desire to be aligned with the mission of Jesus, I believe I am making good progress.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			2	5%
Neutral			6	17%
Agree			21	60%
Strongly Agree			6	17%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### MULTIPLE CHOICE

2. I actively seek to learn more about the mission of Jesus.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			1	2%
Disagree			1	2%
Neutral			6	17%
Agree			26	74%
Strongly Agree			1	2%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>




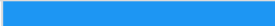
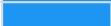
#### MULTIPLE CHOICE

3. I follow a reading plan to help me read the Bible.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			2	5%
Disagree			14	40%
Neutral			7	20%
Agree			11	31%
Strongly Agree			1	2%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>


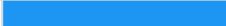



MULTIPLE CHOICE

4. I use other resources outside of the Bible to help me understand some of what is written in the Bible.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			2	5%
Disagree			3	8%
Neutral			5	14%
Agree			18	51%
Strongly Agree			7	20%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>






MULTIPLE CHOICE

5. I almost always read the Bible at least three days a week.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			5	14%
Disagree			15	42%
Neutral			6	17%
Agree			6	17%
Strongly Agree			3	8%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>


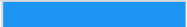



MULTIPLE CHOICE

6. I am a part of a group within our church that spiritually and emotionally encourages me.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			4	11%
Disagree			18	51%
Neutral			6	17%
Agree			6	17%
Strongly Agree			1	2%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>


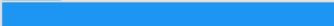

MULTIPLE CHOICE

7. I feel a close connection to three or more members of the church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			1	2%
Disagree			12	34%
Neutral			7	20%
Agree			9	25%
Strongly Agree			6	17%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>

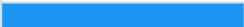


MULTIPLE CHOICE

8. I feel a longing to be with others who will help me in my spiritual journey.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			4	11%
Agree			22	62%
Strongly Agree			9	25%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>





MULTIPLE CHOICE

9. I encourage others in their spiritual journey.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			16	45%
Agree			18	51%
Strongly Agree			1	2%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>

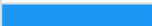

MULTIPLE CHOICE

10. In order for me to fully follow Jesus in my life I need the support of other believers.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			1	2%
Neutral			2	5%
Agree			17	48%
Strongly Agree			15	42%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>

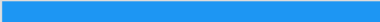
MULTIPLE CHOICE

11. I am comfortable using my spiritual gifts for the benefit of the church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			10	28%
Agree			23	65%
Strongly Agree			2	5%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>


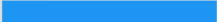
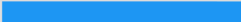

MULTIPLE CHOICE

12. When there is a need at the church, I feel a desire to help.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			1	2%
Neutral			8	22%
Agree			25	71%
Strongly Agree			1	2%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>




MULTIPLE CHOICE

13. I feel that I am using my spiritual gifts in my daily life.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			3	8%
Neutral			14	40%
Agree			16	45%
Strongly Agree			2	5%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>



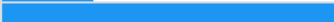

MULTIPLE CHOICE

14. I give of my time to help the mission of the church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			12	34%
Neutral			17	48%
Agree			6	17%
Strongly Agree			0	0%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>



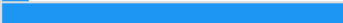

MULTIPLE CHOICE

15. I give of my resources to help the mission of the church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			4	11%
Neutral			6	17%
Agree			22	62%
Strongly Agree			3	8%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>


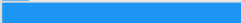

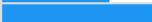
MULTIPLE CHOICE

16. When I miss our church gathering, I feel I am missing something important to me.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			1	2%
Neutral			2	5%
Agree			22	64%
Strongly Agree			9	26%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>34</b>	<b>100%</b>


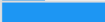


MULTIPLE CHOICE

17. I often invite people to join me at church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			2	5%
Disagree			16	45%
Neutral			7	20%
Agree			10	28%
Strongly Agree			0	0%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>


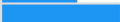


MULTIPLE CHOICE

18. When the church gathers, I know there will be encouraging people with whom I will be able to interact.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			3	8%
Neutral			7	20%
Agree			15	42%
Strongly Agree			10	28%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>

MULTIPLE CHOICE


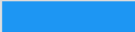
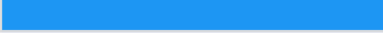
19. There are very few reasons why I would miss a church gathering.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			5	14%
Neutral			8	22%
Agree			19	54%
Strongly Agree			3	8%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>



MULTIPLE CHOICE

20. I am excited to be a part of this church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			1	2%
Agree			9	25%
Strongly Agree			25	71%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>35</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Constant Contact Survey Results**

**Campaign Name:** Increasing Engagement (part 2) Nov 2022


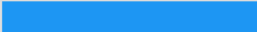
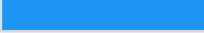
**Survey Starts:** 44

**Survey Submits:** 32

**Export Date:** 12/14/2022 08:46 AM

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. In my desire to be aligned with the mission of Jesus, I believe I am making good progress.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			4	12%
Agree			15	48%
Strongly Agree			12	38%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>31</b>	<b>100%</b>

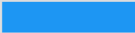



MULTIPLE CHOICE

2. I actively seek to learn more about the mission of Jesus.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			1	3%
Agree			23	71%
Strongly Agree			8	25%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

MULTIPLE CHOICE

3. I follow a reading plan to help me read the Bible.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			8	25%
Neutral			8	25%
Agree			11	34%
Strongly Agree			5	15%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

MULTIPLE CHOICE

4. I use other resources outside of the Bible to help me understand some of what is written in the Bible.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			1	3%
Neutral			6	18%
Agree			20	62%
Strongly Agree			5	15%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

MULTIPLE CHOICE

5. I almost always read the Bible at least three days a week.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			1	3%
Disagree			8	25%
Neutral			5	15%
Agree			9	28%
Strongly Agree			9	28%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

MULTIPLE CHOICE

6. I am a part of a group within our church that spiritually and emotionally encourages me.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			9	28%
Neutral			7	21%
Agree			5	15%
Strongly Agree			11	34%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>



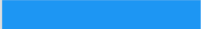
MULTIPLE CHOICE

7. I feel a close connection to three or more members of the church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			7	21%
Neutral			6	18%
Agree			6	18%
Strongly Agree			13	40%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>


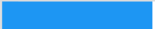
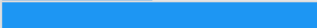

MULTIPLE CHOICE

8. I feel a longing to be with others who will help me in my spiritual journey.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			2	6%
Agree			18	56%
Strongly Agree			12	37%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

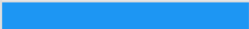

MULTIPLE CHOICE

9. I encourage others in their spiritual journey.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			1	3%
Neutral			9	28%
Agree			19	59%
Strongly Agree			3	9%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>




MULTIPLE CHOICE

10. In order for me to fully follow Jesus in my life I need the support of other believers.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			0	0%
Agree			15	46%
Strongly Agree			17	53%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

MULTIPLE CHOICE

11. I am comfortable using my spiritual gifts for the benefit of the church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			6	18%
Agree			21	65%
Strongly Agree			5	15%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>


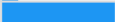
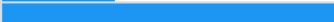

MULTIPLE CHOICE

12. When there is a need at the church, I feel a desire to help.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			1	3%
Agree			23	71%
Strongly Agree			8	25%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>


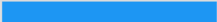


MULTIPLE CHOICE

13. I feel that I am using my spiritual gifts in my daily life.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			1	3%
Neutral			7	21%
Agree			20	62%
Strongly Agree			4	12%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>





MULTIPLE CHOICE

14. I give of my time to help the mission of the church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			2	6%
Neutral			13	40%
Agree			12	37%
Strongly Agree			5	15%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>


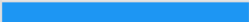

MULTIPLE CHOICE

15. I give of my resources to help the mission of the church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			1	3%
Neutral			5	15%
Agree			20	62%
Strongly Agree			6	18%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>


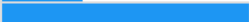
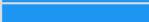

MULTIPLE CHOICE

16. When I miss our church gathering, I feel I am missing something important to me.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			1	3%
Neutral			0	0%
Agree			15	46%
Strongly Agree			16	50%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>




MULTIPLE CHOICE

17. I often invite people to join me at church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			5	15%
Neutral			15	46%
Agree			9	28%
Strongly Agree			3	9%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>





MULTIPLE CHOICE

18. When the church gathers, I know there will be encouraging people with whom I will be able to interact.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			3	9%
Agree			10	31%
Strongly Agree			19	59%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>



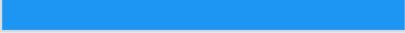
MULTIPLE CHOICE

19. There are very few reasons why I would miss a church gathering.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			2	6%
Neutral			2	6%
Agree			18	56%
Strongly Agree			10	31%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

MULTIPLE CHOICE

20. I am excited to be a part of this church.

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Strongly Disagree			0	0%
Disagree			0	0%
Neutral			3	9%
Agree			5	15%
Strongly Agree			24	75%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>32</b>	<b>100%</b>

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Question Text

Answer Choice	0%	100%	Number of Responses	Responses Ratio
Answer 1			0	0%
Answer 2			0	0%
Answer 3			0	0%
<b>Total Responses</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>100%</b>

APPENDIX D  
VOLUNTEER HANDOUTS



## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Please complete the form below and check mark the opportunities you are interested in and we will be in touch with you.

**NOTE:** A background check is required for anyone working with minors.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE-OF-BIRTH:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Sunday AM Large Group Leader** — Join a rotation of adults on Sunday mornings who work together to share Biblical truths within a fun and engaging large group experience.
- Sunday PM Small Group Leader** — Co-lead a small group of middle or high school students on Sunday nights. Ask questions, guide them, and provide a space where they can engage with scripture and develop Christian friendships amongst their peers.
- Occasional Large Group Leader** — Jump in to lead large group time on a Sunday morning or evening from time to time when you're available.
- Storyteller** — Share your faith story with our teens on a Sunday morning, evening, or on video.
- Food Prep** — Help make, prepare, or purchase food for our Sunday night meals.
- Prayer** — Regularly pray over a specific group of teenagers.

Questions? Please contact Will Haussler ([whaussler@worthingtoncc.org](mailto:whaussler@worthingtoncc.org)).

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# MINISTRY

## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Please complete the form below and check mark the opportunities you are interested in and we will be in touch with you.

**NOTE:** A background check is required for anyone working with minors.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE-OF-BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

- Elementary Small Group Leader (K-5th)** — Build relationships with kids as they grow in their relationships with God and each other.
- Preschool Leader & Helper** — Help kids feel safe and loved.
- Nursery/Toddler/ 2s Caregiver** — Help kids feel safe and loved.
- Worship Leader Preschool & Elementary** — Help engage kids in weekly worship.
- Check-In/ Greeter** — Help make kids and families feel welcome and safe.
- Special Needs Buddy** — Adapt environment and curriculum to meet needs.
- Prep Team** — Decorate and prepare materials needed for Sunday.
- Tech Team** — Prepare and implement production for services (computer & lights).
- Event Team** — Help plan and implement various events (Family Worship, Flashlight Tag, Easter, etc.).
- Sub List** — Serve as needed either for a specific group or where needed.

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# TECH TEAM

## Service Opportunities

Please complete the form below and check mark the opportunities you are interested in and we will be in touch with you.

**NOTE:** A background check is required for anyone working with minors.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE-OF-BIRTH:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow Camera Operator:**

- » Operate a video camera, take directions for shots.
- » Wednesday night rehearsal requested (6:30-8:30 PM)
- » Sunday morning required (7:00 AM-12:15 PM)

**Lighting Operator:**

- » Time light cues with service transitions (blackouts, color changes, etc).
- » Wednesday night rehearsal requested (6:30-8:30 PM)
- » Sunday morning required (7:00 AM-12:15 PM)

**Video Producer 1:**

- » Operating the video switcher, robot camera positions, and coordinating with Follow Camera for shots; if we have a Video Producer 2, coordinate robot camera positions.
- » Wednesday night rehearsal requested (6:30-8:30 PM)
- » Sunday morning required (7:00 AM-12:15 PM)

**Video Producer 2:**

- » Shadow the Video Producer on schedule and assist with robot camera operation/shots. Mixed commitments either Sunday or Wednesday night rehearsals.
- » Wednesday night rehearsal (6:30-8:30 PM)
- » Sunday morning (7:00 AM-12:15 PM)

**A/V assistant:**

- » Assist with various needs requested by Audio 1, help with setting and retrieving microphones, IEM packs, and beltpack mics and their batteries.
- » Wednesday night rehearsal requested (6:30-8:30 PM)
- » Sunday morning required (7:00 AM-12:15 PM)

**Proresenter Operator:**

- » Launching videos, lyrics, title graphics, and sermon slides. Editing arrangements as needed.
- » Wednesday night rehearsal requested (6:30-8:30 PM)
- » Sunday morning required (7:00 AM-12:15 PM)

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# WORSHIP TEAM: BAND/VOCALS

## Service Opportunities

Please complete the form below and check mark the opportunities you are interested in and we will be in touch with you.

**NOTE:** A background check is required for anyone working with minors.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE-OF-BIRTH:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Band:**

- Acoustic Guitar
- Bass Guitar
- Drums
- Electric Guitar
- Keys
- » Wednesday night rehearsal required (6:30-8:30 PM)
- » Sunday morning required (7:00 AM-12:15 PM)

**Vocals:**

- Choir (2nd Sunday of every month; open to Middle School students to adults)
- » Wednesday night rehearsal required (6:30-8:30 PM)
- » Sunday morning required (7:00 AM-12:15 PM)

**Jam Session (Adults Only — Sunday, January 22, 2023 from 4:00 to 6:00 PM):**

- Electric Guitar (bring guitar, pedal board, amp or powered speaker)
- Bass Guitar (bring bass guitar, rig, amp)
- Keys (keyboard is required unless you have a rig you'd like to bring)
- Drums (kit is provided)
- Sing (bring your voice!)

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## SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Please complete the form below and check mark the opportunities you are interested in and we will be in touch with you.

**NOTE:** Some service opportunities require a background check to participate.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE-OF-BIRTH:** \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPORT

- Meals** — Prepare and deliver a meal to families or individuals in need due to surgery, illness, death of a loved one, or the birth of a baby.
- Handy Helper** — Provide in-home assistance with light house cleaning, basic home repairs, yard work, snow shoveling, etc.
- Caregiver Support** — Be available to provide short-term respite breaks for long-term caregivers.
- Transportation** — Assist in transporting those who cannot drive to and from appointments.

### ENCOURAGEMENT

- Cards** — Send out cards of greetings, congratulations, sympathy and encouragement (names, cards and postage provided).
- Personal Visits** — offer an encouraging visit to those who are alone, homebound or in a care center.
- Meals** — prepare and deliver a meal to families or individuals in need due to surgery, illness, death of a loved one, or the birth of a baby.

### PRAYER

- When notified by email of a prayer need, be willing to pray for that person or family as requested.
- Be available at the end of a worship service to offer a brief prayer with anyone who may come to the front. (Training will be provided.)
- Be a part of a 20-minute prayer time at 8:00 AM on Sunday mornings for the church leadership.
- Join with others on ZOOM for an hour of prayer on Sunday evenings at 7:00PM.

**FOLLOW JESUS TOGETHER**



## Service Opportunities

Please complete the form below and check mark the opportunities you are interested in and we will be in touch with you.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE-OF-BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please let us know what area you are interested in serving in and the time you would be available in the area below.**  
**(Our greatest need is for volunteers at the 11:11 AM hour.)** All scheduling confirmation is done through Planning Center. If you are new to Planning Center, we will help you get familiar with the software. Questions? Please contact Alison Morrow (amorrow@worthingtoncc.org).

**HOSTS**

- » This position hosts new guests on Sunday mornings by walking them around the building: coffee area, Kids Ministry, restrooms, the Worship Center, Guest Central, and answering any questions they have.
- Hosts will need to be up to date on current church info and events. If you need more clarification, please take down their information and let them know we will find the answer and contact them.

**I am available to serve at:**

- 8:30 AM     9:45 AM     11:11 AM

**DOOR GREETERS**

- » Assisting at the outside doors and happily welcoming people into the church.

**I am available to serve at:**

- 8:30 AM     9:45 AM     11:11 AM

**INFORMATION DESK**

- » The goal is to help anyone that approaches and has a question. Please keep up to date on current church information and events. If a guest approaches you, please walk them down to Guest Central.

**I am available to serve at:**

- 8:30 AM     9:45 AM     11:11 AM

**GUEST CENTRAL (11:11 AM)**

- » Have conversations with guests about anything related to the church and how they can take their next steps of connection. Volunteers are needed for the 11:11 AM hour only.

**CALL TEAM**

- » Follow up with guests by calling the week after their visit. We provide some prompting questions to use during your call and ask that you report any important details of your conversation. This best helps us further assist their engagement.



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