

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

PENNINGTON PARK CHURCH



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“LET US HOLD FAST THE CONFESSION OF OUR HOPE WITHOUT WAVERING, FOR HE (GOD) WHO PROMISED IS FAITHFUL.” - HEB 10:23

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Church,

2020 was a year filled with challenging circumstances. We experienced a global pandemic in the midst of political tension and racial unrest throughout our country. In addition, most of us personally encountered other challenges whether you battled through difficult illnesses, or loss of employment, financial hardship, intense loneliness, and difficult conversations with friends and family members. But God has been faithful. His faithfulness is not determined by having easy circumstances but it is determined by Him keeping His promises. The great hope in the Christian life is not that God gives us a life without hardship but that God promises to be faithful and near to us in the midst of every hardship. We put our trust not in our changing circumstances but in our unchanging and faithful God who is the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. 2020 was not an easy year. But 2020 did teach us to put our hope in our faithful God.

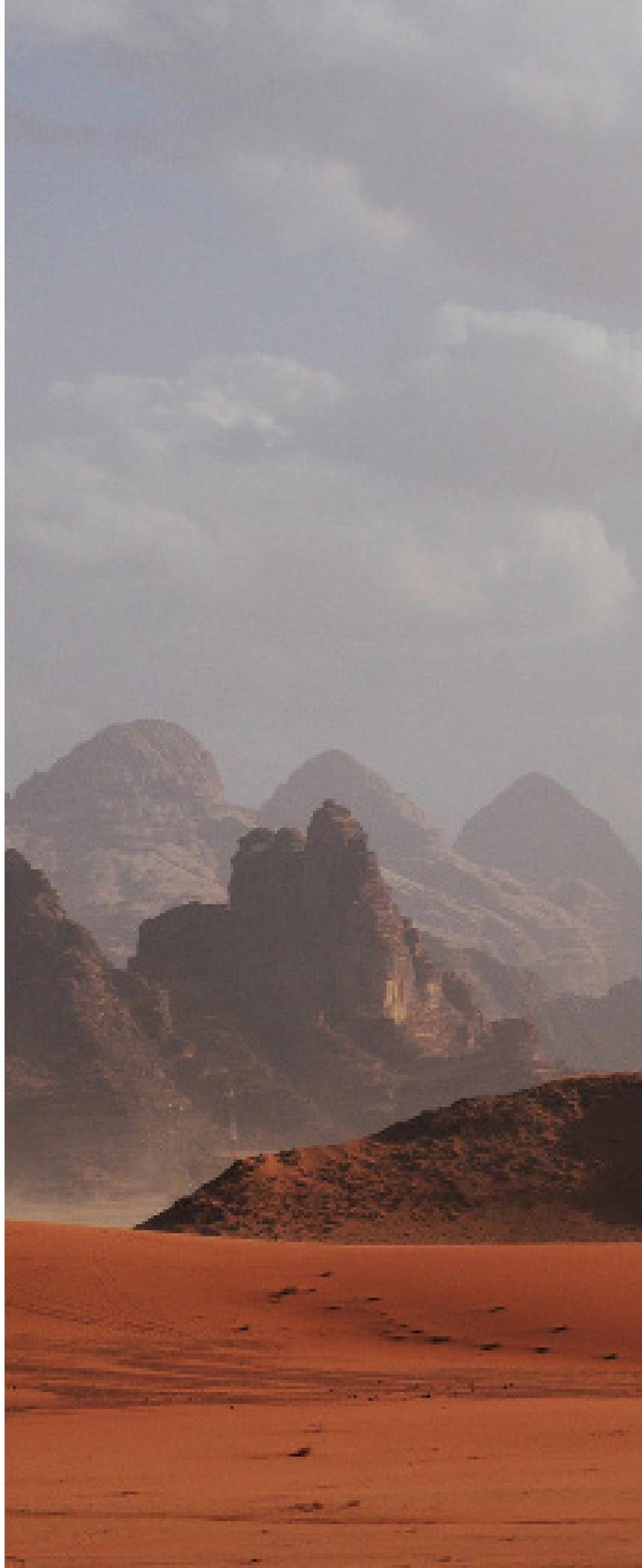
THE GLOBAL CHURCH

REACHING THE NATIONS

Even though 2020 was a hard year for everyone, we were encouraged to see God move in many ways. When the pandemic began, foreigners left the country in large numbers, making us two of very few foreigners still living in our city. Our friends and neighbors noticed this and began asking us why we stayed, which opened doors to deep spiritual conversations explaining that we try to exemplify God's love for us with everything we do, which for us included continuing to invest in our community even in the uncertainty of a pandemic.

We also graduated from our language learning team after reaching strong levels of Arabic and joined a new team in a new city. Our focus is church planting among Syrian communities through meeting physical and spiritual needs, so our weeks are filled with house visits and various aid initiatives, helping out with basic needs, education, and access to healthcare. We are able to both work as a team on already established initiatives and find new projects that are our own, working to expand our team's current outreach into our new neighborhood. Even though changing cities during a pandemic has not been the easiest path, we've already begun to build meaningful relationships with our neighbors, most of whom are Syrian refugees.

God has provided so much for us and our friends, and we have been blessed seeing Him answer prayers over this past year!
- The Shearers





CELEBRATING GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

With deep thankfulness to our Lord and Savior, it is my joy to submit this update on behalf of the Final 58 mission to unengaged, unreached peoples in Southeast Asia. Just three years ago over 150 people groups in Laos had no church, most with no believers. Worse yet, they had no missionary, church, or evangelist working among them. These people groups were small tribes scattered here and there in deeply remote regions beyond rushing rivers, on high mountain peaks, and in hidden valleys. Through your prayers and generosity, over one hundred national missionaries have been specially trained and sent into these tribes. Pennington Park, you have invested heavily in this training process. Fifty-two new missionaries were trained in 2020 alone! Thank you! The last couple rounds of trainings have been particularly exciting, as many of the new missionaries are from the tribes we first engaged.

In the field, the missionaries have been faithful through persecutions and hardships. Not everyone has come through, but over 80 tribes have now begun to be engaged, including 35 new groups since January of 2020. The work is still young, but there are simple house churches among 13 tribes and another 30 tribes with a believing nucleus. Would you join us in believing that the Lord would raise up a church in every tribe we work among? Also, there are another 38 tribes who are still completely without a gospel witness. We believe the Lord would see every tribe and tongue worshipping the Lord. Please join with special prayer for every remaining tribe in Laos to be engaged within the next 18 months. The Lord can do it!
- The Coles

THE LOCAL CHURCH

THE GOSPEL LIVED OUT

Fall Fest

This past October, my wife, my daughter, and I came to the Trunk or Treat at Pennington Park Church. My wife and daughter were attending another church at that time and I was "lost" so I was not attending church but I wanted to. I was going for a while but then stopped when things frustrated me. We came to the Trunk or Treat since we live in Saxony and wanted to take my daughter somewhere festive because of Covid going on and things were not really happening in the community. When we arrived we were incredibly impressed and there were so many people there.

It was so festive and exciting. Everyone was so enthusiastic and friendly. For a brief moment it made me forget that we were going through a Pandemic. Time went on and I wanted to attend church again and I knew exactly where I wanted to go- Pennington Park Church. After discussing it with my wife, she agreed to come with me and I wanted the Sunday School to be enjoyable for my daughter since she was used to Sunday School at the other church. So far we are very happy and impressed. We attended the Discovery event and are now trying to become members at Pennington Park Church.

- Brad Ades,
Attendee at Pennington Park





HELPING THOSE IN NEED

I have a friend that says if you look around you can always find someone who is hungry. She has taught me this for years. When I heard about the food box give out, I knew we could find people who were hungry. Some of the boxes went to a family here in Fishers who are raising their grandkids. The kids' mom is in and out of jail and is not stable enough to raise her kids. The grandparents would have never asked for the food but were extremely grateful. They are doing the hard work day to day of raising and received the blessing of the boxes because it helped take off financial strain during those difficult months of quarantine.

Some of the other boxes went to families and children who attend school 99 in Indianapolis.

The other boxes went to the Lawrence township area, where the boxes were delivered to an entire street of people. One of the boxes went to a bus driver who was laid off because of the shutdown. The boxes provided her an opportunity to feed her neighborhood kids who would stop by to visit.

The food boxes provided help for people when jobs were low and stress was high. It was a tangible way to show the love of Christ in and outside our community.

- Written by a Pennington Park Member

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“IF YOU LOOK AROUND
YOU CAN ALWAYS
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GOD HAS UNIQUELY PREPARED MY HEART TO HEAR ABOUT A SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTE OF GOD EACH MONTH. THEY ALWAYS STRIKE A NERVE AND APPLY TO WHATEVER HAS JUST HAPPENED OR IS GOING ON. I LOVE THE INTENTIONALITY OF THE GROUP TOPICS AS A WHOLE AND I HAVE DEEPLY ENJOYED GETTING TO KNOW OTHER WOMEN AND ESTABLISHED FRIENDSHIPS I WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN OTHERWISE.

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- Megan Cutshaw,
Member at Pennington Park

JOHN 2:19 1022

...that it is the last hour. ¹⁹They went out, but they were not of us, for if they had of us, they would have continued with us; they went out, that it might become plain they all are not of us. ²⁰But you have been told by the Holy One, and you all have judged. ²¹I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it because so lie is of the truth. ²²Who lies but he who denies that Jesus is the Son of God? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. ²³No one who denies the Father and the Son, who ever confesses the Father also. ²⁴Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father and this is the promise that he made to eternal life.

...write these things to you about those who are going to deceive you. ²⁵But the anointing you received from him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone should teach you, for his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has testified about you, abiding in him.

...children of God

And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. ²⁷If you know that he is righteous, you may assure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God, and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ²⁸Blessed are we who have seen him, and what we will be has not yet appeared, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ²⁹And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness, sin is lawlessness. ³⁰You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. ³¹No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or

known him. ³²Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. ³³Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. ³⁴No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God. ³⁵By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

Love One Another

For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. ³⁶We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ³⁷Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. ³⁸We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. ³⁹Whoever does not love abides in death. ⁴⁰Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

If by this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. ⁴¹But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ⁴²Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him. ⁴³Whoever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. ⁴⁴Blessed, if our heart does not condemn us; we have confidence before God. ⁴⁵And whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. ⁴⁶And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ⁴⁷Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God's love and God's in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

MAKING LIFE-LONG DISCIPLES

THE BENEFIT OF VIRTUAL BIBLE STUDIES

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible studies on Zoom have been an amazing way to connect with ladies across our congregation. Gathering virtually has allowed college-aged students, young moms, and retired ladies to meet together and learn more about the character of God during this time when attending an in-person study might not be an option. Being on Zoom also allowed ladies to continue to log on even while they were traveling. The studies we covered brought us back to the power of the Gospel and how it connects to all contexts and areas of our lives. As a leader I appreciated sitting back at times and hearing the wisdom, experiences, and ideas that each lady brought from what God had taught her through the Word during her journey to this point. I have been so thankful for this opportunity to meet a diverse group of ladies from our church and grow together through opening His Word.

- Rachel Milligan,
Women's Bible Study Leader

THE BEAUTY OF INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Women's Discipleship Group

Women's discipleship this year has been amazing! I have loved getting to go deeper with the ladies in my group...I truly think have the BEST group of ladies!

As we have studied God's attributes, we have had some good discussions about what idols we see ourselves prone to turn to and we see God revealing ways we can surrender these to Jesus in our walk with Him, but also in our relationships with other people that God has put in our lives right now.

I have loved the openness and honesty these ladies have shown as the year goes on. They are not afraid to share how they struggle with an attribute of God as we wrestle together to remember that we cannot be like God in these ways. We truly are trying to dig in to how these attributes of God affect our marriages, our parenting, foster care, missions, relationships with extended family, neighbors, and friends. We have gotten to dig in the Word together but we have also gotten to pray very specifically for each other.

We have been so challenged and blessed as we have been learning about God's attributes together this year! We have loved walking through this year together, spurring one another on, loving, and praying for each other.

- Paula Gates,
Women's Discipleship Leader



GOD AT WORK

Seeing the Goodness of God
in Every Situation

GOD IS STILL ON THE THRONE

This past year has been draining (emotionally, physically, and mentally), but we have seen God's hand in it all. His Word has been our calm in the midst of the storm. (Isaiah 26:3) In our small group, we have ached with those who have experienced illness, emotional stress, family struggles, and hard decisions.

The counsel of those wiser has been a huge encouragement and pointed us toward an eternal perspective. The Lord has shown Himself faithful in answered prayer and grace to face each situation.

COVID and the state of our country has worn on us emotionally and mentally, BUT the Lord has shown us over and over again that He is on the throne and our focus needs to be on Him always and throughout each situation, big and small.

We are very grateful for our church leadership and the consistent, intentional verse-by-verse teaching each Sunday. Sunday church services has been our "lifeline" - we look forward to gathering each week. We don't take it for granted and are thankful for the freedom to worship and learn together.

- Paul and Evelyn Grissom
Members at Pennington Park

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Over the past year, God has really shown me the importance of good community. In a time of isolation and hurt, it has been hard to find community and build relationships.

Although a lot of human contact has been shut out, it has made me value the time I do get with people all the more. Interactions at youth group and the times we have been in school seem to be more special and bonding.

Going off to college in the next few months, I am glad for my special appreciation of community because I believe that this will help me grow close with those I interact with all the more.

- Caleb Gates
Member at Pennington Park

THE GOODNESS OF GOD

This has been quite a year, but the Lord has been very gracious to us. We have no family in the area, so church is a big part of our local family. We have been very blessed to be a part of Pennington Park.

Our Small Group (with George and Maryann Parilla leading) has been a major caring connection point for us. The group just started as the lockdown hit. We have bonded with our group and have been an encouragement to each other. We are also grateful for the follow up and concern expressed from our Deacon (Paul Grissom) and Elder (Todd Mitchell) who have reached out to us to see how we were doing and if we had any special prayer requests or needs.

We have enjoyed attending the services online every week, but we were so happy to be able to attend our FIRST SERVICE in the new building in person this last Sunday 3-14-21. The music and messages have blessed our souls. Thanks to Chris and Tim and the entire staff for their ministry that touches our hearts every week.

- Tom and Sarah Clark
Members at Pennington Park



GOD AT WORK

TRUSTING GOD IN UNKNOWN CIRCUMSTANCES

God's Faithfulness in 2020

2020, was no doubt a stressful year for everyone. Some more than others, but never have I been so thankful to know and love a Faithful God.

My husband and I had just opened our new CrossFit gym location in January of 2020. We had moved from Fishers to Noblesville for a brand-new gym facility with more space and hopes to grow our business. We were supposed to move into our new gym on January 1st. The new year is our busiest month, so we were counting on being open on New Years. The day we were moving our landlord told us that our space wasn't ready. They hadn't finished construction on time and it was going to be 3 weeks before we could open. We were discouraged, but it was out of our control so we just trusted God would provide while we waited to reopen.

Of course, we did re-open, and we had a great month and a half. Then everything got shut down because of the COVID pandemic. On March 17th we had to shut down our gym. We had no idea what we were going to do and we were totally unprepared. We lost a few gym memberships at first, which we figured would happen, but we thought we would be back open in a few weeks.

Then 4 weeks went by. We still were not open, so we prayed and asked God to direct us and give us wisdom on how to handle our clients memberships, their money, and the services we provided. We made it work and most of our members stuck around for a little while. Then the cancellations started rolling in.

Because we were in a new building under a new lease, we had 3 months of no rent, per our contract with our landlord. What a blessing our landlord gave us grace one more month and we weren't going to owe any rent until June 1st. That was the first blessing. But by May 1st, we had lost 60% of our memberships, and almost all of our revenue. We had to get on a call with our coaches and let them know that we weren't sure if we were going to make it another month.

Revenue was coming to a screeching halt and there wasn't a whole lot more we could do for our members who wanted to work out in our gym. We had enough to pay our rent on June 1st, but that was it. We didn't take a salary for 3 months and we couldn't file for unemployment, because we are self-employed.

Then God just started providing in ways we couldn't imagine. We were blessed by Pennington Park Church with financial help, multiple times, and then our small group gave to help us.

Everyone surrounded us with prayer, love, and support. My parents helped us, Bryan's parents helped us, and then God let the flood gates open. We finally were able to reopen May 22nd. I wasn't sure what was going to happen when we reopened, but God did.

We have been growing ever since May 22nd, we have tripled our revenue and our memberships and we've been able to hire full time employees. I can say now, that even though this past year was one of the most difficult it was when I saw God's faithfulness the most.

- Bryan and Missy McDowell
Attendees at Pennington Park

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NEVER
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GOD.

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SERMON SERIES IN REVIEW



A YEAR IN NUMBERS

FIRST-TIME
VISITORS

487

NEW SMALL
GROUPS

5

WOMEN'S
MINISTRY
BIBLE STUDIES

3

NEW
MEMBERS

29

BAPTISMS

9

CHILD
DEDICATIONS

20

ENGAGEMENT

79%

OF MEMBERS ARE
IN A SMALL GROUP

66%

MEMBERS SERVING OR
IN A BIBLE STUDY

50%

REGULAR ATTENDERS
SERVING OR IN A
BIBLE STUDY

BACKYARD BIBLE CLUBS

40

BIBLES DISTRIBUTED

BACKYARD BIBLE CLUBS IN

2

DIFFERENT
NEIGHBORHOODS

15

UNCHURCHED
CHILDREN

2020 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2020-2021 GIVING



\$1,894,167

TOTAL GIVING

\$1,357,506 (Budget = \$1,092,000)

GENERAL

\$124,019

GLOBAL OUTREACH

\$5,857

LOCAL OUTREACH

\$11,688

BENEVOLENCE

\$395,097

BUILDING

2019-2020 GIVING



\$2,116,170

TOTAL GIVING

\$1,207,479 (Budget = \$1,113,000)

GENERAL

\$134,044

GLOBAL OUTREACH

\$5,913

LOCAL OUTREACH

\$730

BENEVOLENCE

\$768,004

BUILDING

2020 OUTREACH

SUPPORTING

8

MISSIONARY FAMILIES

2

**STRATEGIC GLOBAL
PARTNERSHIPS IN**

6

COUNTRIES

**2020
CHRISTMAS OFFERING
TOTAL**

\$100,348

**GLOBAL
OUTREACH**

**CHRISTMAS GIFTS
DONATED
THROUGH HANDS
OF HOPE**

50

**MIDWEST FOOD
BANK BOXED
DISTRIBUTED**

150

**FOOD4SOULS
PARTNERSHIP
MEALS MADE
AND HANDED
OUT IN 2020**

100

**LOCAL
OUTREACH**



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THANK YOU, GOD, FOR YOUR LOVE,
PROVISIONS, AND GUIDANCE AT
PENNINGTON PARK CHURCH.
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