

YESTERDAY. TODAY. FOREVER.

2024 - 2025

BUILDING ACOMMUNITY OF CHRIST FOR THE WORLD.

Along	the	Way
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3 Letter fromPastor Adam

Jesus Christ is the same:

4 Yesterday

Jesus Christ is the same:

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Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.

Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

ISAIAH 43:18-19

The heartbeat of River West Church can only be understood in light of something profound about the living God: He is always moving.

He is always creating, redeeming, and renewing.

He is always bringing life out of places that once seemed barren.

From our earliest days, these words from Isaiah 43 have served as a banner over our community. In their original context, God was speaking through the prophet to a weary people—Israel in exile—reminding them that failure would not be the final word. A new day was breaking. A new covenant was coming. A Messiah would soon arrive.

Yet Isaiah's promise still resounds today. It tells us something essential about who God is: He is the God of new beginnings—the One who keeps making a way where there seems to be none, who turns deserts into rivers and wandering people into a family.

For thirty-six years, we've watched Him do exactly that at River West. From a few believers gathered in a dining room to a vibrant community on mission across neighborhoods and nations, our story has always been the story of His faithfulness. And we believe the best is yet to come.

When Isaiah says, "remember not the former things," he isn't telling us to forget the past. He's inviting us not to be defined by it. We look back—not to dwell there—but to recognize the fingerprints of grace that prepare us for what God will do next.

That's what this Impact Report is all about. It's a collection of stories—yesterday, today, and tomorrow—that bear witness to the Gospel's transforming power. Each story offers a glimpse of Christ at work in ordinary lives, renewing hearts, forming disciples, and extending His love to the world.

Because Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever (Hebrews 13:8), we can look back with gratitude, engage the present with courage, and step into the future with hope that is alive and unshakable.

He is still doing a new thing. And by His grace, we get to be part of it.



All Glory to King Jesus, Adam

God's Faithfulness Through Every Season

In an old church directory, Dean Buse pointed to the verse that started it all: "Forget the former things, do not dwell on the past. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth... I am making a way in the desert, and streams in the wasteland." He read. "And that's what we've been living on for thirty-six, thirty-seven years."

Dean joined River West in its early days. Reflecting on his first visit, he said, "I didn't see a church building. I saw a rec center ... there were ten chairs, Pastor Guy and his wife Maureen, and a couple other people ... and that was it."

The story of River West isn't just a timeline of buildings, ministries,

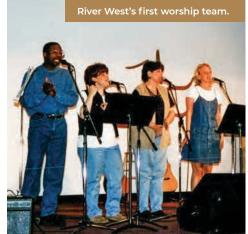
or milestones—it's a story of God's faithfulness. From living rooms to sanctuaries, from local neighborhoods to faraway nations, the church's journey has been marked by answered prayers and enduring grace.

God's Provision in Every Place

Longtime members Susan and Jeff Nopper see one clear truth: God provides. "Watching God's provision for facilities for River West was amazing!" Susan recalls. "We went from meeting in a private home, to rec centers, schools, Green Tree, Quarry Road, and finally our current facility—God had a plan."



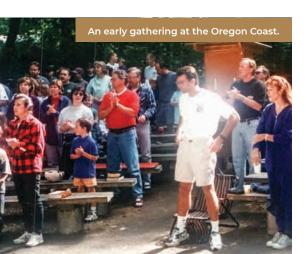






River West began as a small house church in the James' family living room.

Dean Buse (left) and Jeff Nopper (right).



"If that isn't an example of God's faithfulness, I don't know what is." - Susan Nopper

She remembers the transition to the Country Club Road building came after a powerful week of prayer. "The offer to trade Quarry Road and purchase our current building came after members of the congregation met to pray three times a day for a whole week. If that isn't an example of God's faithfulness, I don't know what is."

Through every move, the Lord's work has been evident—each step guided by prayer and confirmed by His provision.

For the World

Dean shares, "One thing that [Pastor] Guy always wanted to do is reach the world for Christ, that was our mission statement."

Jeff reflects on River West's global reach: "Our world-wide missionary endeavor—El Salvador, Rwanda, Myanmar—shows God's faithfulness rippling outward through prayer and mission."

Hope for the Next Generation

For Susan, God's faithfulness is already visible in the next generation. "Get involved! You will not regret one minute of the time you spend within the body," she encourages. Jeff adds, urging people to use their gifts for God's glory and to grow through worship, service, and study of the Bible.



See Dean's full interview online at riverwest.org/post/impact25.

Their words reflect a truth that has shaped River West from the start—God's faithfulness invites a faithful response.

Faithful Still

When the church was smaller, Dean called each person in the directory to pray over the phone. Today, he prays in person on Sundays. Gesturing to his seat in the foyer, he chuckled, "I have my office here now. So, anytime you want to come Sunday and visit with me, I'll pray with you ... I think this is maybe my ministry, just to listen to people and they know that somebody's here that they can count on."

When asked to describe River West, Dean says simply, "It's all about Jesus." From answered prayers to generous hearts, from local service to global mission, River West continues to be a place where God's faithfulness is visible in every season. The same God who answered prayers and drew people to Christ is still at work today. God doesn't just provide buildings—He provides people, prayer, and purpose, leading His people forward one prayer at a time.

Restoring Homes and Revealing God's Heart

Serving with Catalyst Northwest

At dawn on a Saturday in September, fresh strokes of paint brightened the day as River West volunteers joined Catalyst NW to restore a neighbor's home. Serving with Catalyst Northwest gave volunteers a chance to live out the gospel in practical, relational ways. For Kay Moore, it reflected a core conviction: loving neighbors close to home. "Serving our local community is important to both my husband Greg and myself," she shared. Partnering with Catalyst made that simple—"we just had to show up." What began as a home repair turned into a glimpse of God's restorative work in the homeowner's life and in those who served. Listening to Brian share his "transformational story of meeting and encountering Jesus" became the true highlight. "The project work will get done," Kay said, "but the story can only be told by the homeowner."

For fellow volunteer David Hammerstrom, serving was also an act of joy and purpose. "As a retired person I have time on my hands and I like doing building and maintenance related household projects," he said. While the home's exterior was "greatly improved," what lingered was the connection among volunteers and with Brian himself. "Had a great bond with my co-workers and Catalyst personnel, making it a fun day."

The house was repaired, but something deeper was also restored — dignity, belonging, and hope.









How Service
Became Connection:

One family's journey to belonging started with simply saying "yes."

When the Garcias walked into the 5pm gathering, they were praying for one thing—a place to belong.

"After months of ... seeking God for direction as to how we can serve His church, we finally got confirmation," Angie recalls. When Pastor Derrick invited people to serve, they signed their names on a clipboard and found something far greater: community.

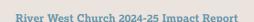
Their prayer for connection was answered in unmistakable ways. "The Lord impressed in our hearts that to be a part of a community, we must be willing to do the work of engaging and interacting with others," Angie explains. So the Garcias began to show up—at Sunday School, VBS, the Christmas outreach, community dinners, and in prayer with others. Angie began serving as a greeter and on the Prayer Team. Her husband, Geo, got involved making

coffee and playing on the worship team.

What began as awkward introductions soon turned into shared meals, late-night prayer messages, and friendships formed in the rows of the 5pm service. "Even the small conversations between what started to become familiar faces... all of those things add up," Angie says. "The Lord has been so faithful in answering our prayers for a community."

Now, as Angie greets people at the door and prays with them after service, she can see transformation unfolding before her eyes. "I see people making an effort to say hello or to check in. I see people finally expressing themselves better during worship."

The Garcias experienced what every disciple eventually learns: belonging begins on the other side of serving. For Angie, serving has not only drawn her family closer to others—it has drawn them closer to God. "The Lord is right there with you even during times of awkwardness and discomfort." she says. "He is showing me that each person I meet is fearfully and wonderfully made by Him, deserving to be welcomed home warmly in His church." And as she looks to the future. Angie trusts that God will finish what He started. "He is not done yet! I am praying for a great revival and awakening for the church. Lives changed and renewed!"



WE DON'T WALLONE

Over the past year, Dylan and Kayla Knight have experienced what true community looks like through the deep and growing relationships in their community group. What began as a circle of friends has become a spiritual family—one that shares in celebration and hardship, laughter and tears, and everything in between. When Kayla faced multiple hospital stays, their friends surrounded them with meals, prayer, and presence. Dylan recalls it as "a huge blessing to have people show up for you like that. And then it's a blessing for us to be able to show up for them when they're in moments like that, too."

That same spirit of togetherness extends beyond their own circle. The group regularly serves the broader community, and for Dylan and Kayla, these shared acts of service reflect what it means to live out their faith side by side. They see their group as "a community on the move," one that not only nurtures its members but actively blesses others.

As the group grows and changes—welcoming marriages, new babies, and shifting seasons—they're learning to navigate life's complexity together. Kayla looks forward to the growth of families in the group, noting that the kids will "see who the Lord is in this community, in the way that we treat each other and live life together." The group has also discovered the beauty of differences. As Dylan put it, "because we all have our different giftings that maybe in some other world we could have disagreed on or split on, we actually all have our own uniqueness that helps us serve others."

Looking back, Dylan trusts that what God has done this past year will continue to ripple outward. "I know that this is a result of [God's] nudging and [God's] pull on our hearts, that because of [Him] and what [He's] done and because of what I've seen, I know that no matter what, we are not going to be alone."



Generations of Faith

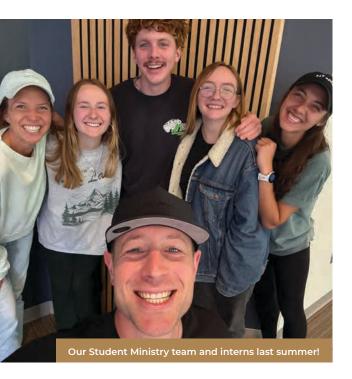
A Story of Service in River West Kids

Every Sunday, as they rock infants and whisper quiet prayers, Mike and Susie Staropoli see God's love reflected in the smallest faces. Serving in the Infant Childcare Room on Sunday mornings is both a calling and a reflection of faith for Mike and Susie. "When Pastor Adam mentioned that we needed help—we knew it was the right thing to do," they shared. With

four children of their own, they understand the value of creating a space where families can worship and grow together. For them, "caring for infants is like looking into the face of God," a reminder of the sacredness in every small moment. Their hope is simple — that every parent who drops off a child would feel the security and tenderness of God's love.

Thank you to the

250
leaders who served
with River West
Kids and Students
last year!



Growing in Grace through Student Ministry

For Anna Giltner, returning to serve as a summer intern in Student Ministry was more than a step into leadership—it was a return to the community that helped shape her faith. "I have gone to River West since I was in sixth grade," she shared. "Finding God through this church and community is what saved my life in so many ways." After years of being encouraged and known by her own leaders, Anna felt called to offer that same love to younger students.

This summer, she saw God move powerfully, especially among the sixth-grade girls she led. "Their faith is beautiful," she said. "I get to see how community builds upon Christ." Years ago, leaders poured into Anna; now she's pouring into the next generation. The same grace that once found her is now flowing through her.

Reflecting on what she's learned, Anna offers this wisdom to younger students: "God wants us to rest in Him and run to Him first in all things because He cares for us... The Lord will fill your cup in ways you didn't know were possible." Through her service, Anna embodies the continuing story of God's faithfulness at River West—lives transformed, leaders raised, and love multiplied.



In June of 2025, River West hosted the Hope for the Journey Conference, bringing together about forty folks from across the city to learn how to better support children and teens through Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI). Facilitated by Rhonda Andrews—a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor, and professor at George Fox University—the conference offered practical tools and encouragement for parents, caregivers, and professionals serving kids from foster, adoptive, and trauma-impacted backgrounds. "Hope for the Journey Conference is an annual conference that brings what I believe is the best parenting advice," Rhonda shared. "It was nice to see the 'aha' moments in parents, parenting children with a variety of behaviors." For Rhonda, those moments matter most: "If the parents, caregivers, and professionals are using what was taught, then there are a lot more children being loved on, having their preciousness seen and managed in a loving environment."







Night Strike partnership provides fresh food to folks on the street.

Guy Oekerman is
a significant part
of the Night Strike
meal team at River
West, preparing
hot meals to serve to
Portlanders experiencing
houselessness under the
Burnside Bridge.

His involvement grew from a recognition rooted in faith: "If you read the Gospels with any kind of intentionality, you realize that Jesus is, like, really, focused on caring for the poor." While other forms of service didn't fit, Guy recognized he had a way to contribute. "I can't build a house. I can't counsel somebody through their addiction. I can't do any of those things. But I can cook." For him, the meals are more than food—they are "just an invitation. It's the thing that you can smell. That's the thing that you can look forward to, to get to a place where people can help you. And that's why I do it."

Guy prayed for a team that could work well together, noting that "What we do is heavy, and it's a lot of manual work, and it gets really hot in the kitchen. So my first prayer was that we would coalesce as a team and become this really high functioning team that can come together and be super efficient and create super good food and get it out the door in a timely manner." Over time, that prayer has been answered. "We're so lucky to have a really loyal, dedicated group of volunteers," he says, and serving together has fostered connection. In addition, experiencing the contrast between the safe, warm suburbs and the streets downtown motivates. the whole team: "Everybody that's come back from that has said, we've got to do more." For Guy, the ministry transcends any debate about the world's problems. He concluded that, "at the end of the day, we're asked to care for the poor. We're asked to care for the sojourner, and we're asked to be the hands and feet of Jesus."



See Guy's full interview online at riverwest.org/post/impact25.

YOURGIFTS GLOBALINACT

Through your generosity, River West
Church is able to support ministry partners
who are bringing the hope of Jesus to
communities both locally and globally.
Together, we are building a community
of Christ for the world—supporting
missionaries, caring for the vulnerable,
and forming disciples who carry the
Gospel to every corner of the globe.

Partnership Support

Children, Youth, and Families \$23,700

7%

for the Poor and Vulnerable \$120,300 Evangelism \$218,444 **60%** Last year we were able to provide a total of

\$362,443

to our ministry partners both locally and globally!

Ministries by Category

Children, Youth, and Families

These ministries include individuals and organizations that support foster care, outreach to youth, and unwed mothers.

Caring for the Poor and Vulnerable

These ministries support our most vulnerable populations, including refugees, victims of sexual abuse, and those living in poverty, both locally and globally.

Missionary Support and Evangelism

These ministries include local and international missionaries as well as organizations that focus on spreading the Gospel to unreached peoples.

Impact by Country

North America

United States Idaho Oregon

Central America

Dominican Republic El Salvador Guatemala

South America

Ecuador Venezuela

Europe

France Iceland Lithuania

Africa

Kenya Malawi Rwanda Uganda

Asia

India Malaysia Myanmar Türkiye

Australia + Oceania

New Zealand

Let the Earth Flourish

An Invitation to Experience Christ, Community, and Creation

In early spring of 2025, a quiet corner of River West Church came to life. What had long been a neglected patch of ground transformed into a thriving Native Plant Prayer Garden—a sanctuary of color, peace, and renewal.

The vision began with Bethany Wray, who has called River West home for over fourteen years. Bethany has always felt closest to God in nature, where creation itself becomes a place of prayer and connection. Early in the year, a series of moments—Pastor Adam's sermon about stepping in when you see a need, Pastor Mary Ann's River message the same week, and a time of quiet prayer—became unmistakable nudges from God. As Bethany recalls, "that's my open door." With this sense of calling, she stepped forward with a vision both spiritual and practical: "I wanted it to be a spot that felt peaceful for people to come and just experience God in nature. I find that's where I connect with God the best. I want to create spaces for others for that."





The project came together in a few months—an idea in January burst into full bloom by Easter through a chain of generosity and faith. A local nursery, Big Trees Today, donated and installed the central tree after learning the project was for a church. The owner, a fellow believer, offered the gift freely—a gesture Bethany described as "another connection in

the kingdom of people trying to do good things." In addition, a joyful volunteer planting day made the garden a true work of the community—neighbors and church members joining in God's creative work.

This spring, the garden welcomed visitors beyond the church family when it was featured on the Backyard Habitat Tour. Around fifty people from the Lake Oswego community—most of whom had never set foot at River West—came to explore the new garden. As Bethany reflected, "in that way, it's its own little outreach opportunity." For her, that's the garden's deeper purpose: a living expression of faith that quietly invites others to encounter God.

Once overlooked, now blooming—that same ground has become a living picture of renewal. Each plant is a quiet new life springing up out of nothing. Like River West itself, the garden began as a prayer and grew through the faith and generosity of many hands. The same God who answered prayers and drew people to Christ is still at work today—making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. And as new life blooms in that soil, we sense God's invitation again: Do you not perceive it? The best stories are still seeds in the ground, waiting to bloom.

Bethany's concept for the garden drew from her background in environmental education and from her belief that "the Earth was meant to flourish." Every design choice reflected reverence for creation and care for those who would walk through it. The garden became a Certified Backyard Habitat, meeting benchmarks for sustainability: native plants, no chemicals, and natural water sources for wildlife. Its mason bee house hums with activity, while a birdbath rock gathers rainwater for feathered friends. Together, they remind visitors of "the hope and life we can bring to the world in the simple act of gardening."

From the start, Bethany sensed a prompting from God to invite Cathy McMurray—an artist and fellow lover of native plants—to partner with her. Cathy's color sense helped bring the vision to life through a palette of blues, purples, and creams—hues that bring calm to the space. Together they designed what they hoped would feel like a "secret garden," a sheltered place where people could experience God through creation.



See Bethany's full interview online at riverwest.org/post/impact25.

A PRAYER FOR THE FUTURE

Lord Jesus Christ,

Our Savior, Lord, and Teacher; The exalted One—whose Name is above every name:

You are the same yesterday, today, and forever.

We celebrate your wonderful work in our community!

From humble beginnings in a living room,

To this present moment in sacred time:

You have been faithful to build this community into a blessing for the world.

You are the same yesterday, today, and forever.

We look ahead to the future, yet acknowledge that nothing is promised.

In humility we ask: O Lord, keep building!
Continue to build us into a community reflecting your love for the world.

Bless the mission you gave us to form disciples.

Bless our unity as one body with you as the head.

Bless the prayers of your people, as we gratefully surrender.

Bless our unwavering devotion to your Gospel—that it would always be our heartbeat.

For you are the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Our Savior, Lord, and Teacher.

This we carry in our hearts and speak from our lips.

Both today, tomorrow,

And for all our days hereafter.

Amen.

Financial Summary

September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025

OPERATING EXPENSES

Ministry \$2,311,729	62%
Missions \$474,012	13%
Facility \$490,067	13%
General and Administrative \$452,166	12%

At River West, we see the Church as a community of people transformed by the Gospel. Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity, which have allowed us to witness the Gospel's impact in the lives around us. Because of your support over the past year, we've seen meaningful growth and lasting change in our church,

our city, and beyond as we follow Jesus together. With gratitude for all God has done and great expectation for what's ahead—the best stories are yet to come!

OPERATING REVENUE

\$3,580,549

OPERATING EXPENSES

\$3,727,974

NET OPERATING REVENUE*

(\$147,425)

Prior year 2023-2024 carryover funds were used to support additional facility projects and ministry activities, along with increased mission support of \$158,345.

^{*} Excludes rental and other income and depreciation

