



2020 Annual Report

SUBMITTED JANUARY 24, 2021

A Slightly Different Report

Welcome to our 2020 Annual Report! Unlike past reports, this year's gives no attendance data (Worship Gatherings, Kids Creek, Growth Groups, etc.). Why? Because the nature of 2020 makes it an impossibility! This is no big deal, though.

Riverwood has never been about numbers. Our purpose has always been and will always be "inviting the spiritually disconnected to find and follow Jesus." So enjoy reading how God was at work helping us follow Jesus in 2020!



2020: A Mosaic of a Year

ERIN BIRD, LEAD PASTOR

There is a story (that's probably just an urban legend) about a pair of construction workers carrying a large mirror. One of the men stumbled, causing the mirror to shatter on the ground. However, rather than fire the careless workers, the lead designer took the shattered pieces and created a mosaic that became an inspiring work of art. In other words, something beautiful was created from the brokenness.



This past year was filled with many "broken" moments. Nationally, America experienced a pandemic, millions unemployed, a contentious presidential election year, racial division, and more. (I'm looking at you, murder hornets.)

But 2020 also held "broken" (or potential "broken") moments for our local church family. In 2020, Riverwood encountered many things that have "broken" other churches. For instance, we engaged in a capital campaign in February, encountered a "shut down" of our Sunday Gatherings March–May, began live-streaming for the first time ever in June, experienced two-months without my presence while I took a sabbatical June–July, weathered through mask decisions for in-person gatherings, saw two of our Growth Groups struggle in the Fall due to Zoom fatigue and



busy schedules, and biggest of all, we renovated and moved into a new property. Just one of those items has caused many churches to experience "broken" moments of conflict or people leaving the church family. But God, in His Sovereignty, allowed us to experience all of them in one calendar year.

However, as I look back, I don't see the potential "broken" pieces. Instead, I see something beautiful, like...

- ...God using our amazing Sunday Team and Elder Team to help us navigate through these potentially "breaking" moments.
- ...God creating a unity among the Riverwood family other churches long for.
- ...God providing financially by allowing us to renovate and move to our new property without a loan.
- ...God working through you when you love and care for one another as well as welcome new people into the Riverwood family.

So while many people will bemoan the year of 2020, I will look back upon it as a significant year in the life of Riverwood. I am in awe of God and what He has done in and through us, and it only leaves me filled with hope, faith, and excitement for what is to come.





An Ever-changing Creek

BRIDGET PAVELEC, KIDS CREEK

From a Kids Creek perspective, 2020 was a whirlwind! We started the year with *The Gospel Story* curriculum. When Covid-19 hit and we went to an all-online platform, we adjusted to teaching our kids as part of the Worship Gathering. It was a challenge for me to get in front of a camera and teach kids (and adults!) for 11 weeks.



Worship through the Struggle

JAKE EPLEY, WORSHIP GATHERINGS



Howdy, Riverwood fam! Twenty-twenty was a challenging year, which is quite the understatement. After we temporarily postponed in-person gatherings due to Covid-19, Erin, Bridget, Randy Albright, Kaden Badura and I met on a weekly basis from mid-March to late-May filming content for Sunday morning worship online. Personally, this was the loneliest period during my time with Riverwood Church; sure, I love leading worship, but not to an empty Droste Hall! Though I enjoyed engaging with "the fam" through the Online Church platform, I genuinely missed worshipping God alongside you all in the flesh!

We returned to in-person gatherings the first Sunday of June, adding the livestream component in order to minister to our church family and guests still heeding safety precautions. I'm grateful for all of the feedback (and patience!) from our church family as we worked each week to make our online Worship Gatherings both engaging and seamless.

We also had some changes in the realm of our worship teams. While some of our church families moved away during the pandemic due to work, our team members definitely stepped up their game this past year: Sam Shaffer and Michelle Chavez have been a strong support through all of this, and Michelle will be



In June, when we restarted in-person Gatherings, we continued teaching our Kids Creek lessons as part of the Worship Gatherings. During that time, we finished *The Gospel Story*, which we had been doing off and on for almost four years. Then in August, we completed a "Back to School" curriculum for 4 weeks, followed by 8 weeks of Jesus' "I AM" statements from the Gospel of John.

Through all of this, we were preparing a new building! An uncounted number of hours and volunteers helped make our new church home and Kids Creek classrooms ready to welcome our Riverwood family and first-time guests.

On the first Sunday in our new building, Kids Creek classes re-opened! A few weeks later, we

began an Advent series about Jesus' coming and how He was born to rescue us from our sin.



2021 brings excitement as we start the super-fun *What's in the Bible?* curriculum. But more importantly, our teachers and I continue to see God at work in the hearts of our kids, seeing them grow in their trust of Jesus. We are optimistic we will see some kids baptized this year. I am also hoping we will once again have separate preschool and nursery rooms in 2021. We are trusting God to continue to lead us through this trying time as we shepherd and guide our families.



Random Notes:

- We unveiled an **updated logo** in January.



- We refreshed **our website** in May.
- We gave \$2,054 to Northside Neighborhood Church (being planted by Patrick Ray in North Minneapolis) as part of our **2020 Impact Gift**
- We gave \$70 to **Compassion International** on behalf of the 14 first-time guests who let us know they had joined us in-person or online.

2020 Financials

JEFF GAUSS, BOOKKEEPER & OWNER OF CHURCH PLANT SOLUTIONS

As I look at your 2020 financials, here are some **highlights** and **quick notes**:

- Your **income** was right on budget! (Actually, **\$229 above** what you budgeted). That is pretty remarkable given the kind of year we had AND you did a building campaign on top of it!
- You did great with your **spending**, as well. Even with the increased facilities rent and utilities, you came in at **\$3,800 under budget**.
- Those **increased facilities expenses** did play a role in your bottom line, however, giving you a **net loss of over \$5,100 for the year**. (We started the year with a zero-based budget, but increased some line items as the year went on to accommodate for the new building.)
- When you take all of your income and building expenses into account, you had a net loss of \$63,000. The PPP loan added back in \$17,500 so that your **actual loss was just under \$46,000**. This is no surprise with the building project. The great news is you had money socked away to cover it.
- Headed into 2021 you have **\$104K in the bank**, a new building, and a community that desperately needs Jesus. I believe you are well-situated to make your biggest community impact yet! Praise God and well done Riverwood!



Worship (continued)

serving in more of a worship leading capacity. I am especially thankful to Randy, Salem Bird, and Tsion Bird for serving on tech, making our sound, visuals, and livestreams happen! And toward the end of the year, we added two new volunteers: Anna Post on the music team (vocals, keys) and my wife Grace on the tech team (projection, camera/streaming).

In 2021, my goal is to better equip our team leaders and members for our worship gatherings. As I mentioned above, Sam and Michelle have been leading the music team more regularly, and Randy has been incredibly resourceful and insightful as our technology has changed dramatically.



The Worship Team's ultimate goal is to glorify God in everything we do. Our aim at Riverwood Church is to help our family and friends do the same, as we worship God through the singing of songs, the teaching of the Bible, the partaking of Communion, and the sending of Jesus-followers into the community to share His good news and His love. God has been faithful throughout this past year, and I have no doubts that He will continue to prove Himself time and time again in the new year!

