



COLLEGE PARK CHURCH

# Stories of Impact Annual Report

# 2024

# Igniting a Passion to Follow Jesus

## When Joy Eclipses Every Challenge

By Eve Stipes

We'd run through the logistical questions, along with some legitimate (and not-so-legitimate) excuses, more than once over the past few years: What about naps? Would our kids melt down? Other people's kids don't necessarily feel like our "sweet spot." Could the twins sit through a sermon without driving us (and everyone around us) bananas? Do we have enough bandwidth and capacity to worship in one service and serve in a second?

While some of those logistics were resolved as we moved beyond the toddler stage of life, becoming a "two-service family" still wasn't on our bingo card for 2024.

Then with the new school year on the horizon, we got an email asking us to consider serving in Children's Ministries. The need was clear, but we still weren't sure it was a commitment we could make. Attending first service with all three of our kids in tow so that my husband and I could serve during second service while our kids went to Sunday School was a big ask.

Our "yes" to living on mission at College Park in a new way didn't come until a few days before the new semester began.

Initially, opting to serve during second service was just about helping fill a need: More table leaders were needed so that more kids could attend Sunday School so that more families could attend second service. And while serving

has helped fill that need, it's also been so much more than that! It's given us a front-row seat to seeing a passion for Jesus be ignited in the hearts of K-2nd graders and in our own family.

It's had its own set of challenges, for sure. Even though my husband and I both have an education background, neither of us had worked with elementary students before. Let's just say that figuring out how to engage K-2nd graders in meaningful conversation week by week has been a steep learning curve that we have by no means conquered.

The adjustment to being in "big church" was particularly challenging for our four-year-old twins and forced me to become a pro at packing a bag each week to help all three kids stay engaged—think coloring books, doodle pads, water bottles, crayons, the kids sermon notes pages, and (of course) snacks.

But God has faithfully met us in each challenge. So much so, that after a few months of this new family rhythm, I can honestly say that the challenges have been eclipsed by joy.

🍊 Learning kids' names, having "regulars" at my table, seeing kids light up when they walk into the room and recognize an adult they know will welcome them, being able to love on kids whose parents I know but don't regularly see, and working with a great team of teachers and table leaders has been wonderful!

● The twins really have gotten better at sitting still and (relatively) quiet. (As a side note, thank you to every person who sat in front of, beside, or behind us who has offered words of encouragement. You've been such a gift!)

● Being in the K-2nd grade class has let me observe my own 1st grader listen to and engage with each week's lesson and with other children. It's been amazing to see him think about and process the promises of God in a new way through Sunday School, especially as an emerging reader. We are witnessing the first sparks of what will prayerfully become a passion to follow Jesus. What a privilege!

● Worshiping together in one service and serving in the next has been incredible for our family. Hearing each week's sermon together has provided some great opportunities for conversation (even when it seems like our kids are more focused on the picture they're drawing or a book they're flipping through). It's been a joy to hear about the things they notice in the service, the Scripture or stories they latch on to, and the connections they make.

Has our decision to become a two-service family and serve in Children's Ministries during second service cost us? In time and energy, yes. But is it worth it to help ignite a passion to follow Jesus in my own heart, the hearts of my kids, and the hearts of the K-2nd graders? Without a doubt. Jesus is worthy!



# Belong

## Dine with Nine

Strengthening the fabric of church family relationships was a priority for College Park in 2024. To encourage relationship building within parishes, we offered Dine with Nine, an opportunity to gather around a table for food and fellowship with nine parish members.

Thirty groups met in homes and restaurants around the city this past summer, allowing College Parkers to make new connections, build new friendships, receive encouragement, and belong.

From encouraging each other in the faith to making a big church feel small, Dine with Nine was a success and a blessing to those who attended.

### Encouraging Each Other in the Faith

“I got to meet some wonderful people in my parish that I had never met. They shared so much of their life stories and really encouraged me in God’s faithfulness.”

JOSEPH, NORTHWEST INDY PARISH

“We shared testimonies and life stories. It was such a blessing and amazing to see how God was working in their lives. I loved the advice I received. I also felt very seen and heard.”

AMY, NORTH SUBURBS PARISH

“It was awesome to meet some new people and experience a new (to me) restaurant! I left especially blessed by our conversations and was encouraged by hearing testimonials of faith from others in my group.”

SARAH, SOUTH INDY PARISH

“We had a number of older saints participate in our group. I was encouraged to hear how they are holding fast to our Lord, fighting sin, and staying committed to our church community as a way to serve during this season of their lives.”

CHIP, NORTHWEST INDY PARISH

“It felt sweet and safe and easy. I didn’t feel like a third wheel as a single. I enjoyed hearing about how God works in the lives of others.”

KAREN, SOUTH INDY PARISH

“I got to meet two new couples and two singles. I was really encouraged to be able to hear how the Lord is working in all their lives in very different seasons.”

PAULA, NORTHEAST INDY PARISH

### Making a Big Church Feel Small

“When I continue to meet people that I’ve literally never seen at church, it underscores the value of this type of event. It was especially fun to see how details of our stories and past interlinked with shared experiences or relationships from other settings.”

BECKY, NORTHEAST SUBURBS PARISH

“My husband and I were definitely blessed! It was a lovely dinner, great conversation, and an awesome host! We just moved here in April, and it is definitely helping us feel more connected to the church and area!”

SUZANNE, NORTH SUBURBS PARISH

“It was great to meet people—some who I have seen before and some I have never seen—and build a connection. The Sunday following the meal I ran into one of the couples and had a nice conversation because of the familiarity that was developed, and I know prior to the event we likely would have just walked past one another.”

MICHAEL, WEST CARMEL PARISH

“It was lovely to meet other Christians in our community and begin to build relationships with them. We were able to see a couple we had dinner with on Sunday, making our community at College Park feel more quaint.”

RACHAEL, NORTHEAST INDY PARISH

“As a mature, widowed single, I felt welcome and as though I belonged.”

KIM, NORTHWEST SUBURBS PARISH

“My husband and I loved this event. Being in the south parish, other members are very spread out. We so enjoyed getting to know several new people in our parish that we don’t normally cross paths with at church. It was fun learning ways our lives intersect through common friends, and we met one new person that lives just 10-15 minutes from us!”

AMANDA, SOUTH INDY PARISH

*Interested in learning how to belong at College Park? Visit [yourchurch.com/belong](https://yourchurch.com/belong).*





## Young Adults Making Kingdom Impact

In 2020 and 2021, College Park began to see an influx of young adults attending on Sundays. What began with a few gatherings between services on Sunday mornings in the winter of 2021 has turned into Fireside, a community of young adults gathering on Wednesday nights for community, worship, and biblical teaching. Now kingdom impact is being made in and through these men and women.

### **Q: How long have you been a part of College Park Church? What brought you to this community?**

**Julie:** I've been attending College Park Church for about nineteen years. My parents immigrated to the US from Egypt and moved to the city of Indianapolis in 1999. Soon after moving, they visited several churches around the area and ultimately landed at College Park. They really connected with the mission and gospel-centered teaching of this church. Through their support, I grew up going to Awana, Sunday school, and youth group. Since then, I have really accepted College Park as my own church, not just my parents' church. Now I regularly attend and volunteer at the Fireside young adult ministry.

**Juliana:** I arrived in the United States in January 2020 from Colombia, where I was born. I came through the AuPairCare program, a company that connects nannies worldwide with American families who need extra help to care for their children. I had the beautiful privilege of matching with a family from College Park

Church. This family brought me to College Park on my first Sunday in the United States. I have attended ever since that first visit, which means that by January 13, 2025, I will have officially been attending this wonderful church for five years.

### **Q: When did you first get connected to Fireside? What made you want to invest in the community there?**

**Julie:** I got connected to Fireside almost as soon as it began. After graduating high school, my best friend and I had been interested in connecting with a Christian young adult group. Alex Anderson and others encouraged us to try out Fireside, which was about to kick off. I realized that I craved corporate worship and fellowship with believers who were my age or in the same stage of life as me. Fireside was just that! After attending for over a year, I knew that this was a valuable ministry that I wanted to continue to grow and be fruitful. This inspired me to give back as a volunteer on the leadership team, and I have been supporting Fireside ever since.

**Juliana:** My first interaction with College Park was actually through Fireside. In 2020, the young adult ministry used to hold its gatherings on Sundays at 9 a.m. I remember walking into the room where Fireside still gathers feeling incredibly excited to be there, excited about using the English I had been studying in Colombia for the first time with native English speakers, and eager to make new friends. I still fondly remember the first

face I saw—a sweet girl who welcomed me, invited me to sit with her friends, and became a wonderful support during the difficult months of the pandemic.

**Q: How has God used Fireside to grow you?**

**Julie:** God has used the ministry of Fireside to grow me in many ways! This ministry has affirmed my need for the local church. It has given me a good community of believers my age and mentors to lean on. Fireside is a great way to meet new people and make friends in a season of life where loneliness is a common struggle. Because of the unique reach of Fireside, I have met many people who attend different churches or come from different cities. Truth is spoken over us regularly at Fireside. I am more confident in my faith because of the wonderful teaching and discussion groups available to us.

**Juliana:** The Lord has used Fireside to connect me with other young adults who share my love for Jesus. God has blessed me with wonderful friendships. My faith has grown significantly. Witnessing young adults worshiping the Lord and seeking to deepen their relationship with him has made my faith and my hope for our generation grow. My knowledge, faith, and especially my love for the Lord have grown significantly, filling me with unexplainable joy. I feel like I am falling in love with God once more.

**Q: How have you seen God at work in the growth of others you've met in the Fireside community?**

**Julie:** The biggest way I have seen God work at Fireside is by teaching young adults how to fellowship with one

another. The Bible instructs us to build one another up in love and truth. Each Wednesday night at Fireside, I witness this commandment being lived out. We share laughs, prayer requests, and even practical ways to follow the Lord together each week. Whether it is in the friendly greetings before the night begins or in the discussion groups after the message, it is clear that the Fireside community is eager to grow together and pray for each other.

**Q: How has God used College Park Church at large to grow you?**

**Juliana:** College Park has been instrumental in my spiritual growth, both through its biblical teaching and the wonderful community it has fostered. I arrived in the United States at age eighteen, leaving behind my family, culture, and language. I have navigated various life seasons while living far from home, but the Lord has blessed me through College Park. Through this church, he has made sure I never feel alone but loved and empowered. The wisdom I've gained has strengthened my faith daily. This church has become my safe place, where I can freely worship God and meet with him every week.

*Interested in learning how to grow at College Park? Visit [yourchurch.com/grow](https://yourchurch.com/grow).*

Juliana

Julie



# Multiply

## The Portico: A Place to Connect

"How can we create a space for us to connect with one another and with people in our community?" This was a question College Park started dreaming about in 2021. In February 2024, that dream became a reality with the opening of The Portico—a space for people to connect and live out the gospel in deep and meaningful ways any day of the week.

We checked in with some of our staff and members to find out how they have seen The Portico impact our congregation and the community over the past year. Here's what they had to say!

"The Portico is the perfect space for the free story hour I have been hosting. We have had nine story hours since March 2024, with anywhere from ten to forty-five kids in attendance at each. It has been so encouraging to see parents engaging in intentional discipleship at these events. The space is perfect with the tables spread out for fun stations. Not only is it great to see kids learning about Jesus, but the open and inviting space provides opportunity for fellowship among parents (mostly moms). Many of the parents and children make their way over to the playground after the story hour to continue play and conversation. It's a really encouraging sight."

LAUREN

"Because I live so close to church/The Portico, I am seeing God use this amazing space in so many ways! I keep meeting people from my neighborhood who I've never met before as we pass each other on the walking path with our dogs

and say hi. I also have neighbors with younger kids who bring them to the playground regularly because our neighborhood has no play area for children. I've also had neighbors ask me about using The Portico for gatherings, and I know they have! They think it's absolutely wonderful!"

JILL

"Nearly every time I am at The Portico, I meet someone from the community who is so grateful for and excited about the space. This last time, it was a woman who works in developmental therapy. She was helping a family from the area who didn't have a car and was able to bring them to The Portico to do a therapy session with their child. She was so thankful to have this space in the area!"

KENDALL

"A coworker and I were walking the path for a meeting and ran into a gentleman who lives across the street just south of church. We stopped and talked for a bit and ended up introducing ourselves. He was blown away by how nice the path and The Portico is and was so thankful to have this right in his backyard. I've run into several others from the community who now use the path, playground, or pavilion. Overwhelmingly, people are thankful and appreciative of it. Something about The Portico subtly calls people to linger and connect."

SHANNON

"Since I don't have a closed office, it's hard for me to meet with people for in-depth conversations. The walking path at The Portico has provided a safe space for women to open up and share things

that are going on in their lives. It's been a big aid in ministry to our Worship Arts volunteers.”

**SARAH**

“As a staff member who occasionally walks the path during the day, I've been so encouraged by the amount of casual traffic I see on the grounds: kids on the playground, walkers on the path, homeschoolers using the open spaces for games. A walker in the community, who is not a regular churchgoer, commented on how they feel the presence of God when they walk on the path inside our property.”

**KAREN**

“I used The Portico to host the Titus 2 group that I mentor, and it was the perfect venue to do this. We plan to meet more often in this beautiful spot. It was a great opportunity to introduce one of our group members, who doesn't attend College Park, to The Portico and the heart behind it. Also, my husband and I plan to host a welcome home celebration with our Barnabas Team for our missionary family. This will be a wonderful venue to gather team members who are a part of our congregation as well as those who are not a part of our congregation. I was one of those who initially thought “Why do we need a space like this?” but now I am all in.”

**CHERYL**

*Interested in learning more about The Portico?*  
**Visit [yourchurch.com/theportico](https://yourchurch.com/theportico).**

*Interested in learning how to multiply at College Park?* **Visit [yourchurch.com/multiply](https://yourchurch.com/multiply).**



# Ministry Impact Stats 2024

## Igniting a Passion to Follow Jesus

**300** participated in Student Ministry

**1,836** participated in Children's Ministries

**689** interactions took place at the New Here desk

**8,930** attended the Christmas Concert



## Belong

**2,617** members

**221** new members

**37** elders

**60** deacons

**218** DISCOVER attendees



## Grow

52 baptisms

770 involved in a small group

115 average weekly attendance at Fireside

300 new people cared for by Soul Care counseling

998 participated in Women's Ministries



## Multiply

191 participated in a Global Vision Trip

48 participated in the Biblical Unity Vision Trip

1,136 counseling sessions provided by Luma Counseling

2,250 attended Trunk or Treat



# Fiscal-Year Update 2024-25

| April-December 2024                        | 2024-25 Budget     | 2024-25 Actual      |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Core Ministry Contributions <sup>(1)</sup> | \$9,701,075        | \$10,059,683        |
| Other Income                               | \$229,314          | \$402,329           |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>                       | <b>\$9,930,389</b> | <b>\$10,462,012</b> |



**\$1,535,101**

2024 Christmas Offering



**\$9,090,598**

2024-25 Core Ministry Spending<sup>(3)</sup>



**247**

First-Time Givers<sup>(2)</sup>



**1,735**

Giving Units<sup>(2)</sup>

## Notes

<sup>(1)</sup> Core ministry giving includes the general fund, benevolence fund, global fund, & local fund

<sup>(2)</sup> General fund

<sup>(3)</sup> Transfers not included

<sup>(4)</sup> 2024-25 results are preliminary/unaudited

<sup>(5)</sup> Revenue and expenses as of Dec. 31, 2024 except Christmas Offering which is as of Feb. 2, 2025

# 2024-25 External Ministry Investment

| April-December 2024  | 2024-25 Actual |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Global Outreach      | \$2,295,576    |
| Local/Urban Outreach | \$761,202      |
| Total External       | \$3,056,779    |

**Notes**

- <sup>(1)</sup> Christmas spending and staff are included in Global & Local/Urban Outreach
- <sup>(2)</sup> 2024-25 spending is as of Dec. 31, 2024





## **COLLEGE PARK CHURCH**

This publication is produced by the College Park  
Communication & Stewardship Teams unless  
otherwise stated.