

Altitude

STORIES OF IMPACT 2025





Altitude is a mid-year publication on selected stories of impact showcasing how our Core Values are lived out in the life and body of the church. You are receiving this because of your partnership in the gospel ministry of College Park Church. You have played a role in each of these stories.

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Pre-eminence of Jesus

While many things vie for priority in life, we are committed to centering our lives on Jesus—our Savior, our Lord, the Way to the Father, our example and enabler, our High Priest, and the One who is worthy of our worship and total allegiance. The main thing is to keep the Main One (Jesus) the main thing.

The Main One

By Mark Vroegop

“**T**he main thing is to keep the Main One the main thing.” When I first visited with the elders of College Park Church in 2007, I was struck by how many of them communicated this simple sentence. It’s a unique way to capture something profound: that Jesus should always be central in the life of the church. He’s the Main One.

Through my candidacy as the second Lead Pastor in College Park’s history, I learned that this phrase represents something more. It reflects a theological and practical vision for ministry. It serves as a bedrock for our church’s identity and philosophy.

Years earlier, the elders talked about an “inverted pyramid” that attempted to illustrate how theology is not only linked together but also builds upon other doctrines. The arch of redemption history—creation, fall, redemption, and restoration—are connected. But the most memorable part of the image was the singular triangle upon which the whole upside-down pyramid balanced: Jesus.

Genesis to Revelation is all about him. Redemption is because of him (Eph. 2:5). Restoration is the church with him (Rev. 21:22-23). Jesus is the beginning and the end (Rev. 22:13-15). He's the firstborn of all creation (Col. 1:15). He's the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). Jesus is the head of the church (Col. 1:18). All the promises of God find their "yes" in him (2 Cor. 1:20).

In other words, Jesus is pre-eminent.

He's the first, the best, the most, the source, and the goal. Jesus is the Main One.

I saw, firsthand, that this Jesus-bias affected preaching, congregational singing, discipleship, counseling, children's ministry, hospitality, compassion, elder governance, global missions, and local outreach. It was a golden thread woven

Jesus has always been the core at College Park.



through the fabric of the church. But it was also deeply impactful in the lives of the people. College Park leaders and people didn't just love the Bible; they loved Jesus. They didn't just like to sing; they loved worshiping Jesus. They didn't just feel compelled to love others; they wanted to love like Jesus loved them.

This singular passion was evident everywhere at College Park, and it's what created the call of God in our family's life to move to Indianapolis in 2008. What's more, it's why I chose Colossians for my first sermon series.

Jesus has always been the core at College Park.

When the elders distilled the values of our church into six phrases, we intentionally placed Pre-eminence of Jesus first on the list. There was historical precedence for this, but it is, arguably, the most important value because it shapes everything else.

However, the centrality of Jesus in everything does more than create a focal point or cohesive ministry philosophy, it preserves the church over decades and in the future.

2025 marks our fortieth year of ministry. On the scale of church history, it's a small milestone. But it's still worth celebrating that week after week, Jesus built his church at 96th and Towne. Over four decades, our church experienced innumerable highs and lows. We welcomed new members,

new staff, and new babies. We've buried friends and mourned together. We've rejoiced in the fruit of spiritual maturity and grieved over the effects of sinful choices. We've experienced seasons of financial blessing and times of scarcity. Our church has weathered challenges, and we've seen fruitfulness emerge after a time of testing.



And now our church is in the middle of prayerfully recognizing the third Lead Pastor.

Through all of this, the anchor of the pre-eminence of Jesus is what holds us fast and provides hope for the future. Jesus is not only the priority, but he also promises to be with us. Jesus is the core, and he's our caring shepherd.

I would suspect that some people see the first Core Value, the Pre-eminence of Jesus, as a robust theological statement. It certainly is that! But it's more. The centrality of Jesus is a preserving value that's personal. When Jesus is kept central,

it creates a spiritually healthy community of people who blend love and obedience to the King of kings. Sunday is simply the assembly of a body of believers who share a common love and mission—igniting a passion to follow Jesus. But keeping the Main One the main thing also creates faith-filled hope for the future because, when Jesus is central, the church stays true to her calling.

Through seasons of change and, yes, pastoral transitions, it's important to remember this “true North” for our church—any church. Jesus is pre-eminent. Jesus is the core. Jesus is the “Main One.” This Core Value has protected and preserved our church for forty years, and it serves as a renewed calling for the next chapter. But it is also our hope for each step along the way. Because when Jesus gave the church the Great Commission (“Go and make disciples . . .”), he also made a promise: “I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:20).

The Main One (Jesus) is the main thing. But the Main One (Jesus) is also our only hope.

“And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent” (Col. 1:18).

To learn more about our Core Values, go to yourchurch.com/usthecore.



Authority of the Word

The Bible is the foundation of who we are, what we believe, and everything we do. We are committed to preaching, teaching, counseling, sharing, and living by the sufficiency of the whole counsel of God because it contains everything we need for life and godliness. Real life change is found in the Spirit-empowered Word, not our ideas, thoughts, or opinions. God's Word is written in ink while our plans and theologies are in pencil.

“My Need for the Word”

By Mitch DePoy

“**I**t’s all true and I never realized it.” This is what I thought to myself not long after becoming a Christian. When I came to faith in Jesus, I began to see all of life and the things of God in a new light. I knew God had done a work in my heart when his Word became precious to me and I had a hunger to learn it and live it.

I watched this same thing happen in the life of a young man in our church. As I met with Corey Mathews for personal discipleship and watched him participate in various College Park classes, I saw Corey’s passion for Jesus and hunger for God’s Word. Now, I’ve had the privilege of leading Corey and his fiancée, Joanna Finley, through premarital counseling and have been blessed to watch them build their lives and future on God’s Word as they start their married life together.

Q. How did you come to know the Lord?

Corey: After being raised in a Christian home and environment, I eventually found myself having no interest in Christianity. I lived through my teens and twenties searching for happiness and meaning in everything the world offers; and to varying degrees, I had checked all the boxes: job, friends, money, material possessions, relationships, etc.

I eventually realized how ultimately empty these things were and one day found myself praying to God to “make me want what you want, more than what I want, because I can’t seem to choose you on my own.” God answered in that moment and changed my heart to love and desire a relationship with him.

Q. At what point in your journey with the Lord did you realize God’s Word needs to be foundational in your life? When did you begin putting practices in place to help you make God’s Word central?

Corey: Because I had a very instantaneous conversion, I had a deep sense of my need for the Word from the very beginning. I had a six-month period where I was starving, and I could not put the Bible down. Since then, I’ve realized that prayer, immersion in the Word, and fellowship/connection to the body of Christ are paramount for continuing to submit more and more to Christ.



I had a deep sense of my need for the Word from the very beginning.

I’ve struggled and had ups and downs as I’m sure every believer does, but I’ve tried to implement different disciplines to be consistently and faithfully in the Word. To start, I try to read at least a “verse of the day” as soon as I wake up so that the first thing to enter my mind in the morning is God’s Word. Secondly, I’m blessed that my workday allows me to carve out some time for Bible reading and study. And finally, since getting engaged, Joanna and I have implemented reading and discussing a passage or chapter every time we are together. We aren’t perfect in doing this yet, but we are trying to lay the foundation of God-centered habits that we know we need in order to love one another and others as he intends us to.

Q. You've been part of CPCi Classes, New World Sunday Class, premarital counseling, and more here at College Park. How have these helped you grow in the Word and increased your understanding of its authority in your life?

Corey: The classes, counseling, and Bible studies I have been a part of at College Park were instrumental in my relationship with God. I don't think I would have grown nearly as fast or as far in my faith as I have in the past year and a half if I had not participated in these things. For one, it helps in not leaning only on my own understanding. And secondly, it connects me to the body in ways that are centered around the Word where I can grow, learn, and work out my faith in fellowship and community with others and not in isolation.



Q. How has your commitment to studying the Word impacted your personal life? How do you plan to keep it central in your marriage?

Corey: Every time I stray from being disciplined in Bible reading and study, I see an almost instant decline in the fruit of the Spirit in my life. If I skip even just a day or two of reading, I find myself much more impatient, prideful, and unwilling to share about Christ with people around me who don't know him.

Going into marriage, the realization of this has taken on much more intimate consequences. If Joanna and I don't stay grounded in prayer and the Word, sin and selfishness creeps in, and our relationship begins to function incorrectly. It becomes "what can you do for me" instead of "what can I do for you" so quickly. We plan to continue to read and study together and pray together every night to remind ourselves that it's not just about my life or hers or either of our comfort, but it's about how we are going to encourage each other and ultimately serve our Father and our King with the gift of marriage that he has given us.

To learn more groups and classes, go to yourchurch.com/groupsandclasses.



Redemptive Community

We are broken people loved by the Father, redeemed by Jesus, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. We strive to minister God's love by repairing the brokenness and bringing those who are lost to sin into restoration, by the power of the crucified and resurrected Lord Jesus. Our focus is Jesus; our authority is the Word; our dependence is prayer; and our aim is Christ-likeness as we live together as the community of God's redeemed.

“Worth It Every Time”

By Angela McColgin

“**W**e’ve always known that family advocacy and helping children was something God placed on our marriage as a ministry,” Hannah Ham reflects, looking back on her and her husband Zach’s early experiences working with children in need during college.

When College Park announced a call-out meeting for Family Advocacy Ministry, Zach and Hannah felt clearly, “This is exactly what we want to get involved in.” After attending the meeting, they soon became a host family with Family Hope, a Local Outreach partner, providing short-term care for children whose parents are in crisis.

Their guiding principle became a willing “yes” to hosting, unless there was a compelling reason to say “no,” trusting in God’s direction for each arrangement. They had already welcomed several children into their home for temporary placement before they were asked to care for a baby boy with complex medical needs. Hannah’s background as a NICU nurse and Zach’s as a pediatrician uniquely equipped them to manage his feeding tube and other medical challenges.

Over the weeks of hosting, “We were able to see him go from the point of being so unhealthy to being healthy and full of life,” Hannah remembers.

For Zach and Hannah, hosting wasn’t just about providing care for a baby. They also desired to walk alongside his mother, offering her support and empowerment. Though their relationship started out with some challenges, Zach and Hannah’s Christ-like love and consistent presence allowed trust to develop and the relationship to grow.

A community of people also provided wrap-around support for Zach and Hannah so they could focus on providing baby boy with the support he needed.

“By the end, she was asking us questions,” Hannah explains. “When her little guy was going back to be with her, we met and I talked with her about the way the doctors wanted him to be bottle-fed and showed her how to use the feeding pump.”

A community of people also provided wrap-around support for Zach and Hannah so they could focus on providing baby boy with the support he needed. Friends, who were also Family Hope hosts, stepped up to be trained in his specialized medical care so they could provide respite when Zach and Hannah went on vacation. Their parish organized a meal train. Friends offered child care so Hannah and Zach could have brief moments to breathe amid the daily challenges of hosting a medically complex child, caring for their own young children, and Zach dealing with the demands of medical residency.

“I was so tangibly seeing God’s grace day after day,” Hannah shares. “I remember Pastor Mark saying, ‘You just need enough grace for today.’ And I felt like that anytime someone asked me, ‘How are you doing this?’ It was ‘I am not doing it by my own power. This is God’s grace actively working through us right now to do this and to feel joy.’”

Even their children were impacted by hosting. “They are so much kinder to our host kids than they are to their siblings,” Hannah observes with



a smile. "I think the Holy Spirit is near to them too, helping them be selfless and caring in ways that they wouldn't do otherwise."

Though the ministry can be challenging, Hannah says without hesitation that it's "worth it every time."

Even when it's been incredibly difficult, it always feels worthwhile, knowing that even one moment might draw a child closer to Jesus.

"Somehow, at the end of each placement, I feel renewed," Hannah reflects. "I can exhale and

offer a heartfelt 'Thank you, Lord, for this experience.' Even when it's been incredibly difficult, it always feels worthwhile, knowing that even one moment might draw a child closer to Jesus."

For those considering hosting a child or walking alongside families in need, Hannah offers this simple encouragement: "Just do it. If you have any sort of stirring in your heart that this may be for you, I say try it. If you do it just one time, you will get a glimpse into God's character that you won't want to miss out on."

To learn more about Family Advocacy Ministry, go to yourchurch.com/fam.



Biblical Unity in Diversity

Within the framework of sound doctrine, we value an atmosphere of theological freedom with humility and a non-divisive spirit. We want to reflect the unified beauty of Father, Son, and Spirit, participating in the building of the multi-faceted Kingdom of our triune God. In our theological systems, our ministry forms, and our personal relationships, we are committed to biblical unity in diversity.

A Glimpse of Heaven

By Emma Halter-Mann

I never understood the reason for a church choir. In a worship culture filled with groups like Passion, Hillsong, and Elevation, the worship leader seemed like the endgame and the church choir a thing of the past, better left behind with hymn books and pews.

Having become a Christian in college, the nostalgia of the traditional church was far outweighed by my pessimism and pride that the music I preferred was the best music for the whole church body to worship with. I'm so glad God was gracious enough to prove me wrong.

I don't remember the first Sunday that it hit me—when the idea of a church choir really started to make sense—but I know exactly what went through my

mind: "This is a glimpse of what heaven will be like." Looking at the men and women of various ethnicities and backgrounds fill the risers, coming from all ages and walks of life, standing together declaring praise to the one true God before a church with the same diversity reminds me of the great multitude in Revelation.

The choir reflects the unified beauty of Father, Son, and Spirit and the multi-faceted kingdom of our triune God.

I learned that of College Park's 135 choir members, 103 are women and 32 are men, with 8 countries of origin and 6 languages spoken. The choir reflects the unified beauty of Father, Son, and Spirit and the multi-faceted kingdom of our triune God.

Secular music is typically divided by decades with hits sorted by the '80s or '90s; and worship music is no different. This is why the intergenerational diversity in the choir is especially intriguing. Between the ages of the oldest member and the youngest spans 70 years, but one truth stands out to both: choir is community. And in the words of the most senior choir member, 88-year-old Don Krueger, "If church is a community, then community should be what's on the platform."

There's a unique community that exists within the walls of the choir room. On Thursday nights at 7:30, Pastor Eric Anderson stands outside the room, greeting each member as they walk in. Divided into sections by vocal range, the choir members practice and then wrap up the evening with a devotion and prayer.

For Don, this is an environment he is more than familiar with, having been part of the choir for the last thirty-two years. The youngest choir member, 18-year-old Kaelyn Harvey, joined the choir two years ago after leading worship for Student Ministry. As Kaelyn begins her journey of stewarding her gifts and serving the church, the choir has helped her grow both musically and spiritually. For both Don



and Kaelyn, the choir is more than just music; it's an opportunity to be part of something bigger than themselves. In the words of Kaelyn, "It's an opportunity to use all the musical gifts we love to serve a common purpose—leading the church to glorify God."

Another unique facet to this intergenerational ministry is that it allows not just church family members to serve together, but biological family members as well. Leslie Agan, age 70, and Liam Zimpleman, age 20, serve together in the choir as nana and grandson. Leslie served in the choir for eight years and then stepped away for a season, intending to come back when she was ready. The Lord used her grandson joining the choir to prompt her to return to a community she had forgotten how much she needed.

Every seven days we gather and worship together—united despite our differences.

This past spring, Leslie and Liam drove together to practice, sang alongside each other, and grew together as their musical gifts were developed and their affection for the Lord was encouraged. For Leslie, seeing Liam love the Lord and serve in the choir is a reminder of God's faithfulness

and how he works in mysterious ways. For Liam, Leslie has been a tremendous example of Jesus during his entire life, and now serving alongside her and being part of the same community has been foundational for his faith. In addition to his nana, one of the highlights of the choir for Liam is the wisdom shared by older choir members.

Regardless of age or background or ability, worship unites us. Every seven days we gather and worship together—united despite our differences. Whether you sing or sign or stand in silent reflection, worship unites this diverse church that Christ has built from generation to generation. And our choir faithfully leads us with many voices together as one.

One day, we will stand together in the throne room with the biggest of all church choirs, made up of every nation, tribe, and tongue, singing "Salvation and glory and power belong to our God!" (Rev. 19:1). But until then, we can be thankful that our choir gives us a partial glimpse of that eternal reality.

To learn more about choir, go to yourchurch.com/choir.



Extravagant Grace

We desire to be a community of believers who treat others with the same extravagant grace that God has lavished upon us. We yearn to demonstrate this grace through our church culture and our lives in a way that is transparent, real, and helpful. We are blessed to be a blessing to each other, the city of Indianapolis, and the world.

Blessed Are the Peacemakers

By Jill Henry

I frequently walk along the path around the church property, and last summer, I repeatedly noticed the same group meeting at The Portico. The group didn't look like a typical College Park gathering, but I could tell something special was happening as week after week I observed about twenty children, mostly of Asian descent, listening intently to a lesson. I recognized the woman who was teaching to be College Park member Scarlett Henderson, so I reached out to her to learn about this group.



Scarlett shared that it all started two years ago when she had taken a Peacemaker class with the goal of learning to be a better listener, a skill that would help her in her role as a lay counselor with the Soul Care Ministry. While taking the class, the Holy Spirit convicted Scarlett about her relationship with her biological father, whom she hadn't spoken to since her parents' divorce, some twenty-eight years earlier. With the Spirit's help and what she'd learned in the class, she reconciled with him, extending to her father the same extravagant grace that Christ has lavished on us.

"God blessed me way beyond what I had asked for or imagined through the class, so I decided to continue being a peacemaker by bringing the

class to more believers," explained Scarlett. As a result, she began facilitating Peacemaker classes for other adults; and so far, she has facilitated three adult classes in Chinese and three in English.

After completing the class with Scarlett, a group of moms loved what they had learned so much that they wanted their kids to benefit from the curriculum as well. So, last summer, she organized her first Young Peacemaker class, teaching twenty kids ranging in age from seven to seventeen. The majority were from Christian families who attend Chinese churches in Carmel, and a few were from non-Christian families.

God blessed me way beyond what I had asked for or imagined through the class, so I decided to continue being a peacemaker by bringing the class to more believers.

The class met at The Portico throughout the summer. “The kids enjoyed the facility and the playground tremendously,” said Scarlett. “And the parents expressed their praise and gratitude for the wonderful support College Park Church was providing to the community through The Portico.”



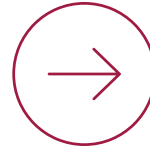
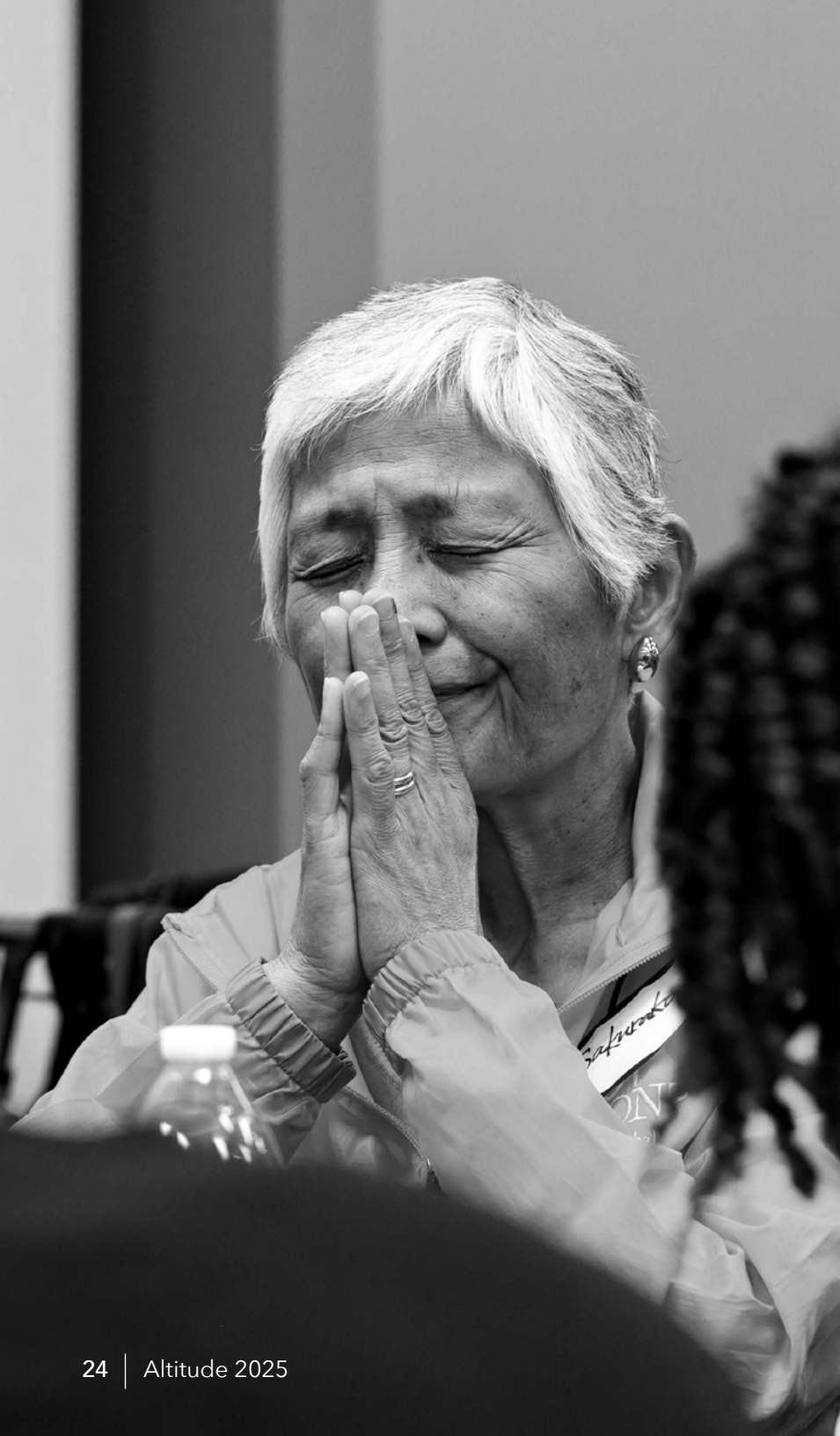
One of the boys who participated in the summer class reconciled with a former friend whom he hadn't spoken to for a while due to a conflict. And three young friends learned to better manage conflicts with each other by practicing forgiveness instead of blaming one another.

As I consider what extravagant grace looks like in our lives and through the body of College Park Church, I am in awe of this story. Extravagant grace is beautifully threaded throughout Scarlett's testimony.

It was only through God's extravagant grace that she was able to reconcile with her biological father, and only through God's prompting that she was then compelled to teach others about biblical peacemaking—teaching so many others how to show that same forgiveness to those around them.

I thank God for his extravagant grace—in these specific testimonies and in each of our lives as well. How are you seeing God's grace in your life and here at College Park? As you consider God's blessings to you, how might he be leading you to be a conduit of his grace in the lives of those around you?

To learn more about The Portico, go to yourchurch.com/theportico.



The Call to Go

All of us are called to be Spirit-empowered catalysts for life change in our areas of personal influence. We approach ministry with a passionate resolve to equip the saints to engage our culture, addressing the most pressing problems, and reaching the neediest people in our city and the world. While the body of Christ is made up of a variety of gifts, the calling is the same: GO!

First Friday Prayer

By Jennifer Bellville

First Friday Prayer is a staple of Global Outreach here at College Park Church. Each month we gather to fellowship over dinner, worship, and a devotion from the Word. Then we hear an update from a missionary, a recent Vision Trip, or a strategic ministry partner and pray together. Brothers and sisters from different generations, nationalities, and backgrounds come together to worship and pray with a specific focus on the unreached peoples of the world.

What do you enjoy most about First Friday Prayer?

By the end of the week, most people don't want to add anything else to their calendar. However, I've found that no matter how tired I am walking into First Friday, I always leave refreshed. First Friday is a time to shift my focus off myself and onto what God is doing in places I may never go and people I may never meet. Hearing how believers are standing firm in difficulties also strengthens my own faith.

JESSICA ROY

Our family really enjoys meeting new missionaries and getting to hear firsthand how God is moving in their lives and in various parts of the world. We enjoy the fellowship with other believers, and it's a great privilege to talk with and pray for the missionaries. Every time, we leave with renewed hope, joy, and burden for praying and with new friends.

SAMUEL AUGUSTINE



First Friday was one of the first activities my wife and I got involved with. What we found was a small group of College Park people who loved to pray for God's frontline workers, many in hard places. We kept coming not only for the good food but deeper acquaintance with more believers.

EARL CECIL

I love knowing our overseas ministries and missionaries' real-time updates. God stirs my heart and encourages me to love each of God's missionaries through prayer!

SAKURAKO ORR



How does First Friday encourage you in our Core Value of The Call to Go?

We all have the great commission to go and preach the good news to all. Not all of us can leave our homes and go to a foreign country and serve, but we can take part in mission work through First Friday Prayer. It gives us a burden to pray for the missionaries and the mission fields and puts our focus on things that really matter for eternity. The mission work becomes more real and personal when you are a part of it.

SAMUEL AUGUSTINE

It was through a friend's encouragement that I started to attend First Friday and then went on my first Vision Trip after learning more about it. Hearing other people at First Friday share what happened on their Vision Trips and how lives were impacted encourages me in the call to go. After going to Cuba, I realized the call to go needs to also focus on our city and the people we know.

KAYE CLAYTOR

By attending First Friday, it strengthens our understanding of God's heart for the nations and helps to put our prayers in alignment with God's command to go.

CHARLIE HOBBS

Not all of us can physically go to places far away to reach those for Christ, but every one of us can pray. Praying is one of the most valuable things we can do to make a difference and encourage the missionaries we support.

ANNA BRADLEY

I am a missionary supported by College Park, but I am also committed to praying for missions. First Friday ignites my passion to continue praying and going. First Friday helps keep me burdened for unreached people groups, opening my eyes and heart to the progress, remaining areas, current challenges, and opportunities to finish the task of taking the gospel to the ends of the earth.

MARTY DEBRUIN

Coming every month has given me a better view of College Park's vision and footprint on the least-reached people groups and our world's need to fulfill Christ's great command: 'Go and make disciples of all people groups.' I hope you will join in College Park's best-kept secret. Let's make it the best prayer movement for our workers and for the lost peoples of this generation and those to come until all have heard.

EARL CECIL

To learn more about First Friday Prayer, go to yourchurch.com/firstfriday.

Igniting a Passion to Follow Jesus

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COLLEGE PARK CHURCH