



The mission moving forward...

We don't move the mission forward; God is the mover. Our job is to move with God. Our mission statement begins with the words, "Riverside is a movement of the Holy Spirit..." Those words serve as a reminder to us that it is God who moves and we have the honor to participate in that movement.

Where we see God moving, or our visible mission, seems to be in 7 areas. They are, World Impact (our partnerships), Missional Facility, Children and Family, Our Community, Ridgetop Coffee and Tea, Students, and Worship. God also works through our day to day spiritual practices, such as small groups and care teams

We invite you to join us in prayer around the many ways we see God visibly working and moving. Here are some ways we see God moving this year:

➤ **Our Community:**

- **Lunch for the Soul** – Our partnership with the Herndon day labor community now has a new host-- Holy Cross Lutheran Church – which is a few steps away from where the day laborers gather to find work. We also have another new partner church, a CMA Spanish language church. We see God every week in the fellowship around a meal and the worship.
- **College Campus Ministry** - Riverside received a grant to support the hiring of a ¼ time campus ministry position for NOVA students and other students who are commuting to college. We have put together a search team that developed a job description and is at work looking to find the right person to fulfill this aspect of the mission. The key role we see for this position is to seek creative ways to help connect college students to God and others through Jesus Christ. A secondary role is to seek creative ways to assist students, especially those who are the first generation to attend college, to study and navigate college life.
- **Sugarland Community** – Although Covid has caused many disruptions, we are re-engaging in Sugarland. The backpack program has restarted and volunteers have stepped up to pack groceries on Thursday afternoons at Sugarland Elementary. In addition, there is a team—part of a larger group exploring opportunities for new worshiping or other communities—considering whether there is a need for a faith community centered in Sugarland. If you helped pack the 350 bags for Feed-a-Student to cover Spring Break it is hard to miss God in the joy of packing and the joy of the students carrying the bags home to their families.

➤ **Students:**

- **The weekly Gatherings:** It is hard to say if God is more obviously working in the lives of our students or in the lives of those who have volunteered to serve our students in the weekly youth group and weekly Bible studies. The exploration of faith class has led to deep conversations and out of it a number of students want to be baptized and "officially" be a part of Riverside.
- **Camps this Summer:**
 - High School will go to Deep Creek Lake, June 26-30
 - Middle School and rising and existing freshman will go to On the Edge camp at Ligonier Camp, July 17-21

- **Ridgetop Coffee and Tea:** March saw the highest sales numbers in the five-year history of our coffee shop. Sales translates into number of cups of coffee and conversations. Ridgetop Coffee and Tea has truly become for many a "third space," not work and not home but a place to be community. We see God in the start of Affinity groups. Affinity groups gather people around shared interests--like photography or board games--with the goal

of connecting people. We have moved these groups under Ridgetop Coffee and Tea using natural connections to catalyze and create groups. Currently there are groups focused on photography, art, games, and coffee.

- **Children and Family:** SonRise Camp will be held July 11-15 at Sugarland Elementary, mostly outdoors. We have seen God in the planning and can't wait until the actual camp. Recently, we added a separate 4th/5th grade Sunday School class and look forward to incorporating playground activities again as the weather gets warmer. We are also reestablishing a nursery at the 9:15 AM worship time for our youngest members in the Sterling Woods area off Ridgetop Coffee and Tea. We believe God is moving us to start "Adventure 45" this summer, which will offer youth group-type activities for 4th and 5th graders. We have seen God at work in the way people have responded to lead SonRise, teach Sunday School, or serve in the nursery. We do not take for granted the leading of the Holy Spirit to allow us the privilege of sharing Jesus with our children in a way that is age appropriate.

- **World Impact, Partnerships in the World**
 - **Faith Chapel** – The worshipping community here has not developed as planned, but the Food Pantry serves 70-125 families twice a month. We have seen God in the forming of a local team, led by Barbara Rogues who lives near Faith Chapel, to run the food pantry. We have added Amanda Brady Vela as community director. She also lives near Faith Chapel and is taking her background in hospitality and catering to create ways Faith Chapel can serve the entire community as a place to gather. She sees possibilities of local groups using the building daily for activities such as music lessons, monthly teen movie nights, and game nights, creating a "box for good" in Lucketts. We see the potential for weddings and parties hosted at Faith Chapel creating income to support the work and maintenance of the facility. The last week in April people from Riverside and the Lucketts community gathered for one large workday. We heard over and over from those who lived in Lucketts that as far as they knew this was the first event in Lucketts that brought together those in the mobile home community, those who live in the new developments, and those who have lived in town for a long time to work for a common cause. We are not sure what will happen next, but the hand of God is obviously at work in the community. We pray that we will be faithful and support and follow where God is leading.
 - **Starlight Farmers Co-Op:** What started out as a modest response to create peace after the post-election violence in Kenya in 2007 and 2008 has become a cooperative society with 595 farmers. They started off with seed potatoes and have expanded to include milk collection, bulking and marketing. Last year Starlight trained 954 farmers on climate smart agriculture, bought a tractor and attachments, and took steps to overcome unpredictable rains. It is hard not to see God everywhere in this partnership.
 - **Fresh Expressions US:** Pastor Shannon is the Director of Training for Fresh Expressions, US. This spring her team led a national conference for over 500 people interested in starting a Fresh Expression of the one Church. A Fresh Expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of those who are not yet part of any church. God showed up at the conference and continues to bless the work as Shannon continues to participate with God in the forming of new expressions of God's one Church.

- **Missional Facility:**
 - The dream we had years ago was that if we purchased a facility it would be a "Box for Good" and would somehow not take one dollar from mission and ministry. God has made that dream a reality. We lease parts of our upstairs to four groups, Golden Path Academy, Ridgetop Dental, Nurturing Touch, and a new tenant, Artistic Fuel. Those leases pay for our building expenses so that every offering dollar is for mission and ministry. Ridgetop Dental has helped us in our partnership with Sugarland Elementary School providing dental work for some of the students who most needed it. Nurturing Touch and Golden Path Academy serve families and we are excited to see the impact of Artistic Fuel. Our lobby and coffee café are places that create community daily.

➤ **Worship:**

- Worship is a time, both online and in person, when God moves our hearts and minds. Sometimes it is in a song, sometimes in a prayer, sometimes in a sermon, sometimes in sharing communion, and sometimes in all of those ways.

➤ **Small Groups and Discipleship Training:**

- **Dinner and...** Gathering around the table to share a meal, conversation, and encouragement is a basic Christian practice. Riverside is holding weekly gatherings for dinner where anyone can have a meal, get to know others, and engage in discussions or disciplines of the church, such as service, prayer, and scripture. We have seen God use this time, the first and third Wednesdays at 6 PM, to help people get connected. It is a great way for those who are new to Riverside to meet others and for those who have been a part of Riverside to reconnect.

- **Care Team:** The Care Team is reengaging, serving where care is needed. We are looking to rebuild the team, which is made up of people willing to be the “hosts” when there is a funeral, make a meal for home delivery when needed, give someone a ride to an appointment, or simply be a listening ear. The Care Line phone line is now up and running at 571-249-5998. We have had a number of funerals this spring and the ministry of the Care Team has shown comfort and hospitality in profound and touching ways.

Doors open:

One of the ways we discern if God is moving us in a direction is the question, “Has God moved people to volunteer and financially support this mission?” We proclaim “mystery” here as God could ask us to give our time, talents, and treasures and God has given us the freedom to say “no.” We believe that financial support is not a campaign but faithful response to what God is doing in our lives. We believe we are not in the business of recruiting volunteers to serve our agenda but we are to help each of us serve as disciples as God has placed it on our hearts in faithful response to what God has done.

- **Serving update:**

COVID-19 made it tricky to volunteer and it still does. What we have seen is that God is moving people to re-engage in service. We have been able to reopen Sunday School, plan to reopen the nursery, have a great team in place in student ministry with camps almost fully staffed, have a SonRise team led by volunteers, have been able to support Lunch for the Soul, had an overwhelming response to Feed-a-Student, and much more. Look back on the ways we have seen God and every aspect is because people have responded to God and have been willing to serve in that area.

- **Financial Update:**

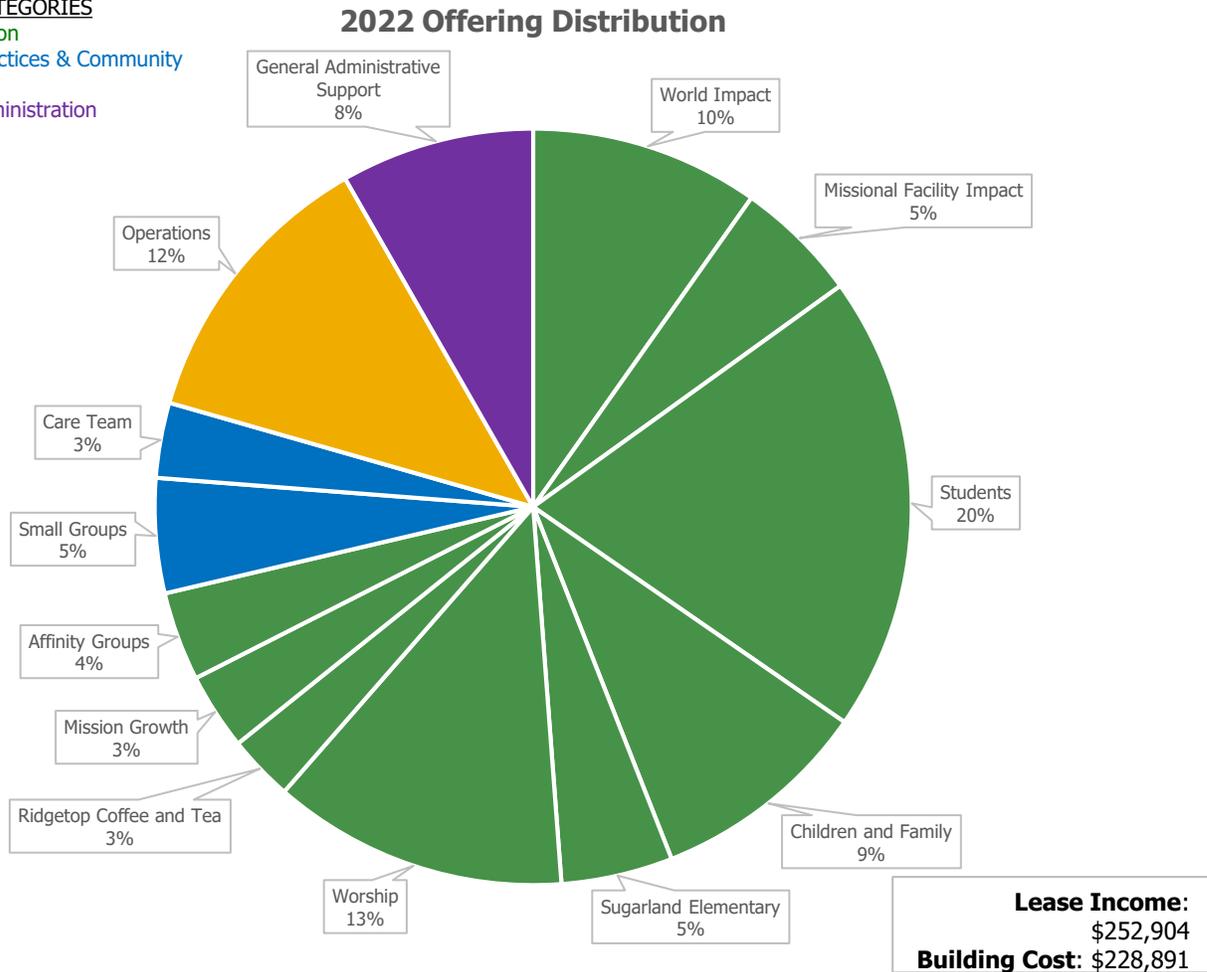
The Riverside community responded positively to the letter that went out last fall. We were significantly behind in giving in November of 2021 yet people responded and we closed 2021 with offering that allowed us to fulfill our mission and move forward with budget planning without having to make difficult decisions. This also allows us to be gracious and explore mission growth. This area is still to be determined, but possibilities include Sugarland ministry and family assistance for recent refugees.

Currently our offering is behind where we were at this time last year. We realize that for some of the Riverside family the increased prices of food, gas, and cost of living have really challenged their day-to-day finances and we want to make sure giving is never out of guilt or obligation but as a

joyful response to what God is doing. Giving is a spiritual discipline, not a requirement for God's grace and love, nor for our grace and love. Giving is a way you can participate in what God is doing, moving forward with God.

LEGEND CATEGORIES

- Visible Mission
- Spiritual Practices & Community
- Operations
- General Administration



Offering Budget YTD through May 31, 2022: \$253,846

Offering Actual YTD through May 31, 2022: \$193,910

Short fall YTD through May 31, 2022 **\$ 59,936**