

the church at
BETHEL'S FAMILY
A Real Church for Real People



Belong

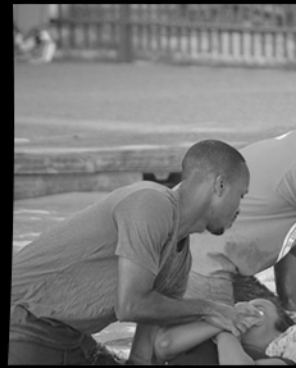
class 101

discovering our church family



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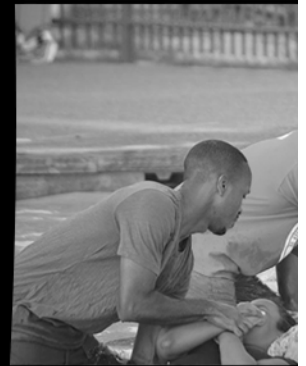
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Class 101

Discovering Our Church Family

*Facilitated by
Pastor Terry Stroud*





Pastor Walter August Jr.

Visionary, Pastor, Kingdom Pioneer

Born on January 28, 1959, Walter August Jr. was raised in Abbeville, Louisiana where he was later baptized at Mt. Triumph Missionary Baptist Church by Pastor Isaiah Matthew in 1972. Three years later, he joined Pleasant Green Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor Isaiah Joiner.

In 1977, after graduating from high school, he joined the U.S. Marine Corps where he served through 1983. A year after serving, he joined First City Bank Corporate Security Group, attended the Professional Management Training School and then went on to obtain a Security Specialist position in 1991.

In 1992, he professed his calling to the ministry of the Gospel under Dr. E.L. Lott, Senior Pastor of True Light Missionary Baptist Church in Houston, Texas. He was also hired by LaSalle Partners Asset Management Company, where he served as Director of Security. In 1994, Pastor August organized and founded Bethel's Family Baptist Church, with his wife, three sons, and six committed adults. Today, the church presently ministers to over 13,000 people.

Having served 7½ years at Sugar Creek Baptist Church as their missions pastor, Pastor August was led to launch seven churches and over 58 ministries through Bethel's Family. In 2002, he founded Bethel's Heavenly Hands, a food distribution pantry which has served over 500,000 pounds of food in the last year and has fed more than 50,000 people in the Houston area. In 2005, after attending Southwestern Theological Seminary in Houston, Pastor August received an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Saint Thomas Christian College.

In 2006, Bethel's Place, Inc. was born. This community empowerment organization supports job training, job placement, GED prep and testing, after school programs, vocational training and more. In 2011, God made a way for Pastor August to move this organization into a new 56,000 square foot, two-story building, allowing more social service programs to impact the Greater Houston metropolitan area. In 2012, the partner entity, Bethel's Blessed Again Resale Shop was established, providing low-cost clothing options for those in need.

While his hands were certainly full, Pastor August still made global missions a priority. He has traveled to Kenya, Africa, the Czech Republic and beyond, doing evangelism training, medical clinics, and developing church leadership teams. Pastor August is also a published author. *Embracing Bootstrap Leadership*, an in-depth guide on Christ-centered leadership, was released in 2014.

Pastor August is a former board member of the Baptist Church Loan Corporation of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and in 2016, he was inaugurated as President of the African American Pastor's Fellowship of Houston, an organization uniting African American pastoral leadership.

Yet and still, Pastor August is a family man. He cherishes his wife, Ruby, of over 30 years and their three sons—Walter (III) and his wife Shawn, Patrick and his wife Katie, and Alex—along with their grandchildren: Brycen, Brinan, Breanna, Karson, and their newest grandchild, Aliyah!



First Lady Ruby August ***Ministry Leader, Counselor, Advocate for Children***

Born on June 4, 1959, Ruby August was raised in Natchitoches, Louisiana where she was later baptized at Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church by Pastor Emeal Jones in 1971. In 1977, after graduating high school, she attended Northwestern State University and later moved to Chicago, Illinois, where she started her career in the field of banking.

In 1985, Sister August moved to Houston, Texas and joined True Light Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of the late Dr. E. L. Lott. Working at First City Bank of Texas, she met and began dating Walter August Jr. in December 1985. They married on November 7, 1987 at Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in downtown Houston.

Sister August continued her employment at the bank and served in various ministries at True Light Missionary Baptist Church. In 1994, she and Pastor August started Bethel's Family Baptist Church where she served as Children's Ministry founder/director and as the director of Bethel's Christian Academy, our accredited child education entity. She currently serves as co-director of Bethel's Christian Academy. From dawn until dusk, she works to ensure that children grow spiritually, mentally and physically within a safe and nurturing environment. When she's not at the Academy, Sister August serves as a leader in Women's Ministry, assisting and leading women's conferences and classes as a facilitator and counselor.

Welcome!

Class 101: Discovering Our Church Family is the first of Bethel's foundational classes. You were designed to be a part of a church family, and that's exactly what Bethel's Family is intended to be— your family. A healthy family has common beliefs, purposes, and commitment. That's why we want to share with you what we believe and where we're going.

Class Purpose

*You are members of God's
very own family . . . and you belong in
God's household with every other
Christian.*

Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

Class Focus

In this class we will discuss what we believe, how we operate, and the history of our church. We will discover the five purposes God has designed for us to live out in our lives, discuss why we need a church family, explore what Bethel's Family Church believes, and learn what it means to be a member.

class 101



God's Plan of Salvation

Rebirth is the answer to life's most important question: "Are you going to heaven when you die?" It is not a matter of how good you are, whether you go to church, or how much money you give to charity. God says, in order to go to heaven, you must be born again (John 3:3).

How can we be born again?

God's plan of salvation is right in the Bible. God gives us His clear plan for being "born again."

First, we must acknowledge God as the Creator of everything and accept our humble position in God's creation. "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created" (Revelation 4:11).

Next, we must realize that we are sinners. "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). And because we are sinners, we are condemned to death. "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). This includes eternal separation from God.

But God loved each of us so much that He gave His only begotten Son, Jesus, to bear our sin and die in our place. "God demonstrates His love toward us, in that, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Although we may not understand how, God said our sins were laid upon Jesus and He died in our place. Jesus became our substitute.

In the Bible, a jailer asked his prisoners, Paul and Silas: "'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' So they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved'" (Acts 16:30-31).

It's very clear in the Bible, believe in Jesus as the one who bore your sins, died in your place, was buried, and whom God resurrected. It's Jesus' blood and resurrection that assures us of everlasting life when we call on Him as our Lord and Savior. "For whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Romans 10:13). "Whosoever" includes each and every one of us.

Therefore, if you understand that you are a sinner, and you believe that Jesus Christ came as the one and only Redeemer of sin, then you understand the plan of salvation.

Are you ready to receive God's gift of His Son?

If so, **believe** in Christ, **repent** of your sins, and **commit** the rest of your life to Him as Lord:

"Father, I know that I have broken your laws and my sins have separated me from you. I am truly sorry, and now I want to turn away from my past sinful life toward you.

Please forgive me, and help me avoid sinning again. I believe that your son, Jesus Christ died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey You, and to do Your will for the rest of my life. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."

"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

If you decided to receive Jesus today, let us know so we can rejoice with you and welcome you to the family of God! As a way to grow closer to Him, the Bible tells us to follow up on our commitment.

notes

Baptism: How You Identify with God's Family

1. What is the Meaning of Baptism?

a. It illustrates Christ's _____ ,
_____ and resurrection.

Christ died for our sins . . . He was buried . . . and He rose again.

1 Corinthians 15:3–4

When we are lowered into the water, it is like the burial of Jesus; when we are raised up out of the water, it is like the resurrection of Jesus.

Romans 6:4 (MES)

*For when you are **baptized**, you were **buried** with Christ, and in baptism you were also **raised** with Christ.*

Colossians 2:12

b. It illustrates my _____ as
a Christian.

When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!

1 Corinthians 5:17

Your baptism in Christ was not just washing you up for a fresh start. It also involved dressing you in an adult faith wardrobe—Christ's life, the fulfillment of God's original promise.

Galatians 3:27 (MES)

Baptism doesn't make you a believer—it shows that **you already believe**. Baptism does not “save” you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring—it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

c. It demonstrates my _____
into Christ's Body, the Church.

*We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a larger, integrated life in which Christ has the final say in everything. **This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized. Each of us is now a part of his resurrection Body.***

1 Corinthians 12:13 (MES)

notes

2. Why Should I Be Baptized?

a. To follow the example set by _____.

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river.

Mark 1:9

b. Because Christ _____ it.

*Jesus said, "Go then, to all people everywhere and **make them my disciples, baptize them** in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and **then teach them** to obey everything I have commanded you."*

Matthew 28:19–20

c. It shows that I really am a _____.

*. . . many of the people who heard Him **believed** and were **baptized**.*

Acts 18:8

*We know that we have come to know Him, if we **obey** His commands.*

1 John 2:3

3. Why Be Baptized By Immersion?

a. Because _____ was baptized that way.

“As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water.”

Matthew 3:16

**b. Every baptism in the _____
was by immersion.**

Two examples:

... then both Philip and the man went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water ...

Acts 8:38–39

“Now John was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water.”

John 3:23

**c. The word “baptize” means to _____
_____ water.**

The Greek word *baptizo* means “to immerse and dip under water.”

d. It best symbolizes a burial and resurrection!

The founders of different denominations agree.

4. Who Should Be Baptized?

a. Every person who has _____
in Christ.

*Those who believed and accepted His message were **baptized** . . .*

Acts 2:41

*Simon himself **believed** and was **baptized** . . .*

Acts 8:13

*But **when they believed** Philip as he preached the Good News . . . and the name of Jesus Christ, **they were baptized**, both men and women.*

Acts 8:12

At Bethel's Family, we wait until our children are old enough to **believe** and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

Some churches practice a "*baptism of confirmation*" for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his own personal confession of Christ. This custom began about 300 years after the Bible was completed. **This is different from the baptism talked about in the Bible**, which was only for those old enough to believe. The purpose is to publicly confess your personal commitment to Christ.

At Bethel's Family, it is a membership requirement that every member must have been baptized the way Jesus demonstrated, even though many of us were "confirmed" as children.

**Over 10,000 people
has been baptized at Bethel's Family!**

5. When Should I Be Baptized?

As soon as you have believed!

*Those who believed . . . were baptized . . . **that day!***

Acts 2:41

Then Philip began with the scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the man said, "Look, here is water! Why shouldn't I be baptized right now?" Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The man answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." So they went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

Acts 8:35–38

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to receive Christ into your life, you can and should be baptized. If you wait until you are "perfect," you'll never feel "good enough"!

6. Practical Questions

a. Can my family be baptized together?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment. Young

children who wish to be baptized are asked to meet with our Minister of Children for a pre-baptism conversation.

However, it is important to remember that baptism is a *personal* statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on other family members to accept Christ, particularly children. This puts an undue pressure on them, and delays *your* obedience.

b. What should I wear when I am baptized?

We have baptism T-shirts you can wear over your swimsuit or any clothes you feel comfortable in. We provide changing rooms, towels, and shorts you can use.

c. Will I have to say anything?

No. At the beginning of the service, one of our Pastors will briefly explain the meaning of baptism. You will wait at the edge of the pool for your turn to be baptized. A pastor will introduce you, briefly lower you just under the water, and then you can leave the pool, dry off, and watch the others. We encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism! You will be given a photo and certificate of your baptism.

d. Special needs?

All of our Pastors can perform a private baptism in special circumstances.

The Lord's Supper: Communion With God's Family

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember his death and resurrection. He gave the church two visible symbols (called "*ordinances*") as reminders of His death. These two ordinances are: Baptism and The Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an object lesson that represents a great spiritual truth for believers.

1. What is the Lord's Supper? (1 Corinthians 11:23–26)

a. It is a _____

*The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, **took bread** . . .*

(verse 23)

b. It is a _____

*. . . and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; eat it **in remembrance** of me."*

(verse 24)

c. It is a _____

*In the same way, He took the cup, saying, "**This cup** is the new covenant in my blood; drink it to remember me."*

(verse 25)

d. It is a _____

*For whenever you eat the bread and drink the cup, **you** proclaim the Lord's death until He comes back.*

(verse 26)

2. Who Should Take the Lord's Supper?

a. Only those who are already _____
(Mark 14:22–26)

For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself.

1 Corinthians 11:29

3. How Do I Prepare Myself for the Lord's Supper?

Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A person ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

1 Corinthians 11:27–28

By . . .

1. **Self-Examination**
1 Corinthians 11:27

2. **Confessing My Sins**
1 John 1:9

3. **Recommitment**
Romans 12:1

4. **Restoring Relationships**
Matthew 5:23–24

notes

4. When and How Often Should We Observe the Lord's Supper?

Jesus never said when or how often believers should observe The Lord's Supper. He instituted it on a Thursday night. In the Bible, Christians observed the communion in small groups in homes.

Benefits of Membership

The difference between being a member and an attender means being a participator, not just a spectator, a be-longer, not just a bystander, a contributor, not just a consumer.

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Why Become A Member?

1. It's an Act of Obedience to Christ's Commands

God expects every believer to join a local church. In fact, there are over 50 commands in the New Testament you cannot follow unless you commit to joining a local Body of believers. Without a church family, you're a spiritual orphan.

Be devoted to each other like a loving family.

Romans 12:10 (GW)

*You are **members** of God's very own family, citizens of God's country, and **you belong in God's household** with every other Christian.*

Ephesians 2:19 (LB)

2. It's a Counter-Culture Choice that Shows Maturity

Immaturity is the inability to make and keep commitments; Today's culture promotes immaturity everywhere: "*Keep your options open . . . don't commit to a job . . . a marriage . . . a church . . . anything.*" Even many believers have a superficial consumer's attitude of "shopping & hopping" — attending different churches each week without being dedicated or loyal to any specific church family. You cannot build character without making commitments.

*My friends, stop thinking like children. **Think like mature people** while being as innocent as babies.*

1 Corinthians. 14:20 (CEV)

notes

*Christ loved the church, and he **gave his life** for it.*

Ephesians 5:25 (NIV)

3. It's a Necessary Step in Your Spiritual Development

***First** they gave themselves **to the Lord**; and **then**, by God's will, they gave themselves **to us** as well.*

2 Corinthians 8:5 (TEV)

They helped the believers grow in love for God and each other.

Acts 14:22 (LB)

4. It Provides Spiritual Protection

*To Pastors: **Guard and protect the flock of God** over which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers and guardians. Care for and shepherd the Church of God which He bought with his own blood.*

Acts 20:28 (AMP)

*To Members: Obey your spiritual leaders and do what they say. For their work is to **watch over your souls**, and they know they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this joyfully and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.*

Hebrews 13:17 (NLT)

Our Model for Membership: The First Church

What the First Christians Did in the Jerusalem Church

All the believers joined together and shared everything with each other . . . they worshiped together regularly in the temple courts. They also met together in small groups in homes and fellowshipped with communion and eating together. They also shared whatever they had with joy and generosity. They praised God together and the whole city liked them so every day more people were saved, and the Lord added to the number of believers in the church.

Acts 2:46–47

1. They *united* into a congregation
2. They *shared* to meet each other's needs
3. They *worshiped* in the Temple courts (multiple venues/campuses)
4. They met in small groups in homes for *fellowship*
5. They celebrated *communion* (every Sunday afternoon service)
6. They *ate together* (several places to eat on this)
7. They *gave generously* and joyfully.
8. They built a *reputation for love*
9. They brought people to Christ *everyday*.
10. They *never stopped growing*!

What Does It Mean to Be a Member of Bethel's Family?

The Bible is very clear about both the privileges and responsibilities of belonging to a church family. These are spelled out in our Membership Covenant!

Membership Means I Commit . . .

1. _____ of Bethel's Family

Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8 (NLT)

"Your strong love for each other will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

John 13:35 (LB)

2. _____ of Bethel's Family

*Don't use your freedom as an excuse just to do anything you want. Use it as an opportunity to serve **each other** with love.*

Galatians 5:13 (CEV)

3. _____ of Bethel's Family.

I serve God by spreading the Good News about his Son.

Romans 1:9 (GW)

4. _____ of Bethel's Family.

We are partners working together for God.

1 Corinthians 3:9 (TEV)

5. _____ of Bethel's Family.

*Do not let what you regard as good **get a bad name**.*

Romans 14:16 (TEV)

***We try to live in such a way** that no one will be hindered from finding the Lord by the way we act.*

2 Corinthians 6:3 (NLT)

The Bethel's Family Membership Covenant

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and been baptized as Jesus modeled, it is now my desire to unite with the Bethel's Family church as my spiritual home and family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following with God's help and for His glory:

1. I will love the members of my church

By _____

*Let us concentrate on the things which make for harmony, and the growth of our **FELLOWSHIP** together.*

Romans 15:19 (PH)

Since Our Church Is a Fellowship: Love Matters Most

*Whenever we have the opportunity, we must do what is good for everyone, especially for the **FAMILY** of believers.*

Galatians 6:10 (GW)

*Don't reprimand a senior member of the church, appeal to him as a **father**. Treat the young men as **brothers**, and the older women as **mothers**. Treat the younger women as **sisters** . . .*

1 Timothy 5:1-2 (PH)

***Since Bethel's Family Is a Family, We
Function By Relationships, Not Rules.***

*We can only develop a healthy, robust **COMMUNITY** . . . if we do the hard work of getting along with each other, treating each other with dignity and honor.*

James 3:18 (MES)

By _____

Accept those whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.

Romans 14:1 (NIV)

Warmly welcome each other into the church, just as Christ has warmly welcomed you; then God will be glorified.

Romans 15:7 (LB)

By _____ **(in a home group)**

Open your homes to each other.

1 Peter 4:9 (NCV)

*Dear friend, when you **extend hospitality** to Christian brothers and sisters, even when they are strangers, you make the faith visible.*

3 John 1:5 (MES)

*Every day in the **Temple courts** and in **people's homes** they continued teaching and telling the Good News."*

Acts 5:42 (NCV)

notes

Healthy Churches Grow Larger and Smaller at the Same Time!

If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

1 Corinthians 12:26 (ESV)

2. I will serve the ministry of my church

By _____

*God has given each of you some **special abilities**; **be sure to use them** to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings.*

1 Peter 4:10 (LB)

*There are **different kinds of service** in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving.*

1 Corinthians 12:5 (NLT)

By _____

*The whole **BODY** depends on Christ, and all the parts of the body are joined and held together. **Each part does its own work** to make the whole Body grow and be strong with love.*

Ephesians 4:16 (NCV)

**Bethel's Family Is a Body,
Not a Business . . . an Organism,**

**Not an Organization, so We Function by Giftedness,
Not Elected Positions**

Small Groups Are the Cells of Our Church Body

*Just as each of us has one body with many members, and **these members do not all have the same function**, so in Christ we who are many form one Body, and **each member belongs to all the others**. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.*

Romans 12:4–6 (NIV)

*Each one of you is a separate and **necessary part** of it.*

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NLT)

By _____

*Christ gave gifts to the church: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to **equip and train** God's people to do **the work of ministry (service)** which will build up the church.*

Ephesians 4:11–12 (NLT)

**At Bethel's Family, the *Members* Are
the *Ministers* and the Pastors Are the *Administers***

**Currently We Have Over 60 Active
Community Ministries**

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notes

*To the **elders** I say . . . Be **shepherds** of God's **FLOCK**, serving as **overseers** . . .*

1 Peter 5:1–2

Three different terms in the Bible to refer to the *same* church leaders:

- “**POIMEN**” means _____
- “**PRESBUTEROS**” means _____
- “**EPISCOPOS**” means _____

*Paul sent to Ephesus for the **elders** of the church. When they arrived he said to them . . . Keep watch yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**. Be **shepherds** of the church of God . . .*

Acts 20:17–18, 28 (NIV)

3. I will spread the message of my church

*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*

Acts 1:8 (NIV)

My “Jerusalem” _____

My “Judea” _____

My “Samaria” _____ (Local PEACE)

My “End of the World” _____ (Global PEACE)

*I try to find **common ground with everyone** so that I might **bring them to Christ**. I do all this to spread the Good News, and in doing so I enjoy its blessings.*

1 Corinthians 9:22–23 (NLT)

As God's grace brings more and more people to Christ, there will be greater thanksgiving, and God will receive more and more glory. This is why we never give up!

2 Corinthians 4:15–16a (NLT)

4. I will protect the name of my church

By _____

Be sure that you live in a way that brings honor to the Good News of Christ . . . standing strong with one purpose, and working together as one for the faith of the Good News.

Philippians 1:27 (NCV)

You are God's people, so don't let it be said that any of you are immoral or indecent or greedy. Don't use dirty or foolish or filthy words. Instead, say how thankful you are.

Ephesians 5:3-4 (CEV)

By _____

Out of respect for Christ, be courteously reverent to one another.

Ephesians 5:21 (MES)

Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God honor the Emperor.

1 Peter 2:17 (NIV)

notes

*Don't use bad language. Say **only what is good and helpful** to those you are talking to, and what will give them a blessing . . . Stop being mean, bad-tempered, and angry. Quarreling, harsh words, and dislike of others should have no place in your lives. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God has forgiven you because you belong to Christ.*

Ephesians. 4:29, 31–32 (LB)

5. I will support the mission of my church

Global Problems	Jesus' Mission
Spiritual conflict	Promote reconciliation
Self-centered/corrupt leadership	Equip servant leaders
Extreme poverty	Assist the poor
Pandemic diseases	Care for the sick
Illiteracy	Educate the next generation

By _____

Dear brothers and sisters, pray for us. Pray first that the Lord's message will spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes.

2 Thessalonians 3:1 (NLT)

By _____

*Dear friend, you show your faith through whatever you do for other believers . . . **You do well to (financially) support them on their trips.** It proves you belong to God. After all, they went on their trip to serve Christ, and didn't accept any help from the people to whom they went. **So we must support believers who***

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go on trips like this so that we can work together with them in spreading the truth.

3 John 1:5–8 (GW)

Each one of you, on the first day of each week, should set aside a specific sum of money in proportion to what you have earned and use it for the offering.

2 Corinthians 16:2

A tenth of all you produce is the Lord's, and it is holy.

Leviticus 27:30

By _____

Through Christ, all the kindness of God has been poured out upon us . . . and now he is sending us out around the world to tell all people everywhere the great things God has done for them, so that they, too, will believe and obey him."

Romans 1:5 (LB)

notes

The Reason for Everything

*It's in Christ that we find out who we are
and what we are living for. . . . part of the overall purpose
he is working out in everything and everyone.*

Ephesians 1:11–12 (MES)

*Everything, absolutely everything . . . got started in him
and finds its purpose in him.*

Colossians 1:16 (MES)

*For everything comes from God alone.
Everything lives by his power, and everything is for
his glory. To him be glory evermore.*

Romans 11:36 (MES)

class 101

The Reason for Everything

1. Everything Starts with God!

The Lord has made everything for his own purpose.

Proverbs 16:4a (GW)

Everything, absolutely everything . . . got started in him and finds its purpose in him.

Colossians 1:16 (MES)

*For everything comes **from God alone**. Everything lives **by his power**, and everything is **for his glory**. To him be glory evermore.*

Romans 11:36 (LB)

2. God Is _____

*Dear friends, let us love one another, for **love comes from God** . . . Whoever does not love does not know God, because **God is love**.*

1 John 4:7–8 (NIV)

3. God Wanted _____ to Demonstrate His Love.

*When I think of the wisdom and scope of his plan, I fall down on my knees and pray to **the Father of all the great family of God** — some of them already in heaven and some down here on earth.*

Ephesians 3:14–15 (LB)

notes

4. God's Family Is _____!

God's family is the Church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth.

1 Timothy 3:15 (GW)

5. God's Family Will _____, Outlasting Everything Else in Creation.

God has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end.

Ecclesiastes. 3:11 (NLT)

*(We have) **the hope of life forever**, which God promised to us before time began. And God cannot lie.*

Titus 1:2 (NCV)

6. Although God Created Us Last, He Thought of Us _____. He Planned the Universe for His Family.

I am your Creator. You were in my care even before you were born.

Isaiah 44:2 (CEV)

In his goodness he chose to make us his own children by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his choice possession.

James 1:18 (NLT)

7. God Didn't Reveal His Plan Until _____.

*And God gave me the work of telling all people about the plan for his secret, which has been hidden in him since the beginning of time. He is the One who created everything. His purpose was that through the church all the rulers and powers in the heavenly world will now know God's wisdom, which has so many forms. This agrees with the purpose God **had since the beginning of time**, and he carried out his **plan through Christ Jesus our Lord**.*

Ephesians 3:9–11 (NCV)

8. Jesus Makes the Whole Plan _____.

It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for . . . part of the overall purpose he is working out in everything and everyone."

Ephesians 1:11–12 (MES)

Jesus died for us so that we can live with him forever.

1 Thessalonians. 5:10 (NLT)

This is his plan: At the right time God will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth.

Ephesians 1:10 (NLT)

9. The Time is _____.

*All creation is **waiting eagerly for that future day** when God will reveal who his children really are. All creation anticipates the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.*

Romans 8:19, 21 (NLT)

notes

No mere man has ever seen, heard, or even imagined what wonderful things God has prepared for those who love the Lord.

1 Corinthians 2:9 (LB)

10. In the Meantime We Can

We should live in this evil world with self-control, right conduct, and devotion to God, while we look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed.

Titus 2:12–13 (NLT)

God's Five Purposes for Your Life on Earth and Why You Need the Church

1. God Planned Me _____.

You created everything, and it is for your pleasure that they exist and were created.

Revelations 4:11 (NLT)

The LORD takes pleasure in his people.

Psalms 149:4 (GNT)

Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love.

Ephesians 1:4 (MES)

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment."

Matthew 22:37-38 (NIV)

"I don't want your sacrifices—I want your love; I don't want your offerings—I want you to know me."

Hosea 6:6 (LB)

The 1st Purpose of life is:

_____.

The Bible calls this: _____

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notes

Some . . . people have missed the most important thing in life—they don't know God.

1 Timothy 6:21 (LB)

“People who don't know God are always worrying . . .”

Matthew 6:32 (CEV)

2. God Formed Me _____

[God's] unchanging plan has always been to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. And this gave him great pleasure.

Ephesians 1:5 (NLT)

God . . . has given us the privilege of being born again so that we are now members of God's own family.

1 Peter 1:3 (LB)

That family is the church of the living God, the support and foundation of the truth.

1 Timothy 3:15 (NCV)

Love your spiritual family.

1 Peter 2:17 (MES)

The 2nd Purpose of life is: _____

The Bible calls this _____

We belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others.

Romans 12:5 (NLT)

3. God Created Me _____.

From the very beginning God decided that those who came to him—and all along he knew who would—should become like his Son.

Romans 8:29 (LB)

We look at this Son and see God's original purpose in everything created.

Colossians 1:15 (MES)

In your lives you must think and act like Christ Jesus.

Philippians 2:5 (NCV)

As the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more like him.

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NLT)

The 3rd Purpose of life is: _____

The Bible calls this _____

[Some people have] such shallow soil of character that when the emotions wear off and some difficulty arrives, there is nothing to show for it.

Mark 4:17 (MES)

4. God “Shaped” Me _____

You shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb.

Psalms 139:13 (MES)

notes

S _____
H _____
A _____
P _____
E _____

God has made us what we are. In Christ Jesus, God made us to do good works, which God planned in advance for us to live our lives doing.

Ephesians 2:10 (NCV)

The 4th Purpose of life is:

The Bible calls this

5. God Made Me _____

“In the same way that you gave me a mission in the world, I give them a mission in the world.”

John 17:18 (MES)

Through Christ, God has made peace between us and himself, and He gave us the work of telling everyone about the peace we can have with Him . . . So we have been sent to speak for Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:18, 20 (NCV)

The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me — to tell people the Good News about God's grace.

Acts 20:24 (NCV)

Make the most of your chances to tell others the Good News.

Colossians 4:5–6 (LB)

The 5th Purpose of life is: _____

The Bible calls this: _____

THE BIG KEY

I can't fulfill God's purposes _____

Since we are all one body in Christ, we belong to each other, and each of us needs all the others.

Romans 12:5b (NLT)

notes

The Purpose of the Church Is to Help People Fulfill God's Purposes for Their Lives

Having a church family will help me . . .

Center my life around God (**worship**)
Connect with other believers (**fellowship**)
Cultivate spiritual maturity (**discipleship**)
Contribute something back (**my ministry**)
Communicate God's message (**my mission**)

What's Driving Your Life?

This world is fading away, along with everything it craves. But if you do the will of God, you will live forever.

1 John 2:17 (NLT)

God's plans endure forever; his purposes last eternally.

Psalms 33:11 (GN)

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. . . . and you'll recover your life. . . . and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."

Matthew 11:28, 30 (MES)

It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open.

Acts 10:35 (MES)

A Prayer of Purpose

Dear God,

Thank you for creating me and loving me. I want to fulfill the purposes that you created me for. So starting today, I really want to get to know and love and trust you. I want my life to bring you pleasure and I want to become a part of your family. Help me to grow more like Your Son Jesus, and to use my life to follow and serve you. Thank you for sending Jesus to die for me. In the weeks ahead, help me to understand your vision and mission for the rest of my life.

The Great Commandment

“‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart . . . soul and . . . mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Matthew 22:37–40 (NIV)

The Great Commission

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Matthew 28:19–20 (NIV)

Our Motto

A Great Commitment

To the Great _____

And the Great _____

Will Grow a Great Church!

notes

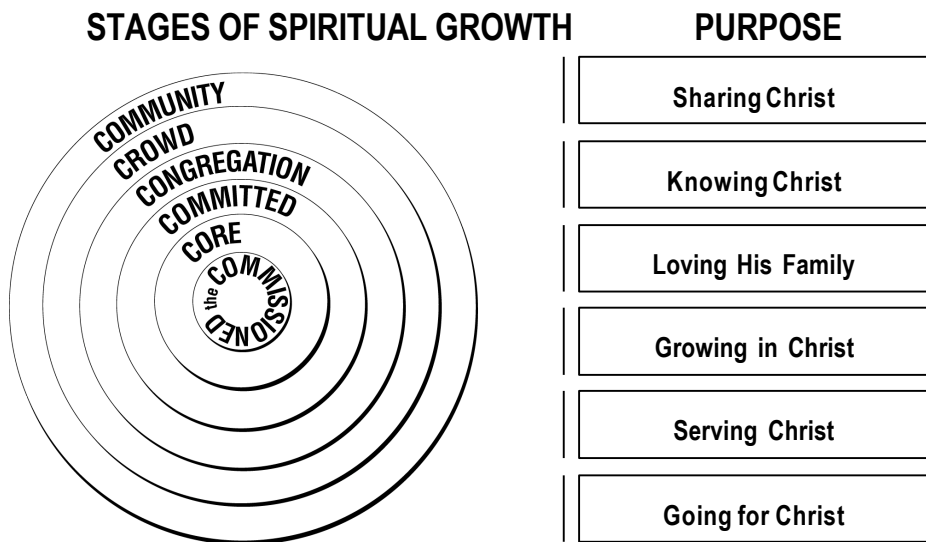
Our Purpose Statement

*To bring people to Jesus and _____ in his
family, develop them to Christ-like _____,
and equip them for their _____ in
the church and their life _____ in the
world, in order to _____ God's Name.*

Bethel's Family Circles of Commitment and Life Development Diamond

Stages of Spiritual Growth

The Bible explains that spiritual growth is a journey. (1) People live at different stages of commitment and spiritual maturity, and (3) we only grow by making commitments. The Purpose Driven strategy moves people from the outer fringe of our church to the center by encouraging personal spiritual growth through a series of classes and covenants.



THE COMMUNITY: Everyone in driving distance

THE CROWD: Weekend worship attenders

THE CONGREGATION: 101 Grads, Members of Bethel's Family

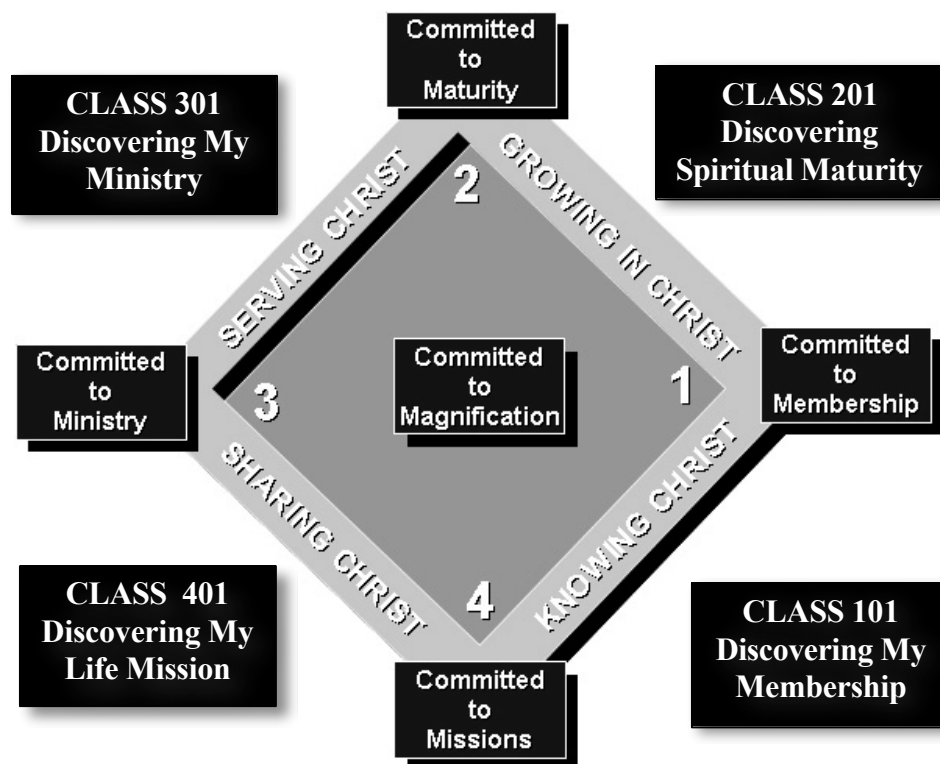
THE COMMITTED: 201 Grads, have signed the Maturity Covenant

THE CORE: 301 Grads, Active in Ministry

THE COMMISSIONED: 401 Grads, have served on a PEACE trip

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notes



Our Faith Statement

In Essential Beliefs — We Have _____

There is one body and one Spirit . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all.

Ephesians 4:4–6 (NIV)

In Nonessential Beliefs — We Allow _____

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. . . . Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. . . . So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God. . . . So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.

Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22 (NIV)

In All Our Beliefs — We Show _____

If I . . . hold in my mind not only all human knowledge but also the very secrets of God, and if I also have that absolute faith which can move mountains, but have no love, I amount to nothing at all.

1 Corinthians 13:2–3 (PH)

The Essentials We Believe

About God

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.

Genesis 1:1, 26, 27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19;
1 Peter 1:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14

About Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate his power over sin and death. He ascended to heaven's glory and will return again someday to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Matthew 1:22, 23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1–5; 14:10–30;
Hebrews 4:14, 15; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Romans 1:3, 4; Acts 1:9–11;
1 Timothy 6:14, 15; Titus 2:13

About The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians, we seek to live under his control daily.

2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7–13; 14:16, 17; Acts 1:8;
1 Corinthians 2:12; 3:16; Ephesians 1:13;
Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18

About the Bible

The Bible is God's Word to us. Human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, wrote it. It is the supreme source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. Because God inspired it, it is the truth without any mixture of error.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Timothy 1:13;
Psalm 119:105, 160; 12:6; Proverbs 30:5

About Human Beings

People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by an attitude of disobedience toward God called "sin." This attitude separates people from God and causes many problems in life.

Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:3–6; Isaiah 53:6;
Romans 3:23; Isaiah 59:1, 2

About Salvation

Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus in faith we are saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith.

Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8, 9; John 14:6; 1:12;
Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1

notes

notes

About Eternal Security

Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot “lose” it. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of God that gives us this security.

John 10:29; 2 Timothy 1:12;
Hebrews 7:25; 10:10, 14; 1 Peter 1:3–5

About Eternity

People were created to exist forever. We will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is hell. To be eternally in union with him is eternal life. Heaven and hell are real places of eternal existence.

John 3:16; John 14:17; Romans 6:23;
Romans 8:17–18; Revelation 20:15; 1 Corinthians
2:7

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notes

Sacrifices

- Volunteers leading 2, then 3, then 4 then 5 services in 1 locations
- People parking wherever in order to attend
- During our No Family Left Behind campaign, 467 families sacrificially gave an average of \$3,800 in addition to their regular tithe in order to purchase land

Miracles

- A last minute gift of \$50,000 from a visitor that came in the day we had to close escrow (which made the deal possible)
- Sold our first piece of property we purchased for \$64,000 dollars for better properties worth over \$15 million dollars today

Lessons and Values that Shaped Bethel's Family

- Keep it simple, practical, portable, reproducible, and flexible!
- We cannot out-give God! God is faithful.
- It takes unselfish people to grow a church.
- Never give up! Keep believing what you can't see.
- Love leaves no choice: As long as one person doesn't know Jesus we must keep reaching out.

The History of the Church at Bethel's Family

1994 - Bethel's Family Baptist Church was organized on January 21, 1994, at Walter & Ruby August's home with 13 people in attendance. On March 6, 1994, the first public worship service was held at the Huntington Place Apartments located at 6300 Dumfries in Southwest Houston. On December 24th the church held its first Birthday Party for Jesus. s. The church closed out 1994 with 90 members. 1995 In February, the church signed a lease at 6162 Willowbend. In April, Brothers Clark Booker & Reginald Jones were appointed as the first deacons of the new church. In June, the church took 28 children and 8 adults to the National Baptist Youth Convention in Mobile, Alabama.

1996 - The church began a program called "The Fun In The Sun" where over 200 children participated in after school and summer activities. Our church helped launch its 1st Church, Green River Baptist Church, and Rev. Ronald Phillips was officially called to organize that church with Bethel's Family blessings.

1997 - Pastor August was called to Sugar Creek Baptist Church in Sugar Land to be their Missions Pastor under the leadership of Dr. Fenton Moorhead. Bethel's Family launched its 2nd Church, Damascus Road Baptist Church, and Rev. David Collins was officially called to organize that church with Bethel's Family blessings.

1998 - In January, the church purchased 1½ acres of land located at 14421 Fonmeadow for \$64,000. In May, Bethel's Family launched its 3rd Church, First Century Christian Church, and Rev. William O. Lumpkin was officially called to organize that church with Bethel's Family blessings. In July, the church sent 60 middle and high school students to Victory Camp in Alvin, Texas. Pastor August participated in a medical and evangelistic mission trip to Kenya, Africa, and thousands were ministered to and many were saved.

1999 - The Baptist Church Loan Corporation approved a loan amount of \$800,000 that allowed Bethel's Family to purchase its current location and complete the construction of the children's educational wing, along with the worship center.

2000 - In January, the church held the first worship service at the new location. The people continued working within the church and within the community. The new worship center was completed in September, and the church celebrated what the mighty Lord had done through a people with a mind to work. And the Lord continued adding to their numbers weekly.

2001 - Bethel's Family sent seven members for 15 days to Kenya, Africa, on their very first mission trip outside the United States. We provided medical supplies, clothing, and shoes to those in need.

2002 - In February, Bethel's Family launched its 4th Church, Kingdom Family Community Church, and Rev. Willie Davis was officially called to organize that church with Bethel's Family blessings. The Baptist Church Loan Corporation approved a loan in the amount of \$540,000 that allowed Bethel's Family to purchase 7 additional acres of property and to construct a badly needed 225 space concrete parking lot.

Pastor August led a missionary team to the Czech Republic, which included staff members from Windsor Village United Methodist Church, Sugar Creek Baptist Church, Love Center Christian Center and 10 members of Bethel's Family.

2003 - Bethel's Family Youth Home-Groups were started, and Rev. Matthew Davis led 122 youth and 38 adults to Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee to minister in various churches and experience the Civil Rights struggles of the past.

2004 - The church developed Life University Classes to continue training and maturing the believers in the faith. The new Children's Ministry Building design was completed later in the year. The church now has over 800 families with an average worship attendance of 1500 people, forty-five different ministry opportunities, nine licensed ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and forty deacons.

2005 - Construction of the Children's Ministry Building and installation of 225 additional parking spaces were started. With over 1200 families attending church regularly with an average Sunday morning worship attendance of approximately 1600 teenagers and adults plus 250 children between the ages of six-months to 11 years.

2006 - Approximately 671 individuals became partners of Bethel's Family, and approximately 170 partners were baptized. The construction of the Children's Ministry building and the additional parking lot was completed, and Bethel's Family Christian Academy (Elementary) a new ministry was formed. The area food pantry and community service center, Heavenly Hands, relocated to a larger facility; and acquired 5 additional acres of land for yet more ministry work.

2007 - Bethel's Family experienced another exciting year of growth. We increased the number of partners in the ministry by 747 and 182 more baptisms. Through our benevolent partnership with Heavenly Hands Food Pantry and Community Service Center, we continued to bless just over 3,200 men, women, boys and girls each and every month. In March, we partnered with Heavenly Hands and Bethel's Place to sponsor several community wide events in support of harpist/composer Jeff Majors' "National Blanket Drive for the Homeless." Bethel's Family collaborated with Bethel's Place and Houston Community College to provide GED classes for approximately 80 students each week. Ministers of Bethel's Family became an active participation in the Police and Clergy Team (PACT) community outreach initiative, and our married couples have participated in the CARES Team program. Through these "pilot" programs, Bethel's Family was able to co-labor with the City of Houston and Apartment Life in building up our community while transforming lives in the process. Bethel's Family Christian Academy received 60 children (ages 4-11) into their 11-week summer educational program which opened on June 4th. Bethel's Family has planted (2) Churches: Faith Covenant Community Church in April, and Bethel's Family Fort Bend in August.

2008 - Bethel's Family experienced a History making year in 08 and by year's end, 1195 new partners joined the church, and 184 baptisms had been done. Over 3300 saints were involved in some level of spiritual growth and community outreach each week. Through our benevolent partnership with Heavenly Hands Food Pantry and Community Service Center,

we blessed just over 3,500 men, women, boys and girls each and every month. As part of our International benevolence outreach in the 1st quarter of 2008, we donated \$12,000 to the "National Association for the Prevention of Starvation" (NAPS) in support of their summer mission trip to Madagascar and Botswana. Bethel's Family Christian Academy enrolled approximately 45 children (ages 4-11) in their summer education and development programs from June 9th through August 11th. On June 19th we purchased 4.46 acres of property at 12660 Sandpiper Street for the future home of the "Bethel's Place Community Outreach and Development Center. On October 6th the Adult Choir "Generation of Praise" competed in the "How Sweet The Sound" Regional Competition in search of the best Gospel Choir in the Nation. The event was sponsored by Verizon Wireless. Generation of Praise walked away with 3 of the 4 Awards.

2009 - Was yet another History making year at Bethel's Family as 1613 people became members of our family, and another 181 were baptized. The Bethel's Family Christian Academy experienced an increased enrollment of 54 children (ages 4-11) in their summer education and development program from June 8th through August 14th. Through our benevolent partnership with Heavenly Hands Food Pantry and Community Service Center, we served just over 6,500 men, women, boys and girls each and every month. The Capital Campaign for building Bethel's Place Community Development and Outreach Center was launched on March 15th. Our Campaign pledges totaled \$1.9 Million. Plans continue to build the 65,000 square feet (\$7.2 Million) Bethel's Place campus and ceremonial ground breaking on December 19, 2009. Our benevolent support of Bethel's Place in 2009 resulted in: Educational assistance to 75 elementary school students each week; quarterly job fairs that average 150 participants; and, Free Tax services that assisted just over 600 families this year. In September, we conducted an interest meeting for our Mission Trip to Kenya, Africa; 6-19 June, 2010. We as one body in Christ, stand ready, willing and able to meet the greater tasks that GOD has called us to accomplish in His name. And, to Him be all the Glory!

2010 - Over 1,840 individuals joined the Body of Christ at Bethel's Family with 250 baptisms. We expanded to five morning services in September. We averaging just over 4,100 saints involved in some level of spiritual growth and community outreach each week. The Bethel's Family Christian Academy launched their first school year in August for children ages 1-4. Heavenly Hands' has expanded its outreach initiatives to include 8 satellite locations, and thereby meeting needs of over 8,000 individuals each month in the Greater Southwest Houston area. Bethel's Place Community Development and Empowerment Center is coming to fruition with the signing of a \$5.78 Million Loan between Bethel's Family and Region's Bank on November 3, 2010. Bethel's Place Community Center's projected completion is slated for September 2011. Bethel's Place family orientated programming has serviced over 5,000 individuals in 2010. Their most significant hallmark is the GED Program that is provided to the community by way of partnership with Houston Community College. Bethel's Place Free Tax services saw 1,341 tax returns being filed resulting in over \$1,034,301.00 in tax refunds returning back to our community. The Young Men Development Initiative, Inc. (YMDI) hit the ground running in January 2010. Attending focusing on educational development, mentorship and training of boy in the community ages 4-18. The Mission Trip to Kenya, Africa; 6-19 June, 2010, was a success for the 92 team members who were able to attend. The Team consisted of 5 Doctors, 18 Nurses, 7 Ordained Ministers, numerous teachers, and a total of 18 different professions. Who were able to

minister to over 8,000 Kenyans. This Kenya Mission trip led to the formation of a 501(c)(3) non-profit for Missions called "Bethel's Global Reach, Inc." November, Bethel's Family formed a partnership with the National Black Chamber of Commerce (NBCC) out of Washington, DC. and designated our church as the model for the first Black Church Chamber of Commerce in the nation. This designation led to the creation of Bethel's Place Black Chamber of Commerce, Inc.; a 501(c)(3) non-profit.

2011 - 2014 individuals have joined and 394 have been baptized. On October 16th we moved into the new 56,000 sq. ft. 2-story Bethel's Place Community Empowerment Center with Bethel's Heavenly Hands, Bethel's Place, Bethel's Global Reach, Bethel's Place Black Chamber of Commerce, Amazing Smiles (Dental), Bethel's Café, Bethel's Copy and Print Business Center, and a host of community amenities ALL under one roof. Heavenly Hands continues to expand its outreach to 9 satellite locations, and continues meeting the needs of over 8,000 individuals each month in the Greater Southwest Houston area; Bethel's Place numerous family orientated programming pieces are picking up where they left off with their most significant hallmark being the well-attended free GED Program; Bethel's Place Bethel's K.I.S.S. (Keeping It Sealed & Saved) did a major outreach to the Kraus Center in Katy, TX where they were able to share the K.I.S.S. purity program for young girls with them; the Young Men Development Initiative, Inc. (YMDI) is in full swing with their fall Basketball season making great use of the Empowerment Centers double-gymnasium, Bethel's Global Reach in partnership with The Buckner Foundation out of Dallas, TX took a group of 40 on Mission to Kenya, Africa; 5-18 June, 2011. The trip included the addition of a dental team from "Amazing Smiles" who were able to provide an array of dental services to thousands of Kenyan people. Bethel's Place Black Chamber of Commerce, Inc. played a key role in the Trade Mission resulting in the formation of a 21 member Kenyan Church Chamber of Commerce coalition. Bethel's Place Black Chamber of Commerce was also recognized by the NBCC as the 2011 "Chamber of the Year" in light of their phenomenal growth and creation of the Empower Magazine in print and electronic format. Bethel's R.S.V.P. and Bethel's Learning Center (Arrow Academy) were established in 2011. R.S.V.P. stands for Reserved, Saved, Validated and Pure Bethel's Arrow Academy opened its doors for the first time this fall to the delight of just over 170 kindergartners to 5th grade students.

2012 - We are blessed to see another wonderful year in the ministry. Since January 1st, we have been blessed with the opportunity to lead 1,343 individuals to a life change in Jesus Christ. 355 members chose to enter the water to be baptized and join our expanding Ministry. The recently opened 56,000 sq.ft. 2-story Bethel's Place Community Empowerment Center continues to be a tremendous blessing to our community. In January, the Women's Ministry (Women of Worship) hosted its first event of the year. Over 900 women attended our annual January Women's Conference and it was a joyful success. Bethel's Family also kicked off this year with attending the Installation Service for Pastor Charles Jones as New Hope Baptist Church in Clute, Texas. Let the people of God Rejoice! In February, we had a Pre-Valentines Marriage Conference; the theme was "Discovering & Achieving Oneness in your Marriage." We had over thirty-five engaged couples and over 100 married couples in attendance. It was a two-day event with plenty of fellowship, laughter & fun. Later in the month, Bethel's Global Reach & Perfect Praise Children's ministry partnered together to present, "The King's Daughter, A Night of Royalty." Over 500 fathers and their daughters

danced the night away at this monumental night of celebration. In March, we celebrated 18 years in the ministry! Our Church anniversary celebration is a time that we set aside to reflect on how far God has brought us, give thanks unto God for where we are now, and most importantly focus on HIS divine, strategic vision for our future together. Adult Sunday School underwent a major transformation to Bethel's Life University. Bethel's Life University offers multiple classes on Monday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday to help fight our daily battles with wisdom and faith. A new ministry made its debut! Bethel's Family introduced College Connect Ministry, which is geared to aid our college students near and far to stay connected to the body of Christ. Bethel's Global Reach also led a team of 20 missionaries to Czech Republic for the cause of evangelizing. While in Prague they witnessed to hundreds of people about Christ, many of which had never heard the message of Christ. In April, we held our Annual family-centered Easter Egg Hunt and Walk-A-Thon on Good Friday at Herman Park to support local and international missions. Once again we were able to bless well over 1,000 children and young families from the community. In May, Bethel's Family non-profits partnered together to host a history making Texas DARS (Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services) Job Transition Fair that led to the employment of many area high school juniors and seniors for summer internships. We also celebrated our seasoned seniors with a Prayer Breakfast, giving them honor through praise dance, mime, stepping, and a fashion show. Houston's Forward Times presented the "Visionary Pastor's Award" to our one and only Pastor Walter August Jr. for his leadership, service and commitment, along with 15 other senior pastors in Houston. In June, Bethel's Global Reach led their annual two-week international mission trip to Kenya, Africa. Again it was an overwhelming success! Thirty-six missionaries journeyed over 20,000 miles round trip to deliver the life changing message of the gospel and service to 1000 Kenyans with Medical, Dental and Social Services. While there our team also demonstrated the Love of Christ by providing "Foot Washing" to well over 300 Kenyans! This year we were also able to provide eyeglasses for elders in the remote villages. As we rejoiced in the safe arrival of our missionaries, our Youth Ministry faithfully sent over a hundred (4th-9th graders) to our annual summer camp experience at Carolina Creek Camp in Huntsville, Texas. In July, 50 of our enthusiastic high schoolers went to Missouri to experience Kids Across America where thousands of young people their age could worship God together and test their faith through adventurous activities. Perfect Praise Children Ministry also grew another level in faith as they began Sunday Services at 9:15 and 11:15. With a focus to build God's children for the future, they desire to instill values that will help them grow spiritually, mentally and emotionally by imparting knowledge of God at a young age from 6 months to 6 grades. In August, Bethel's Christian Academy continued to enjoy at capacity enrollment for the school year. Arrow Academy currently serves 170 students in Kindergarten - 6th grade. We pride ourselves in our blended instructional model which provides each child with their own laptop and incorporates online instruction tailored to our student's individual needs. In September, Women of Worship hosted their annual Women's Retreat, "A Queen's Extravaganza, Finding Favor." Let the Women of God Rejoice! Oak Tree Manor celebrated its 6th year Church Anniversary under Reverend Wooley and his wife. The Church at Bethel's Family celebrated the 1st year anniversary of the building on Sandpiper that is hosting all of these Victories for the Kingdom! In October, The Bethel's Place Black Chamber of Commerce hosted their first ever Convention/Expo and B-Excellent Awards Dinner in which NBA Basketball legend and business entrepreneur Mr. A.C. Green was the Keynote speaker. The Young Men Development Initiative, Inc. (YMDI)

once again organized a highly tauter community wide Youth Basketball League making great use of the Empowerment Center's double-gymnasium. The Bethel's Place Black Chamber of Commerce hosted our Annual Harvest Festival called the MEGA-EVENT. Once again, it was the biggest one yet with over 7,500 people enjoying all the rides, games and food. As in the past, people came from all over Houston, and all experienced a great time of fun, fellowship, excitement and laughter. In November, Bethel's Family Thanksgiving Worship Service celebrated this time to give thanks unto God with Prayer, Praise, Testimonies and Preaching. In December, The Forget-Me-Not Ministry held our Annual Memorial Candle Light Service to remember our loved ones who are in HEAVEN with Prayer, Songs, and Lighting of Candles. For Christmas we celebrated the birth of our Savior Christ Jesus with Worship Songs, Praise, Prayer, and Preaching. Bethel's Family is truly on the battlefield for our Lord and Savior, and we remain willing and able to answer the call for Him in service to our community and beyond. And to Him be all the Glory!

2013 - Bethel's Family has done it again! In 2013, we experienced another exciting year of growth with over 912 new members while baptizing 353 people! Heavenly Hands currently feeds approximately 4,000 people annually, while Blessed Again Resale Shop Ministry has provided clothes for more than 1,300 people. Our benevolent partnership with Community Service Center, iCARE Social Services continues to help the disabled and disadvantaged, while iCAN Beautification Services labored diligently to clean 10 properties in our community. By establishing Place Properties and Management, members of our community are now able to get free help with home ownership and apartment. Bethel's Place Endowment Foundation has received 4 grants over the last years to assist with our efforts in building and empowering the community. Our 2013 Prayer Breakfast brought true excitement to our seniors as we celebrated over 500 legacies of senior adults who have made countless contributions to our society. Bethel's Global Reach had over 50 people who were authorized to carry out the Great Commission on the 2013 Kenya, Africa and Haiti trips. With the Kenya Mission Trip, Bethel's Global Reach was able to serve over 2,000 people, ship 50,000 medical supplies, 40,000 books, more than 100 pairs of glasses and more than 100 pairs of socks and flip flops. In the employment arena, Bethel's Family, and Bethel's Place partnered with the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) in hosting the 2013 High School Transition Job Fair. With an excess of 30 DARS employer vendors, over 150 students from 12 different schools in Houston, and surrounding areas were able to actively seek employment (over 65 students hired). To enhance adult employment, Workforce Solutions and Bethel's Place sponsored two job fairs at Bethel's Place hiring over 55 adults on the spot. A partnership with Goodwill's FEXO Program, which assists women transitioning from jail to the workforce, led to employment for over 20 women at Bethel's Place. 2013 also brought with it our introduction to the Connect College Ministry Mentoring Program. This program is designed to help students keep their spiritual connection to the body of Christ here at Bethel's Family as they attend a college or university. Bethel's Christian Academy educated approximately 50 children during the school year and 75 children during the summer (ages 2-5 years old). Arrow Academy, a school of choice, serves 215 students in Kindergarten - 6th grade. Arrow Academy provides each child with their own laptop and incorporates online instruction tailored for students' individual needs.

We partnered with Bethel's Global Reach Ministry to present the 2013 Father Daughter Dance, Boots & Blessings, with over 400 fathers and daughters. Our Easter 2013 Celebration included an Easter Egg Hunt with over 10,000 Easter eggs and candy hunt for children and a Walk for Jesus "Walk-a-thon" on Good Friday. Bethel's Place Youth Camp had over 310 youths in attendance, including 155 youths from Abbeville, Louisiana. During the camp, 67 youths accepted Christ into their life and were baptized. Approximately 40 youths attended the Kids Across America Summer Camp in Branson, Missouri in July 2013. In the Children Ministry, our Perfect Praise Choir hosted Vacation Bible School 2013 Rocky Point Lighthouse. In August, our partnership with the Texans and Amerigroup allowed us to host the 2013 Back-to-School Fair where we distributed over 5,000 backpacks and school supplies to children. Introduced a new class for the Men at Bethel's Family, "Dare To Be a Man" The Truth Every Man Must Know ...and Every Woman Needs to know about Him. We celebrated 20 years of Ministry in September with Fallbrook Church with keynote speaker Pastor Michael Pender. Bethel's Family First Lady, Ruby August, was honored at Inspire women and the City of Houston at First Methodist Houston. 2013 gave the women of Bethel's Family an opportunity to come together in numerous ways. The WOW (Women of Worship) EXPO entitled "Prayed and Prepared", registering over 40 Vendor booths, was truly a blessed time in the Lord. In October 2013, WOW held a Women's Retreat at Columbia Lakes Resort which gave women the opportunity to renew their vows with Christ and truly become Brides of Christ. WOW first choir rehearsal was open to all of the women of Bethel's Family. We had our Annual Fall Festival in November. The Fall Festival was better than before with over 3,000 people enjoying all the rides, games and food. People came from all over Houston, and a great time of joy, fun and laughter was experienced by all those that came on that day. Our 1st Thanksgiving Dinner served by Wade Smith Foundation who plays for the (Texan football team) came out to feed the hungry and those who had family long distance, so they would not eat by themselves. People came from all over Houston, which gave us the opportunity to feed about 400 people, and we had a great time of joy, laughter and giving thanks. In December, we honored our seniors by having a dinner as we celebrated over 400 of senior adults who have made countless contributions to our society; we served them with gifts and lots of love and hugs. The following week we held Bethel's Family Christmas Banquet, semi-formal attire, featuring Houston's Finest Jazz Ensemble with fine food, we fed about 400 people, and we had a great time. We ended the year with Christmas Service, on Christmas day, and admonished everyone to bring the whole family to church to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior before opening their gifts. We had one service with over 1000 people, who came and celebrated the birth of our Lord.

2014 - The year 2014 has brought a plethora of blessings. In January 2014, we were blessed to see 200 new members added to the body. Approximately 40 new members chose to enter the water to be baptized and join our expanding ministry. For Bethel's Global Reach, the year began with a successful mission trip to Haiti. January 18 -24, 2014 marked the first week of missionary success for 14 mission-minded saints. This trip paved the way for Haiti missions to move to the next level. Women's Ministry kicked off the year with their 2014 Extreme Makeover WOW Edition tour on January 31, 2014. Women of all generations worshipped, prayed, danced, and received an awesome Word from our own Pastor Walter August Jr. It was a celebration like no other and the attendance was outstanding. Broken hearts were mended, heavy hearts were lifted, and stagnated hearts begin to flow.

On February 12th, Bethel's Family celebrated a new church plant in Pearland, TX. Harvest Point Fellowship held its first service on Sunday, February 16, 2014 with approximately 275 attendees and two service times: 8:30AM and 10:00AM. The worship service consists of Praise & Worship, an official welcome, congregational fellowship, and a Bible-based message from Pastor Lawrence Scott. And God continues to add to the body in different ways throughout the land. On Saturday February 8, 2014, our first men's ministry event of the year was held. It was our Father & Son Breakfast. Our theme was Purpose, Prayer, Power, Promises and Possibilities. Over 200 people were in attendance, along with many speakers, including former NFL stars. The breakfast highlighted a young man named Robert Lane who presented Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech "I Have a Dream". The weekend of February 23, 2014, Bethel's Family hosted the Children of the World International Choir. The choir is composed of 14 children from the World Help Child Sponsorship Program and has included children from Nepal, Uganda, Brazil, India, and the Philippines. Through the powerful mediums of song, dance, spoken word, and creative media, the Children of the World choir presented the desperate reality of millions of children who cannot speak for themselves. Members of the Children of the World choir were able to spend valuable time in the homes of Bethel's Family host families. On February 28, 2014 over 200 dads and daughters gathered together for our Annual Father-Daughter Dance. It was a fun-filled night with dancing, desserts, crafts and pictures. This is the time of year where we show girls what it means to be treated like a princess. Mission accomplished! Bethel's Global Reach had its 2nd successful mission trip of the year! 32 mission-minded saints journeyed to The Holy Land for a 10 day experience of a lifetime! The Holy Land mission took them to sacred sites such as Golgotha, The Empty Tomb, The Temple Mount, David's Palace, The Sea of Galilee, and Mount Masada. Everyone on the trip experienced baptism in the Jordan River and so much more! Praise God for His faithfulness!

2015

The Church at Bethel's Family Church marched forward proclaiming the Gospel of Christ as the year 2015 seemed to explode with blessings. The number of members increased by 1095 with 350 of those members being baptized.

Through our benevolent partnership with Heavenly Hands Food Pantry and Community Services Center, we continued to bless 4,500 – 6,000 families monthly with groceries and we distributed 5,000 Thanksgiving baskets. Our partnership with Feed the Children allowed us to serve 1,200 families, and provide 7,000 Christmas baskets throughout the community.

In 2015, Bethel's Global Reach had the opportunity to send missionaries into new territory. Our evangelical travels were expanded to Guatemala, and we continued to serve in Jamaica and Haiti. BGR's missions enabled us to send teams of missionaries to serve in medical capacities and construction, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.

In June 2015, our Annual Prayer Breakfast served 600 people from the community; thereby, allowing us to encourage and fellowship with our community members.

With the occurrence of the Baltimore riots, we had the opportunity to connect with local law enforcement, families, churches, city officials and other community advocates to host our first community summit on July 18, 2015. Our *Empowering Communities Through the Voices of Unity Summit* set the stage for an audience of over 800 people to share our concerns with social unrest and bridge the gap of communication with the community and those who protect and serve. We were able to show our respect and support for one another. We left the summit with an understanding of the vision and the role we play in restoring peace to our communities.

Over 300 youth enjoyed both the spiritual and mental rejuvenation as they journeyed to Carolina Creek Christian Camp in July. As a result, over 40 youth and children gave their lives to Christ and were baptized. After forming a partnership with Bethel's Place Empowerment Center and Houston ISD Homeless Education Office, we hosted the 2015 Back to School Extravaganza in August of this year. Over 1,000 students were blessed with backpacks, tennis shoes, school supplies, and warm wishes for a successful school year.

September 2015 brought with it the opportunity to partner with businesses in the community. As a result, our Young Adult Ministry hosted its first Annual Just Say YES Business Networking Expo. The purpose of the expo was to encourage young adults in the areas of finance, business, investments, and networking.

Our 2015 Fall Festival was an exciting event for the entire family. Over 4,000 people were in attendance to enjoy the music, rides, food, games and giveaways. People from all over Houston showed up in record numbers to experience the fun and the fellowship. Bethel's Family ended the year 2015 by celebrating the birth of Our Savior. An integral part of the celebration was the Angel Tree Program. The Angel Tree program helped adults, children and youth to minister to others with excitement and love. We were able to provide gifts to hundreds of children in need.

2016

Bethel's Family ushered in the year 2016 in prayer. Thus far, Bethel's Family has welcomed 817 members and baptized 293 members. Of those baptized this year, 120 of them have been children.

The women of Bethel's Family began 2016 by celebrating through W.O.W.'s War Strained, Stained & Still Standing. With an intense war cry, over 300 ladies gathered to declare war on the devil and to position themselves in God's War Room.

In February, over 200 couples participated in the Wedding Vow Renewal Ceremony. Each couple received their personal Biblical Wedding Certificate.

March 2016 brought with it an awesome Easter Celebration. Over 400 children participated in the BF Easter Egg Hunt while adults celebrated with the BGR Walkathon, Good Friday Service and the 6:00 AM Easter *SonRise* Service.

In April 2016, emphasis was placed on the development of a stronger connection to our youth. This has led to the re-implementation of our HOME Groups. The HOME Group program has given us the opportunity to mentor over 300 students (from elementary school children to graduating high school students). Through HOME Groups, we provide a safe environment for our youth and children to learn and grow in their Christian walk. The month of April was also highlighted by a Teacher Training Mini Retreat and an additional W.O.W. Women's Conference.

In May 2016, we hosted the Church to Church Conference in order to connect with other churches in Houston and surrounding areas. Providing encouragement and leadership materials we were able create a positive vision of supporting other communities. The month of May also gave Bethel's Family an opportunity to host our first City-wide Prayer Gathering and our 2016 Abbeville Summer Youth Camp (over 100 participants).

Our Annual Prayer Breakfast yielded a record crowd of over 500 people. This year's celebration provided an opportunity for Bethel's Family to honor senior citizens who have made countless contributions to society.

In conjunction with our 2016 Graduates Ceremony, Bethel's Family highlighted our first graduates of Belhaven University. Through our partnership with Belhaven University, many of our community members have advanced their education.

The Bethel's Family Leadership Conference was held in July 2016 where leaders had the opportunity to come together for a time of spiritual cohesiveness and spiritual re-alignment. Bethel's Family also had the opportunity to celebrate our youth in July when 150 students graduated through the purity program pledging a life of righteousness and living pure. In addition to this, approximately 200 youth also attended 2016 Summer Youth Camp at Carolina Creek Christian Camp where over 50 were baptized.

Solidifying another year of partnership with Bethel's Place Empowerment Center and Houston ISD Homeless Education Office, 2016 Back to School Fair took place in August. With a record crowd of over 2,000 adults, youth and children; this year's Back-to-School Fair featured a foot washing ceremony for all tennis shoe recipients. Once again, over 1,500 students received school supplies, backpacks, tennis shoes, and prayers for an academically-successful school year.

In addition to a successful Back-to-School Fair, Bethel's Family in partnership with Bethel's Place provided a wellness opportunity. Rightway Imaging conducted stroke and vascular screenings for BF members and members of the community so that proactive measures could be taken with regard to health and wellness.

September 2016 proved productive for Bethel's Family members. In this vein, X-tended Family Care ministry held its Annual Senior Game Day and over 300 seniors came out to enjoy the festivities. Also, Bethel's Family in partnership with The Rose conducted mammogram screenings for early detection and prevention of breast cancer.

Women of Worship hosted its 2016 *PRAY BIG* Retreat on October 13-15, 2016 at South Shore Harbor Resort. The women of Bethel were able to enjoy a weekend of prayer, fellowship, and true spiritual anointing from God.

On October 31st, Bethel's Family, Bethel's Heavenly Hands and Bethel's Place came together to host our 2016 Fall Festival. This family-oriented celebration was designed to prevent children from going door-to-door for Halloween. We were blessed to have approximately 5,000 people in attendance to enjoy the food, entertainment, rides, giveaways, music, games, and fellowship.

The year 2016 ended with a holiday celebration for children. On December 17th, we hosted our First Annual Winter Wonderland. We were able to serve over 500 underserved children and children of incarcerated parents. Children and adults enjoyed the festivities.

Bethel's Global Reach continued to venture into new lands. Our mission teams have served in Belize, El Salvador, Haiti, and Angola, Africa.

2017

The Church at Bethel's Family welcomed in the year 2017 on our knees in prayer. Over 2500 people gathered for the Watch Care Meeting for Bethel's Family and many souls were saved.

In February 2017, Bethel's Family held a two-day Singles' Conference which afforded singles across various generations to fellowship together, to bask in God's blessing of singleness and to pray for continued blessings upon their lives. Likewise, the Men's Ministry celebrated in a godly way God's goodness, grace and mercy with over 300 men in attendance at their quarterly eMen's Fellowship.

In April 2017, Easter was celebrated in a mighty way. Bethel's Global Reach kicked off the Easter Celebration with its Annual Walk-a-thon and Good Friday Service with over 1500 worshippers. During the month of June, Bethel's Family and over 500 attendees paid tribute to its senior citizens who have made countless contributions to society at its 2017 Annual Prayer Breakfast. The July 2017 Women of Worship Conference provided an opportunity for approximately 400 women to break down barriers and serve God in spite of their circumstances.

August 2017 ushered in a different type of service. The 2017 Back-to-School Fair afforded Bethel's Family, Bethel's Place and HISD an opportunity to serve approximately 1,000 students in the community with backpacks, school supplies and tennis shoes. However, our efforts were thwarted by the onset of Hurricane Harvey. Hurricane Harvey devastated the city of Houston and surrounding communities on August 25, 2017. The gale force winds ripped the roofs off of homes, uprooted trees and brought down power lines. While some members of the community were blessed to have their homes and personal property spared, thousands suffered crippling losses from the storm. In many instances, lives were lost, property was destroyed and many families and individuals are presently displaced. In an attempt to address Harvey's devastation, Bethel's Family, Bethel's Place, and Bethel's Heavenly Hands collaborated hurricane relief efforts with the city of Houston by setting up a distribution site for hurricane victims to receive emergency supplies. Our five day weekly efforts continued through December 2017. For the 113,000 residents in the Greater Fondren SW Community, we offered a plethora of interventions/assistance. The interventions are and were inclusive of, but not limited to daily distribution of the following items clothing, bedding, linens, towels, pillows, cleaning products, yard items, pet food, fruit, vegetables, produce, juice/beverages, diapers, pull-ups, toys, hot lunch, educational items for school aged children, etc.

On October 31st, Bethel's Family, Bethel's Heavenly Hands and Bethel's Place hosted its 2017 Fall Festival. Designed to prevent children from going door-to-door for Halloween, this family-oriented celebration blessed approximately 6,000 people with food, entertainment, rides, giveaways, music, games, and fellowship.

The year 2017 was brought to a close with our 2nd Annual Winter Wonderland for children. On December 16th, we served over 600 underserved children with the support of parents, sponsors, mentors, and area businesses.

2018

The Church at Bethel's Family brought in 2018 with a blast of praise and worship. Believers came in droves to thank God in advance for the miracles and blessings that 2018 will bring. Bethel's Family began the year by requesting that leaders in Houston area church re-align their life's work to the kingdom of God. Over 500 church leaders came together on January 27th at the Church2Church Conference for a time of assessment and alignment with God's Holy Word.

As 2018 progressed, Pastor August's vision for a \$1.5 million prayer trail and pavilion began to unfold. His vision came to fruition as Bethel's Birthplace of Faith. As Bethel's Family is a Christian institution firmly rooted in God's Word, it is only fitting to construct a representative of God's Kingdom. This prayer trail is not just a paved walking path at your disposal on a brisk morning, it is a spiritual journey. A walk through the Birthplace of Faith will bring a serenading of sweet music along a 3/4 mile walking trail. There are 66 stones, each bearing a name of a book of the Bible. The Birthplace of Faith trip will take you from Genesis to Revelation, bringing your mind to God, the Alpha and Omega. As you journey and find yourself in need of a rest, you will have the pleasure of sitting on one of many scripture-engraved benches. It's only right - as we not only walk in the Word, but we meditate *on* it! The Birthplace of Faith allows you to commune with God while reflecting and gazing upon the beauty of landscaped flowers and trees.

The completion of the Birthplace of Faith was timed to God's specification. Its completion allowed Bethel's Global Reach to hold its 2018 Good Friday Walk-a-thon on March 30th. Good Friday Worship Services were held on the evening of March 30th with approximately 1000 in attendance. On March 31st, over 500 children and youth came together for a time of fellowship and the 2018 Annual Easter Egg Hunt.

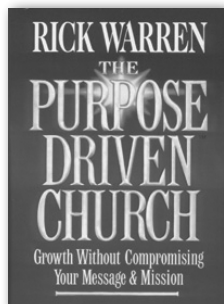
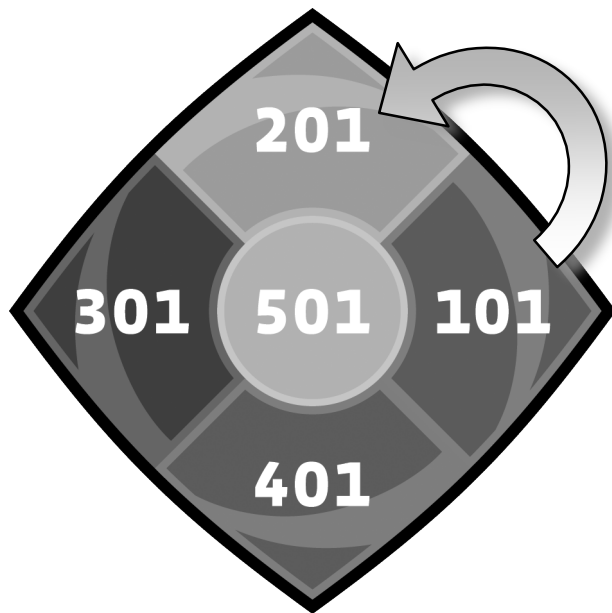
Bethel's Family continues to reach record numbers as we host events such as the 2018 Spring Tea with 500 attendees and the 2018 Annual Prayer Breakfast with approximately 625 attendees. We embraced others as they embrace God's vision and as they sow into God's kingdom.

The Church at Bethel's Family is committed to sharing the Gospel and serving with an open hand and heart. God continues to bless us in abundant measure. And for us, the best is still yet to come!!

Your Next Step

Completing All Five Purpose Driven Life Discovery Classes

Take Class 201:
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We've just barely scratched the surface of all that goes on at Bethel's Family Church. For a complete understanding of our history and our strategy go to our web-site.
www.bethelsfamily.org

notes

