



2020



PRAISE REPORT
Cottonwood Creek Church
January - December 2020



Dearest Church Family,

What a year it's been. As we leave 2020 behind, I want to leave you with these words: God is always good.

No one could've expected the year we've had. Despite everything we faced, God was at work at Cottonwood Creek in 2020. As I watched seemingly terrible events unfold in our country and our community, I saw God use everything for His glory. I saw our community come together to care for each other. I saw God-given talents shine through our staff and volunteers. I saw God's blessings so clearly that I leave 2020 astonished by God's love for us.

I want to tell you how grateful I am that God has gifted Cottonwood Creek with such an amazing, devoted church family. As you look through this booklet and read the stories that encapsulate 2020 at Cottonwood Creek, I hope you are able to share in my feelings of thankfulness and excitement for what God has done for us, as well as what God will continue to do for us in 2021.

I pray that you and your family leave 2020 with a sense of tranquil joy and begin 2021 with a faithful hope for the new year.

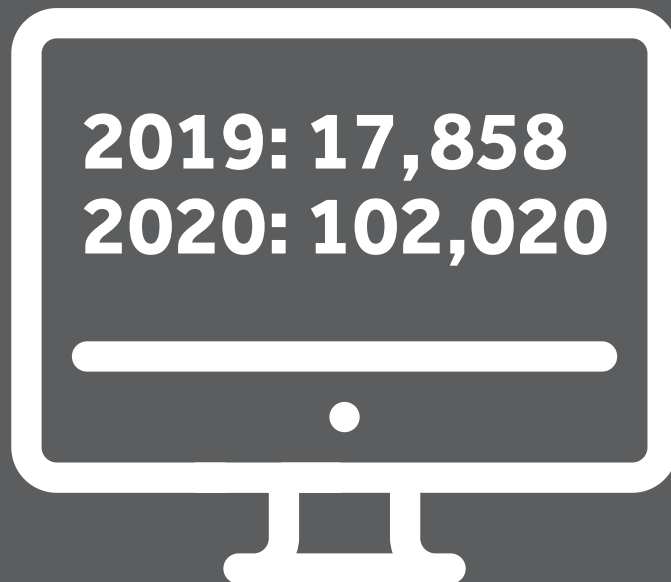
Your pastor,
John Mark

IT'S BEEN A GREAT YEAR



***1,000 KIDS
REGISTERED FOR VBS***

CONNECTED DEVICES



***23 NEW LIFE
GROUPS STARTED***



***TOTAL
BAPTISMS***



***1,500+ STUDENTS
ATTENDED DNOW***



\$64,312.48

***COLLECTED TO DISTRIBUTE
TO LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES***

COVID-19 RESPONSE

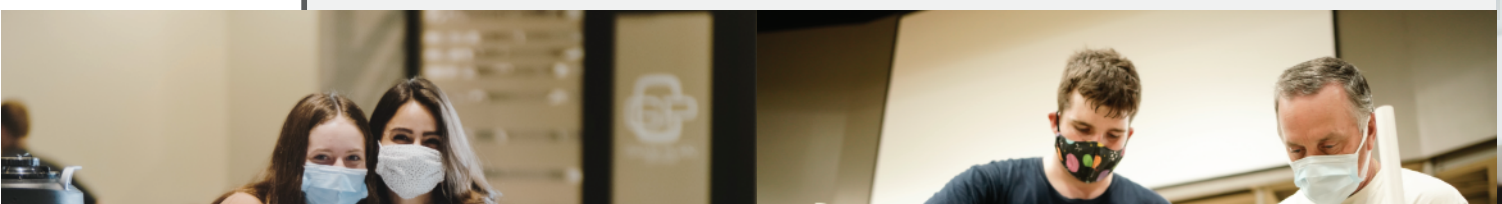
One of the biggest events that the world witnessed in 2020 was the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted our nation, our state and our community. During the midst of this trying time, we were able to come together to place the safety and health of our members at the forefront of our concern.

Based on CDC recommendations, Cottonwood Creek adopted an approved sanitation method, which is frequently used by hospitals and medical centers to combat the spread of COVID-19.

Social distancing guidelines were implemented, which allowed people to come to church in-person, but also remain a safe distance from others.

Cottonwood Creek created a completely new online campus for those watching worship services from home.

As the COVID-19 Pandemic hit, many were left in search of jobs. In response to this sudden unemployment spike, we created our job board, Cottonwood Creek Job Connection. This board was birthed out of our Pastor's experience with the stress and toll joblessness takes on a person or family.





Additionally, **Cottonwood Creek held a free headshot event to allow anyone to receive free, professional portraits to use for job applications.** “An updated, professionally captured headshot can be the difference-maker for an employer to consider giving your resume or job application further consideration. A properly captured headshot presents you as professional, prepared, and personable,” said Fred Mahusay, professional photographer.

When the pandemic hit, Cottonwood Creek was quick to respond to needs as they revealed themselves. Made up of nearly 100 volunteers, the **Community Outreach Team’s** focus started with our seniors and expanded out to the community. “They started out as a volunteer team to help with the COVID-19 pandemic, which morphed into a team that now helps the church meet the needs of individuals in the community,” said Justin Hillhouse.

“I am so thankful for Cottonwood Creek and the opportunity they’ve given me to connect and worship virtually during COVID-19.” — **MEMBER AT COTTONWOOD CREEK**

CAMPUS UPDATES

DENISON CAMPUS

At our Denison campus, we are so excited to continue to grow God's kingdom with the new lead pastor, Jeston Katebe. Both he and wife, Dr. Charity Katebe, have been enthusiastically involved members of Cottonwood Creek for the past year. Originally from Zambia, Pastor Katebe has been sharing the gospel for over 30 years.

KOREAN CAMPUS

Led by Pastor Soungho Chun, the Cottonwood Creek Korean Campus is taking great strides to develop fruitful fellowship and worship. Meeting in Allen each Sunday, this church-plant has the goal of bringing the joy of knowing God to all.



ALLEN CAMPUS

This year at the Allen campus we began the two-fold campaign, Onward.

Onward sought to raise funds to improve both our **online and on-campus** equipment and services.

Through the faithfulness of God and the generosity of our church family, we were able to raise over \$780,000. These funds will support:

- Updated lighting in the Worship Center
- Development of a new church-wide website and app
- Higher quality streaming for worship services
- Expanded parking for members and new guests
- Modern video-recording equipment



THE MISSION CONTINUES

As the pandemic hit, Cottonwood Creek geared up to continue discovering new ways to share the Gospel. Here is a glimpse of what God has done through our body in 2020.

NTX Foodbank

The NTX Foodbank, a longtime Cottonwood Creek partner charity, was a focus-area for missions in 2020. Over the past year, we were able to host food-collection events on campus at Cottonwood Creek, in addition to donating **\$10,000 and 8,000 lbs.** of peanut butter. Additionally, Cottonwood Creek staff spent time packing meals on-location at NTX Foodbank, which contributed to the 96.9 million meals delivered annually by the organization.

The Gift 2020

Generosity was abundant during The Gift 2020. During a year of hardship and loss, Cottonwood Creek still came together to serve their community.

- **Operation Christmas Child:** 315+ cartons containing 4,900 boxes were collected. Operation Christmas Child, a staple for Cottonwood Creek Christmas missions each year, is a program of Samaritan Purse, which brings both Christmas gifts and the gospel to children in need all over the world.
- **Carter Blood Care:** 29 Donors = 40 units collected which has the potential to impact 120 patients in our community!
- **Pink Heart Funds Hair Donations:** 38 ponytails donated to create wigs for cancer patients.



- **Angel Tree:** 161 children were adopted among 47 Cottonwood Creek Life Groups and individuals. Angel Tree, a program that helps provide Christmas presents to local children in need, is an effort that Cottonwood Creek is ecstatic to support.
- **Meal Packing:** 460 volunteers packed 108,000 meals, to be delivered to Naomi's Village.
- **Naomi's Village Christmas:** Hundreds of Christmas cards decorated and written to the children at Naomi's Village.
- **Operation Care Coat Drive:** 60 coats were donated.

**"Early Risers Life Group gave me the privilege of organizing the Angel Tree adoption for our class. Our class was so generous that we were able to shop for two families."
— Connie Rachow**

Baptisms

We had 143 baptisms this year, and only 23 of the 143 were before the pandemic. Baptisms looked different in the face of COVID-19 as well, but as always, we found a way to make it work. We modified to start holding outdoor baptisms, which were an extreme success!

"For this is how God loved the world: He gave His one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. — John 3:16

Fun with the Son

Fun With The Son is Cottonwood Creek's annual Missions event to provide FREE school supplies, fun and services for families who are struggling financially.

Although we were unable to hold our usual carnival-like event due to COVID-19 restrictions, we were able to do other FWTS Activities planned to get school supplies and the gospel to the families, while following social distancing guidelines!



“FWTS Delivery Teams delivered school supply bags to families doorsteps who were English-speaking and partnered with Iglesia del Nazareno Renovacion, in downtown McKinney, to create a drive-thru school supply pickup for those who spoke Spanish. This partnership provided the translators we needed and those families who wanted prayer were able to pull into a parking space for a private, social distanced prayer meeting.” — Stephanie Ott



Dominican Republic Mission Trip

In a year with very little travel, Cottonwood Creek students were able to go on mission to the Dominican Republic, only weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic put an end to international flights. These students brought the love of God to the Dominican Republic, and through their efforts they saw dozens of people confess salvation.



“We took 25 people to the Dominican Republic in March, right before the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. We were able to share the gospel in local schools, pack and distribute school supplies, and food supplies.” — Chase Durham

RESOURCES

Cottonwood Creek TV

With the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, CottonwoodCreek.TV provided a platform where anyone watching from home could enjoy worship on-demand, interact with pastors and ask for prayer.

Daily Devotions

Throughout the year, we were able to provide daily reading plans with scripture and devotionals that coincided with worship messages. Through our texting system, we had 2,293 people subscribe for our daily devotionals.

Podcasts

As we moved through various sermon topics, we were able to launch a podcast. With 1,512 streams, this new media allowed us to sit down with pastors for real conversations, some of which answered hard questions, and some of which were good for a laugh.

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

As you read through the following featured moments, you'll catch a glance of God's goodness in Cottonwood Creek's ministries.

Care Groups

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Cancer Care, Celebrate Recovery, DivorceCare, Grace Groups and GriefShare groups offered **online meeting options** through Zoom.

Although many groups did transition to a virtual meeting space, participants and leaders still felt that the fellowship and support experienced was amazing.

"I absolutely love that the church has a curriculum to help believers walk through emotional struggles."

– **Grace Group Participant**

I continue to grow through Celebrate Recovery and am becoming the child of God He created me to be. I seek to follow what He has called me to do." – **Celebrate Recovery Participant**

"The caring, encouragement and support I encountered in the group was a balm to my deeply grieving soul."

– **GriefShare Participant**

LifeGroups

Lifegroups, communities that enjoy fellowshiping and supporting each other in the name of God, continued to meet and encourage each other throughout 2020.



"In 2013, my family, along with some neighbors, decided to start a life group at home. Being a part of a life group has been instrumental in continuing to grow in our faith."

— **Josh Bolton**

Creek Worship

Nights of Worship: Several times over the course of 2020, our Cottonwood Creek family gathered together to praise God and fellowship together. With amazing worship led by Bridgette Hammers and Creek Worship, every Night of Worship led all in attendance to turn their eyes upon Jesus and enjoy being present. Attendees were able to join us in-person or online for these events.

Men's Ministry

The Men's Ministry at Cottonwood Creek provides tangible steps to help men walk with God in every aspect of their lives.

Men's Winter Retreat brought attendees to Breckenridge, CO, where they enjoyed God's handiwork through majestic mountain scenery and dove deeper into God's Word.

Pastor's Tuesday Morning Bible Study, as well as **Men's Breakfasts** throughout 2020 provided morning motivation through fellowship and study of the Bible.

Iron Men of God continued to put into practice "iron sharpening iron" through encouragement and accountability.

Children

One Way Class: 33 attended One Way class with 30 baptisms in 2020.

Gobble Gathering: Although Thanksgiving looked different this year, we were still so excited to spread thankfulness with our Creek Kids!

VBS At Home: Even though the COVID-19 Pandemic forced us to host VBS online, Creek Kids still came out in full force! This was a year of joy, laughter, and God's grace, all through computer screens!

- 1,000 kids registered
- 240 new families
- 25 unchurched
- 530 visits to our VBS webpage each day
- \$1,800 raised for FWTS
- 2 reported decisions to Receive Christ!
- Families reported watching in various states and even in Australia!

Students

Huddle Groups: Because of the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, we made it a goal to get every student into a weekday small group in a safe and secure way.

DNOW: We saw the largest DNOW in church history! We had 17 churches attend, 1,500 students, and 500+ of those students were from Cottonwood Creek.

GoLocal: Students were unable to do an in-person local mission trip due to the COVID-19 pandemic, so we created an online mission experience.

This year Jonathan Davis, Assistant Student Minister at Cottonwood Creek, started 4 distinct, youth-based bands that plan to release a song this year!



Ministry Academy

In the spring we had 20 graduate from Ministry Academy. This fall, thanks to technology we were able to see 60+ people commit to our year long discipleship program going over the story of scripture and teaching biblical theology.

Marriage Ministry

The Cottonwood Creek Marriage Ministry exists to instill the sanctity and importance of marriage by equipping couples with the knowledge of God's Word and its application.

Women's Ministry

During 2020, 15 different opportunities were offered for ladies to connect with a Bible Study. **Mirror Image** taught participants how to discern traits of Jesus within themselves, as well as how to separate God's truth from the lies of this world. Although it was cut short by the COVID-19 pandemic, **Fresh Spirit for Moms**, a bi-monthly fellowship event, provided hope and light to moms in early 2020.

Breathe: A unifying night of worship for women of all ages, was held in January 2020.

ReVision: A women's weekend conference, provided an opportunity to shake off the fog and revitalize mindsets to focus on God.



2020