

BECAUSE OF
**WHAT
HAPPENS
HERE...**



Canyon Ridge Christian Church | 2023



A Message From Pastor Drew

Hey Everyone!

What a year 2023 has been! Let's take a moment together to reflect and celebrate what God has done in the last year. It's because of the incredible generosity of so many of you that we've witnessed such amazing things. **In fact, 1,200 of you receiving this letter took the leap into partnering in generosity for the first time, becoming contributors and not just recipients.**

God does so much good in us when we give, and it's right for us to look at and celebrate what he's done in us together. We had the chance to celebrate our 30th birthday as a church! **30 years as a church** is an amazing legacy here in our city! But even more incredible, **we celebrated with almost 600 people who got baptized**, saying, "I never want a moment without Jesus," and committing their lives to follow His direction. What a gift! What's even more amazing is that most of them were baptized by their friends or family.

New faces are arriving at Canyon Ridge, as **attendance increased 27% this year!** This made it possible for **462 new faces** to jump into Discover Canyon Ridge and get equipped to be disciples AND to make disciples. Additionally, **384 of you jumped into groups for the first time**, gathering in community, supporting and encouraging one another to discover God's voice, share it with their people, and obey it in costly ways.

How could I forget Summer Camps? **Over 650 kids, students, and volunteers had the privilege of experiencing camp this summer.** What makes it even better is that 136 of them went with the help of scholarships, thanks to the people of our church who **raised an additional \$75,000** so that no family would have money be the barrier between their child and camp.

There were some projects you probably didn't notice but were so important. We resurfaced buildings to ensure they are secure, safe, and well cared for. We updated our fire alarm system to leave no room for doubt about your safety. These projects may not be as flashy, but they're so important in stewarding the resources that we have here really well.

Our budget year wrapped up at the end of August, and we celebrated having given together beyond what was initially budgeted! This kind of giving allows us to give more and more away. In fact, this past year, we donated over a quarter of a million dollars to other disciple-making ministries here in Las Vegas, across our nation, and around the world.

As we step into the holiday season, it's the perfect time to look back, reflect, celebrate, and enjoy all that God has accomplished in us and through us. **Because of what happens here**, lives are being changed all over the world! And it's all because we partner together in generosity! On behalf of all of us who have received the blessings of Canyon Ridge, I want to say a resounding thank you. 🙏



DID YOU KNOW?

If you made a gift similar to what the average American spends on gifts for loved ones at Christmas, here is how your \$263.50* contribution would have an impact...

- \$23.72** - Help people take next steps toward Jesus
- \$73.78** - Create meaningful worship experiences
- \$55.34** - Care for and create disciples locally & globally
- \$50.01** - Help kids and students discover God
- \$31.62** - Cultivate a disciple-making movement
- \$28.99** - Connect new people to Canyon Ridge



*<https://www.creditcards.com/statistics/holiday-debt-poll/#methodology>

BAILEE: A KID'S BAPTISM STORY

Two years ago, Bailee had a stirring curiosity about baptism, telling her mom, Danielle, **“I know what it means to walk with God.”**

It was at that point that Danielle suggested they sign up for the Kids Baptism Class.

“We answered questions, and it wasn't me answering; it was her answering the questions of why she wanted, and what she thought it meant.”



The Kids Baptism Class is a space where parents and guardians are empowered to help their kids make the right next step in their faith journey. Here, kids have an opportunity to discover what it means to believe and follow Jesus. Parents are encouraged to be the primary disciple-maker in their kids' life, modeling what it looks like to take steps in Jesus' direction. Listening well is the priority for their parents, ensuring kids truly know what it means to be baptized before taking that step.


During the class, there's an intentional portion for kids to think through who they can invite to celebrate their baptism with them. As soon as class was over, Bailee texted and called all her friends and invited them to come witness and cheer her on as she took her next step in Jesus' direction.

Three of her close friends, Zoe, Isabella, and Myla showed up for her baptism. Danielle says, *"She was so excited to learn a little bit more that it wasn't just about her accepting God in her heart, but it was also letting people know. [She's excited to] help spread the Word, to help do her [part] in showing everybody what it really does mean to be a follower of God. It's not just about your relationship, it's about getting other people involved too."*

In 2023, over 100 kids attended a baptism class, taking the next step in their journey of becoming a disciple. Each of those kids is experiencing the transformation that can only come through Jesus.

Bailee's transformation story is,

"When I wasn't baptized, I felt very sad and not happy. Then, when I was baptized, I felt like Jesus was always there, and I know he would be there."

Do you have a story like that? 



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2023, **584 people were baptized** at Canyon Ridge! An average gift would provide the resources for **24 baptism packets** to help people celebrate well and continue taking their next steps toward Jesus.

LATASHA'S STORY:

FROM SERVING HOURS TO SERVING OTHERS

Latasha grew up in a home environment that felt unstable—from moving homes and schools to witnessing her parents drinking and gambling around her as a young child.

Eventually, after becoming a mother herself, she began drinking and gambling as well, eventually landing her family in survival mode, living day-to-day and paycheck-to-paycheck. **“I [had] just seen this pattern.”** What Latasha had grown up with was now the reality for her kids.

A few years ago, the dysfunctional cycle caught up with Latasha. **“I ended up getting in trouble with the law, tickets, and things like that; I even caught a DUI years ago. That’s what led me to have to do community service.”** At this pivotal point in her life, Latasha had to choose a place to complete mandated community service hours. Seeing Canyon Ridge Christian Church on the list of options, she gravitated toward it. **“There [are] other places that you’re able to go to, but I feel like this was a sign from God...just for me to try to get myself together, and I did.”**

While faithfully completing her service hours, Latasha began cultivating relationships with people at Canyon Ridge. As she opened up and relationships developed, her life began to change. She learned the power of sharing her story. Two of those new friendships were with Eleina and Lorrishamae. Their curiosity about her life experiences and relationship with God was new for Latasha.

“I was very embarrassed to share about struggling with alcohol and how I grew up, but I’m thankful to other people sharing their stories. It’s like I’m not alone.”



Because of What Happens Here

Latasha's life change was so evident during this time, and she eventually landed a job offer for a facilities position at Canyon Ridge. *"And I thought, 'What better place would be for me?' because if I didn't become employed at Canyon Ridge, I don't know where I would've been, or gone, or decisions I would've [chosen]."* As timely as this opportunity was, God had even more in mind for her.

As facilities coordinator at Canyon Ridge, Latasha now works with those serving community service hours at the church. With her unique, shared experience, she is able to *"help others just the same way as people who have shared their story have helped me."*

What's the story she tells?

"Before Christ, I was someone very distant, non-existent. I was lifeless. And with Jesus, I've felt much lighter, now with all these burdens that I've carried. I don't feel shy or embarrassed to share my story. I feel just full of life, and I'm enjoying it at that. Do you have a story like that?"

On May 30th, Eleina and Lorrishamae baptized Latasha, surrounded by her coworkers, parents, kids, and friends. Life isn't perfect, and the journey's never finished, but she keeps taking steps in Jesus' direction. From spending years in a deep depression, only wanting to drink or gamble, she is now experiencing a deep joy and purpose, embracing her unique transformation story. *"It just showed me that no matter where I was in life, that God was still with me, that he still loved me and cared, and he wanted the best for me."* 🏠



DID YOU KNOW?

In 2023, **Canyon Ridge** invested **\$550,000** in campus repairs, upgrades, and remodels to make space for the **27% increase in attendance**. Because of what happens here, **lives like Latasha's are being transformed here in Las Vegas and all over the world.**

Because of What Happens Here

US VETS:

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

For the last 15 years, a team of volunteers from Canyon Ridge has partnered together to serve meals to U.S. veterans in Las Vegas. Right before the pandemic hit, Anthony was approached with the opportunity to lead the team. ***“I didn’t know what I was getting myself into—I just knew I was a vet, so I wanted an opportunity to serve other vets.”*** Anthony has valued investing in this community, and getting to know the diverse group gathered to serve: some vets, some the children of vets, and some who simply want to help those who have served our country.




MEET THE TEAM



Mariz's "heart is always for the vets." Her daughter served in the military for eight years, and her husband served for 20 years. Having moved around so often, Mariz found it difficult to be a part of something consistently. When her husband retired in 2021, she fully stepped into being a part of the local church and community. After she heard about the U.S. Vets group, she immediately started volunteering. *"I told myself, 'This is what my calling is, and I want to serve the vets and bring more people with me.'"* At Mariz's invitation, her women's group is now committed to serving with her!

Blessing is one of those who came with Mariz! She first encountered the women's group thanks to Mariz, before making her way to serve the U.S. Vets. *"When I first came here, I was 20 years old with a two-year-old, completely alone."* After connecting with Mariz, a new partnership formed with a common purpose. Ever since then, she's been volunteering and cultivating meaningful friendships! As someone who is currently on active duty and has family members who have served, she says, *"U.S. Vets is really important to me... giving back is the least I can do."*

Bill and Joyce Hawkins have been serving U.S. Vets for years. *"I've been feeding the vets down here for about 15 years or so with a bunch of different people. They come, and they go—[both] the veterans and volunteers. And we enjoy doing it; that's why we're back."* Although Bill and Joyce have never served in the military, this is the way they give back, and they truly enjoy doing it alongside others. They are witness to the many stories that have emerged simply because of their faithfulness to the group.

The hours spent praying, preparing, serving, and sharing meals with vets help create a space for meaningful connection. As Anthony puts it: *"We might be the only Jesus they see."* 



To join the Local Outreach Team and serve your community, visit canyonridge.org/volunteer.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2023, the people of Canyon Ridge went above and beyond by donating **1,080 backpacks** for local foster families and **1,479 food bags** to provide a Thanksgiving meal to friends and neighbors in need.

JOSH & JANETH TAKING STEPS

Joshua and Janeth Heath came to Canyon Ridge in 2017. At the time, Josh was battling depression and anxiety, and through his journey of mental and spiritual unhealth, he asked himself, “**Why don’t I get back to God?**” As Josh began trying out church again, he found himself wanting to be a part of what God was up to—volunteering wherever he could, learning as much as he could, and partnering with whomever he could.



Because of What Happens Here




Some of their first steps in this direction came earlier in 2023, Josh and Janeth really began exploring life in partnership with God and his people. They reached out to people they can continue to partner with and learn alongside and found so many who were instrumental in their lives. Everett helped Josh launch his own Bible study. Blake partnered with Josh in leading sophomore boys in high school ministry and table hosting at Discover Canyon Ridge. In September, Blake baptized Josh, who then baptized three of their high school students. Long-time missionaries Russell and Sydney Bridges mentored Josh and Janeth, along with Allen, on a missions trip to Thailand to serve missionary families there.



Janeth took a next step to start conversations about what God's doing in her life. She began a small business, making custom tumblers with designs of the different tools practiced around Canyon Ridge—like the 3-Circle Gospel, the Healthy Church circle, and the 15-second transformation story tool. ***“It’s a conversation starter if someone sees it.”*** For Janeth, sharing the Gospel has been challenging, ***“but the more you learn how simple these tools really are, they’re very easy to share; it’s as you go—you’re a disciple-maker as you go to your workplace, the grocery store, things you’re already doing in your life.”***

Bigger steps are yet to come, but the pieces are coming together in a beautiful way for Josh and Janeth. On a recent trip to the Philippines, where Janeth was born, God continued to stir their hearts for missions. As they came back to Las Vegas and began to debrief and reflect meaningfully with Blake, Allen, and others, they realized that the tools they were learning and being equipped with at Canyon Ridge are the tools that could help multiply disciples in the Philippines. ***“We want to go back and teach tools that we’ve been taught.”***

Josh and Janeth's life goal used to be to work hard, save money, and retire early. After their experience of partnering with God and his people, their purpose together is now going in a new direction. ***“I think we’re called to do more than that, and what an adventure it would be.”*** Because of the real, tangible partnership that Josh and Janeth have experienced in Las Vegas and beyond, they have found that ***“there’s true joy and relationship and love with the Lord and others who are serving him that’s waiting for you if you just take that step; he has good in mind for you.”*** 

DID YOU KNOW?

“Discover Canyon Ridge” equips people with simple tools to be and make disciples. Just one gift similar to what the average American spends on each loved one is enough to **print training books for all 462 people** who went through “Discover Canyon Ridge” in 2023.

SHARING STORIES IN UGANDA AND BEYOND GABI'S STORY

Because of What Happens Here

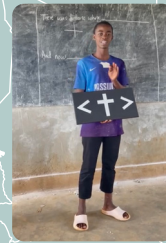
“Before Jesus,
I was _____.”

Now with Jesus,
I’m _____.”

Gabi first heard this simple 15-second transformation story format at Canyon Ridge Easter services in 2022. Since then, it's become a simple, shareable, and repeatable practice for disciple-making for her. **“One day, I read others’ transformation stories, and it intrigued me to figure out what my own story was.”** At first, not knowing where to start, she began sifting through the moments in her life when God had transformed her through friendships, faith, and family.



This past summer, Gabi went on a mission trip to Uganda with an organization called Love Africa, where she would be serving kids in Kyangwali, a refugee camp for those who have escaped the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As she and the team were getting ready for their trip, the team leaders encouraged each member to prepare a devotional. As she prayed, asking God what he would want to say through her, Canyon Ridge was practicing the transformation story tool over and over. Realizing how powerful it was for her and those around her, she discovered what she would share.



“But then, as I was preparing this, God put it on my heart that it wasn’t only for my team members, but also for all the students that we were going to encounter.”

She realized this was bigger than her team; in fact, she was going to train her team, equipping them to discover and share their own transformation stories, and then to train others in return!

Gabi began to meet people and hear of their often tragic experiences, yet they had so much joy. ***“When you hear their stories, there’s no other way to describe it in human matters, other than God has shown up in their lives, and they know that, but they just didn’t know how to express it.”*** And that’s where the story tool comes in.

“So, we made it very simple.” One of the days in Uganda, Gabi and the team were in a classroom and put the story icon (< + >) on a chalkboard with the words ***“There was a time in my life _____”*** and then ***“With Jesus, I’m becoming _____.”*** Soon, everyone wanted to share their story. Person after person began putting into words how God had transformed their lives. ***“It was hopefully something that they’ll be able to share with those in their community and continue to empower each other to have that type of deep faith to know that Jesus is always transforming their story.”***

Even across the globe, Gabi realized that this simple, short way to share our stories isn’t meant to be kept to ourselves. It’s meant to be shared and replicated in all areas of our lives. ***“I’m just excited for people to know that this tool is not just for the people of Canyon Ridge, but for people across the world, people in our neighborhoods, people at our jobs, and our family members, our friends, so that people can know that God is working in all places.”***

“There was a time in my life when I believed my worth came from what others said about me and what accomplishments I could have. But with Jesus, I have realized that my worth comes from who Jesus says I am and not from everything that I can do to earn that worth. Do you have a story like that?”

Every story is worth sharing. Discover yours, and start sharing! 

DID YOU KNOW?

In addition to **\$347,395 given to partner ministries** making a difference in Las Vegas and around the world, in 2023, Canyon Ridge sent **20 people** on mission trips for the first time since the pandemic.

BEFORE JESUS,

I WAS _____.



Because of What Happens Here

NOW WITH JESUS,

I'M _____.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2024

As we set our sights on 2024, there are great things ahead. In the early part of the year, we'll be delving into a biblical perspective on mental health, learning how to support one another, live well together, and show up for those around us.

I imagine months ahead as groups of people that have come together experience more and more connection and support with one another and from God. I imagine the faces and places around them that will hear stories of transformation. I think about the curiosity that is stirred up in their workplaces, neighborhoods, and more.


I can't wait to hear the stories of the hundreds who will be baptized and set out to be disciples who make disciples. I'm excited to see kids and families find a greater connection with one another and God as they discover, do, and share. There are so many more stories waiting to be written of people finding support and care through Celebrate Recovery, Grief Share, Divorce Care, Biblical Care Coaching, and more.

There have been so many stories already written in these past 30 years, and God is writing even more! Each of these stories is only possible because of God's goodness and the generosity of his people. Imagine the stories like what you've read in this booklet that will be written in the coming year if we all join together with many others across our church by adding Canyon Ridge to our Christmas list.

Our giving together provides not only the resources and staffing but also our church building and facilities. There will be more building updates, like a new AC and a refreshed courtyard, all designed to create a space where people can truly encounter God and one another really well. Like every year, we'll send a big portion of what we give together to other organizations doing amazing things in Jesus' name.

During the Christmas season, we all give gifts to people we love, and I want to encourage you to add Canyon Ridge to your gift list. Let's love one another really well here and anticipate all the good that God has in mind in 2024.

This book has been packed with stories God is writing **because of what happens here**. Maybe you can join in by giving what the average American spends on Christmas gifts. Maybe you can't. Every year is different, but the important thing to remember is that when we partner together in giving, God gets His way, and lives are changed. Whatever amount you feel called to give will go precisely where it is needed most: to equip people to take their next steps toward Jesus and help the people in their lives do the same.

And so I just want to say, keep going, keep going, keep going. But before we do, celebrate, reflect, and enjoy all that God is doing in us as we head into the holidays. As we continue to partner together like this, we can have the highest confidence that God will impact our city and beyond through the people of Canyon Ridge. Thanks for partnering together! I can't wait to see what happens this year. 



Drew Moore
Lead Pastor



Visit canyonridge.org/give to find out more about the safeguards in place to ensure your gifts are able to create the most impact.

TOP FINANCIAL PROJECTS IN 2024

- **Building Updates and Renovations** **\$900,000** (est.)
- **Local and Global Partnerships to Make a Difference Around the World** **\$378,000**
- **Raise Money to Allow All Kids and Students to Attend Camp at a Reduced Rate** **\$75,000**

THANK YOU

LET'S KEEP GOING TOGETHER.



canyonridge.org

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CANYON RIDGE
CHRISTIAN CHURCH