



ONE FOCUS

2021 YEAR-IN-REVIEW



Oh there's never been anyone like You
There's never been anyone like You
You are worthy You are worthy

SHARP

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You are worthy You are worthy

Dear One Focus,

“This network is entering a season of growth. From the East Coast to the West Coast and even unto the nations, says the Lord, I am expanding this ministry. I have settled your identity as a network. You know who you are, your relationships are deepening, and now it is time to move from primarily inward growth to outward growth. I will do it, saith the Lord.”

Prophetic word by Pastor Jack
One Focus 2021 Fall conference

Every now and again, God speaks in low key, unadorned ways that provides critical direction for a ministry or individual. I believe, our network experienced such a moment at our fall conference. The word God spoke over One Focus, I believe, is summed up in the word growth: growth in influence, growth in the anointing, growth in creativity, growth in kingdom connections and growth in network membership.

I am reminded, years ago before Grace Network and New Life Ministries International merged, that several simple “what if” comments by Dick Blackwell and later Stuart Bell turned out to be a prophetic impetus, which led ultimately to the creation of One Focus Network. I feel something similar is happening now. Pastor Jack’s word confirmed something deep inside me and has energized me about the future of our network.

Pastor Dan Backens



PTI Testimonies

Ian Martin

As a young pastor adjusting to living and ministering in an American context, there have been many times where I've wondered if I have what it takes, what it really means to be a leader, and if I'm even on the right track. The Pastors' Training Intensive invited me into the company of twelve fellow pastors, each at different stages of experience, yet all highly gifted, passionate and called. And over the course of 5 days together, a true fellow-ship emerged that I found transformative.

There was shooting, mountain biking, axe throwing, and ziplining. There was steak and 'Indian Tacos.' There were enough Nacho Libre references and questionable accents for several lifetimes. There were anecdotes that went way beyond what any person should ever know at any time. But what emerged through the fun was a deep sense of ease within the group that led to moments of profound vulnerability and genuine camaraderie. The rare kind of authenticity that allows men to praise one another without embarrassment. In this way, the laughter was spiritual. It became the bond of friendship.

Thus when we focussed our minds at the table for discussion, for prayer and prophecy, we sat as peers, each seen and valued as unique. And men I respect spoke words that my soul needed to hear. They told me I had what it takes, that I am a leader marked by God, and that I am very much on the right track. For me, receiving this kind of expert encouragement into my life, character and situation was deeply formative. I found a greater confidence in my calling. I found a greater awe for the vocation of a pastor. And I gained friends that I didn't realize were essential to me. In a time when many are leaving the ministry, I returned excited to be doing what I'm doing and grateful for those with whom I co-labor in this network.

Also, it is important to note that I scored two consecutive ringers in horseshoes and will live in glory forevermore. Pastor Dan can confirm.

Juan Milla

At the beginning of 2021 I remember feeling unsure about Nueva Vida's future. COVID left us on life-support and such pressure mostly felt on me, as it normally does in any church. At the turn of year, a good number of families left the church for numerous reasons. As a result, questions and insecurities started to flood my mind. It felt lonely and dark. I remember thinking to myself, and in a way saying to God, I am giving Nueva Vida one more push and You do the rest. Him doing the rest has come in unexpected ways. One of them was the retreat to South Dakota. I have been to different retreats but SD tops them all. SD had all the trademarks of a retreat: prayer time, worship, great teaching, etc. Where SD excelled was the fellowship. I have never laughed that hard for so long. It was awesome and refreshing fellowship. More importantly, such fellowship developed into friendships with fellow pastors that continue to be a blessing and encouragement to me to this date.



PTI Testimonies

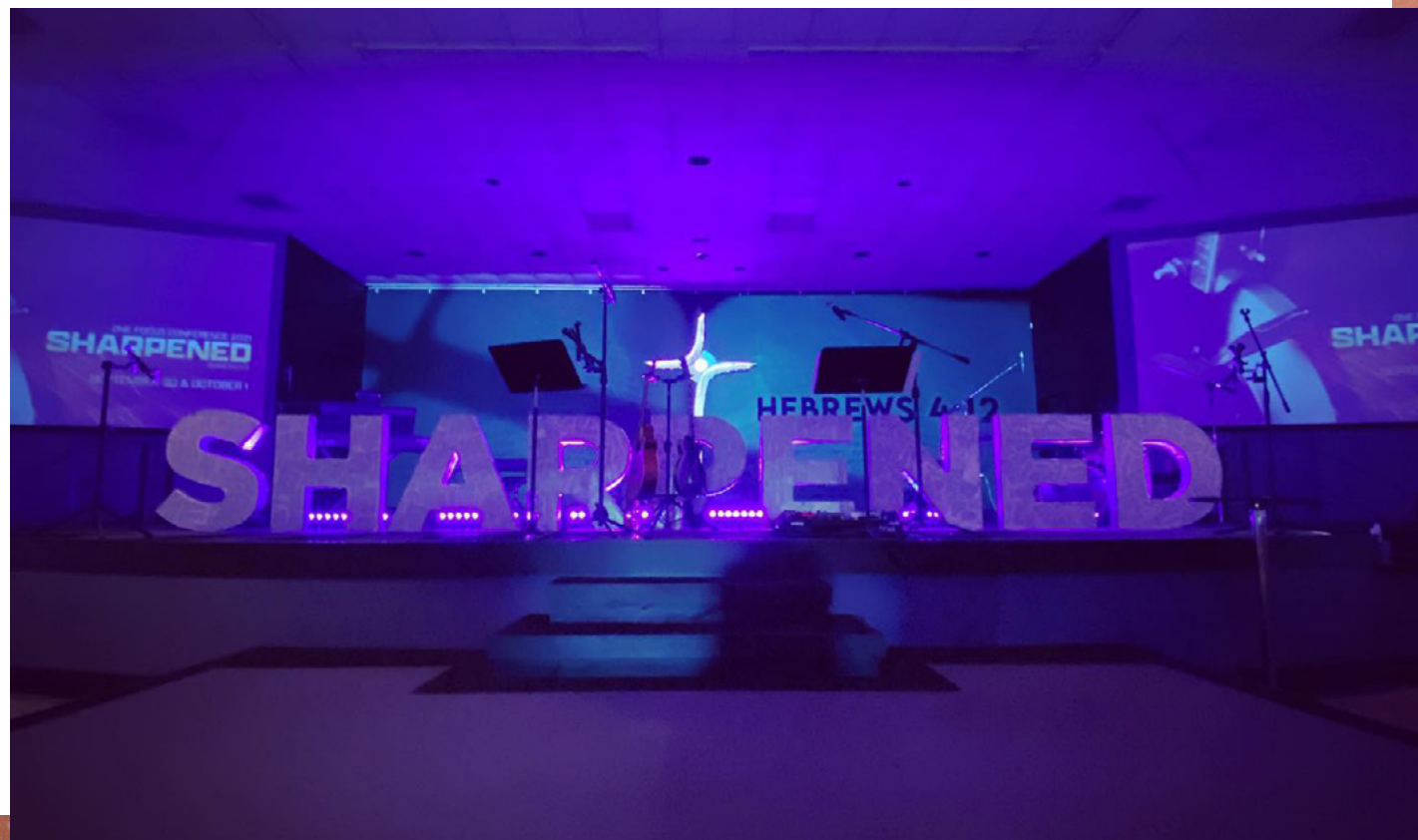
Taunja Johnson

The Pastors Training Intensive for female pastors far exceeded the expectations of the pastors who attended. The women arrived at a stunning home with a beautiful view of the beach and the melodic sound of waves crashing. We enjoyed fellowshiping, and as a result, new relationships were developed; we received an impartation from the speakers, a time of worship, prophetic presbytery, late-night girl chat, games, and of course, delicious food. During the retreat, we also enjoyed times relaxation and leisure, including receiving massages, and painting.

The pastors training intensive kicked off with words of wisdom from Pastor Dan with strategies on leading as women pastors. Rhonda shared stories of her journey serving alongside Pastor Dan, followed by the dynamic duo of pastor Melvin Mcleese and his wife, Denise. Pastor Melvin shared the aspect of a pastor's heart in shepherding and leading the flock, and Denise spoke on loving the sheep. The ladies received much-needed information from Pastor Tina Davis on the importance of balance and mental wellness spiritually, emotionally, and physically while serving in ministry. Pastor Nina Anderson spoke on "Being authentically you in ministry." The final night of the retreat concluded with the ladies partaking in the Eucharist together and receiving foot washing from Pastor Eunice. At some point during the retreat, every pastor received a prophetic word either as a confirmation of something that God has already spoken, something new that God was birthing, reminders of promises about destiny and purpose, and new visions for ministry. One of the retreat highlights was when Joanne Picataggi arrived. As she was preparing to pour out a word of encouragement into the pastors, the Spirit of God was moving so mightily that Joanne could not deliver her message.



Since the retreat in May, God has done some incredible things in the lives of the pastors. Pastor Eunice Barruel Lam-Yeun of Christian Renewal Ministries was installed as a member of the Executive Leadership Team for One Focus Network. Connie Padmore of Whole Word Fellowship was ordained as a Pastor. The ministry (The Well Global Network) of Pastor Nina Anderson is expanding and reaching thousands of women. Angela Perigo received her Doctoral degree in worship. Pastor Tina was promoted to Executive Pastor, Pastor Dana Williams now serves as an online campus Pastor, and I was installed as the Saturday night service Pastor.



Annual Conference

One Focus Network's strategic high point this year was our September conference. The church at large has wrestled with the pandemic and our leaders have looked for wisdom to pilot our churches through it. At the conference we were finally together again, refreshed by the presence of the Holy Spirit in our worship, prophecy, teaching and preaching . . . and of course one another's company. All but two of our churches were able to attend after a year's hiatus. Big kudos to Grace Covenant Church in Harrisonburg for hosting us and seeing to it that we took our meals together and had plenty of time for key conversations and friendship.

It was a time in which church leadership sought to gain clarity in what God is saying and doing. To that end, the theme for our gathering was entitled "Sharpened" alluding to Hebrews 4:12. The plenary sessions and breakouts were geared to fortifying us in the foundational clarity of the Word of God both in doctrine and practice.

Strategizing for a new season of growth in our churches and in the network was the prophetic byword. So it was with joy that we welcomed Erie Christian Fellowship into One Focus Network pastored by Jason and Liz Ackerman. And we were honored to receive Pastor Eunice Barruel Lam-Yuen as an apostolic leader on our Executive Team. She brings key insight and a passion for execution to the team.

One Focus Network finds itself spurred by God toward a season of Kingdom increase.

Pastor Jack Groblewski

New Churches

In August 2019, Grubby and Trish were pouring love and encouragement into Jason and I as we had recently transitioned into senior leadership at Erie Christian Fellowship Church. Grubby talked about One Focus Network and suggested that we “date” the network to see if it might be a source of apostolic resourcing for us. “Apostolic what?” was our response. We were too busy trying to revive our kid’s ministry, navigate staff challenges, transition a congregation to new leadership, and keep our eight kids straight. The last thing on our minds was apostolic resourcing. After their visit all thoughts of One Focus faded into the background as we continued working hard, unknowingly putting the cart before the horse.

Two days before the Converge conference, Trish texted to ask if we were coming to the conference. Having completely forgotten about it, it seemed obvious that we couldn’t plan to leave town in only two days. But in that moment of declaration of how impossible it would be, we heard the Spirit whisper, “Is it impossible? Is it?” We sprang into action and within two hours all arrangements for the church and our family had easily fallen into place to release us to attend our first One Focus conference. Miracles!

Within minutes of walking into the Converge conference, and at every event we have attended since, the message has been the same, “You’re not alone. You can do this. We’re here with you and for you. It’s ok, you don’t have to be perfect. God’s got you. We believe in you.” The outpouring of support, prayer, prophetic ministry, community, and friendship has been overwhelming. We thank the Lord for leading us into this community of churches. The spiritual covering that the network provides has allowed us to take more ground in the past few months than in the previous three years. Officially joining the network this October felt like the beginning of a beautiful and fruitful relationship all for the glory of God and the building of His church!

Jason and Liz Ackerman

Worship SEA Group

In the midst of this 2021 pandemic year, a new SEA Worship group emerged. The vision for this group was to grow as whole-hearted worship leaders in the image of Jesus — doing so among (new and established) friends and in discipleship of our Lord and Savior who is worthy of our worship. And what a fun and life-giving journey it was.

We have 19 amazing members! In this group we have worship leaders from different areas in Pennsylvania and Virginia, and California. We discussed the joys and difficulties we face as worship leaders in our respective churches, but also as ministry leaders in a challenging time in our world. Our conversations were uplifting, vulnerable, honest, raw, informative, and loving.

We prayed together, we shared our home lives with each other (lots of babies on our zoom calls), we learned a bit of musical theory from each other, and we were encouraged to grow. We looked Jeremy Riddles' book, *The Reset*, which led to some of us sharing it with our teams. It was inspiring to see the collective passion these leaders have to see our congregations' worship and encounter Jesus.

We saw the culmination of these genuine, cooperative, and loving relationships that were formed at our Network conference in September. Not only were the group members being friendly, they were encouraging each other, speaking life to each other, inviting them to join in their worship sets, eating lunch together, and making space for these hard-working worship leaders to feel loved.

I was personally blessed by this group of beautiful worshippers. To hear their stories, to understand their passion, to know their hearts for Jesus was a gift to me and I pray God will continue to unite our network leaders together in this way.

Sarah Blackwell



Church Highlights

Believers Church

At Believers' Church we have been continuing to broadcast our church services exclusively online. With the shut down of churches in California and then the school we were meeting in getting sold, we have been forced into this place. However, we have been led in the last couple months to a church building that is for sale and we believe that the Lord has told us that this is the property we are meant to have, reopen, and relaunch in. So we, at Believers' Church, have put our faith on this building. We have a united vision, and we have made announcements and started a building fund to purchase it. We are believing for a miracle and a testimony of the provision of God, for His glory. We are excited about what 2022 will bring, even though 2021 has been a very difficult year from appearances. We know where God wants us, however, and look forward to relaunching Believers' Church with a fresh location, and refreshed vision for our church, and Southern California.

Big House Church

Big House Church is lengthening and strengthening its tent pegs! It has been a wonderful year of experiencing the fruit of our labor, and we are so thankful to the Lord for bringing this growth. Our newly launched Virginia Beach campus is healthy and thriving. Our Ghent campus is also going strong and will receive a full-time campus pastor next year. We are \ adding new staff members next year and shifting a few leadership roles. Many of our younger staff members have been with us for over 10 years, and they will now be transitioning into greater levels of pastoring and leadership. We are also passionately saving money for a future home for our church. God is good and we are so grateful for another year of serving His church.

GCC Harrisonburg

Our GCC baptism services on October 31st were a joyful highlight for our church in 2021. In our combined (bi-lingual) services with our Grace en Español ministry, we baptized 10 individuals and joined with heaven in celebrating their new life in Christ! Baptizing 7 native Spanish speakers and worshipping with our Hispanic brothers and sisters in two languages creates an atmosphere of love, blessing and unity that few other gatherings can match. We enjoy an expression of the promises in Psalm 133 and catch a taste of heaven each time we worship together in combined services like this!

GCC Roanoke

For GCC Roanoke there are two standout things that happened for us in 2021. One, a very intentional return to and stronger desire for the unadulterated word of God. Two, not only were we able to retain our diversity, our diversity actually increased.





Church Highlights

GO Church

The year 2021 was a watershed year for GO Church. After seven years of leasing our church property, God miraculously provided the finances for us to purchase the facilities, which seemed out of reach mainly because of the pandemic and lower attendances. We were also happy to welcome regular guests, several of whom became new members. There is new excitement in the air at GO Church. The two congregations that merged at the beginning of 2020 continue to work well together. Also, while several members contracted COVID-19, the few who were affected have recovered or on the way to recovery.

New Covenant Christian Community Church (NC4)

2021 was a year of significant preparation for the biggest changes in NC4's history. On 11/14/21, at a congregational meeting of both the Bethlehem & Macungie campuses together, Pastor Jack "Grubby" Groblewski announced that he will retire on April 30, 2022, after 40 years as senior and founding pastor. Pastor Ian Martin was named NC4's new Lead Pastor effective 5/1/22. Pastor Ian also shared a new and exciting kingdom-building vision for this decade which was the result of a collaborative effort of the elders after much prayer and prophetic and apostolic input. We are looking forward to 2022 with great anticipation.

New Life Church

2021 was a year of continued recalibration of a response to a turbulent 2020. We worked hard in keeping expansion in our hearts and mission even in the midst of much uncertainty. We launched several new global workers into foreign lands, pioneered new relationships with local outreach, and slowly began to regain momentum of our congregation re-gathering. We refocused our efforts on our family ministry and launched a campaign called “Imagine” that looked to fund new family ministry staff, programs, and facility items. We also increased significant structure and emphasis on our online campus in order to digitally reach those who haven’t returned. Through a year of unprecedented division in our country we sensed a fresh movement of God’s grace to remain a single body in unity though holding many differences.

Nueva Vida

Nueva Vida experienced a year of extremes in 2021. At the beginning we lost numerous families for different reasons. It was probably the biggest exodus that Nueva Vida has had. Almost all of the reasons were related to the way Covid affected things. Some left due to spiritual laziness and getting out of the habit of going to church on Sundays. Some left because they found their needs better met elsewhere.

Thankfully, by the end of the year we were at a 100% capacity again, many coming in as new believers. After years of not having a consistent, committed leader for the youth ministry, I decided to lead the youth again until we can find a suitable leader, and it has been good experience. In August we had a picnic/ baptisms and it has been the most attended picnic we have had. In November we had a mini family fair in the church’s parking lot to bring the people together. This event was very successful and we intend to have more events like this in the years to come.



Church Highlights

Red Church

RED Church expanded to a second location at 245 S. Rosemont Road allowing for expanded capacity and new ministry opportunities. This follows the successful adoption of Plaza Church into RED Church, which includes a 180+ student preschool. In a time of great division in our society, we are grateful for the opportunity to foster unity within the body of Christ.

Staunton Grace Covenant Church

We celebrated its 25th anniversary this year and marked the occasion in October. Many of our members who have been with us throughout this time were present for our service. Our founding pastor, Dick Blackwell, and Becky Blackwell joined us for the celebration service. Many friends who have visited and supported the ministry of Staunton Grace Covenant over the years participated in the celebration. Within a month of that time we received notice that our new Associate Pastor, Zifus James, received notice from USCIS (U S Citizenship and Immigration Service) that he had received clearance for an R-1 visa and was able to begin serving on staff with our church family. That was followed in December by a children's presentation and ministry of praise and greetings from members of our congregation from numerous countries and video greetings from multiple countries around the world. Earlier, in June we re-established our children's outreach with a successful Vacation Bible School outreach attended by over fifty children in our area.

Whole Word Fellowship

This year the Lord got us directly involved with human trafficking. Together with our in-country partners, we have helped return almost 100 previously trafficked women to Sierra Leone from the Middle East. We are also partnering with Operation Underground Railroad (OUR). OUR has been pleased with our collective efforts. and they have allocated \$850,000 for Sierra Leone Survivors ministry, with more later for building an aftercare center project. Negotiations are now open with us, OUR, architects and builders for a proposed 3 phase Acute aftercare facility that they will pay for and we will operate in Sierra Leone.



Tribute to Tony Miller

Bishop Tony Miller, Pastor of The Gate Church in Oklahoma City, OK, Leader of The Destiny Fellowship of Churches, and friend of One Focus Network, went home to be with the Lord on January 19, 2021. His passing felt premature and way before anyone was expecting. He was an anointed preacher and world class communicator, and so much more.

He was as anointed, and perhaps even more of a blessing in one-on-one conversations. His quick sense of humor and sincere interest in others was impressive given the countless people he connected with. A favorite quote (among countless gems) was spoken in his livestreamed conversation with Pastor Dan Backens in our Perspective | God's Activity Within America series: "What informs you, forms you."

Thanks, Bishop Tony, for being a spiritual father and investing in our One Focus leaders!

Pastor Merle Shank





