

THE HISTORY OF HARVEST CHURCH

The story of Harvest EFC is a story of God's faithfulness and provision. He has continually met needs and raised up people with gifts and skills to help our church become what it is today.

Our story begins in Randolph in July of 1991, when seven families from Randolph EFC gathered regularly for Bible study to consider the call to plant a church in Beaver Dam. Through this Bible study and growth at Randolph EFC, the dream of planting a church in Beaver Dam was (re)born.

In March of 1992, church meetings began to take place at the Beaver Dam mall, where Pastor Rob Palmer began as our interim pulpit supply and eventually served as Senior Pastor until December 1992.

In early 1992, an incorporation meeting took place at Randolph EFC where our fledgling congregation resigned from Randolph EFC and was officially organized as Harvest Evangelical Free Church, becoming an affiliate with the Forest Lakes District.

Not only was this an exciting and challenging step for us, but also for Randolph EFC, as they stepped out in faith by sending families and resources to help Harvest get started. This incorporation meeting was a time of celebration, recognizing that God had not only blessed Harvest, but had also blessed Randolph Church with more people, talents, and resources to replace those who had been sent to Beaver Dam.

In May 1993, Pastor Bill Schraven was called as our Pastor, serving until March 2001. Soon after his arrival, five acres of land was generously gifted to the church, and God equipped our church to build our own facility. At this point our small community had grown to about 80 people.

The building project had three phases. Phase I (completed in 1995) provided a multi-use facility, in which we held our worship services. Phase II was for office and classroom space (completed in 1997). Phase III featured a larger worship center – an additional 400 chairs – and nursery space, along with additional restrooms (completed in 2001).

Throughout the building process, our church saw God's faithfulness at work as he brought people with gifts and abilities to help, as well as generous hearts to donate materials and many hours of labor. God provided things like wood trim from a local college tech class, donations of gravel from a local company, and skilled workers like carpenters and electricians to help make the project successful.

In January 2000, we called Pastor Bill Lerch as our Associate Pastor, tasked with the responsibility of recruiting and training lay leadership to serve in ministry. He served until August 2003.

In August of 2002, Pastor Scott Roen was called as our Senior Pastor, serving until January 2015. Throughout his years in ministry, our church continued to grow spiritually and numerically (reaching nearly 300 in 2010). During his tenure, Harvest added 15 additional acres adjoining our property to the north (summer 2006).

The following summer, Phase II was remodeled into a fellowship area called "10:25 Place". This name is taken from Hebrews 10:25, which encourages believers to continue *meeting together and*

encouraging one another. 10:25 Place became a focal point of fellowship and encouragement for our church community.

Hans Gochenaur served as the first Pastor of Youth Ministries from February 2004 - 2008.

In August of 2007, Brian Conyers joined us to serve as our Associate Pastor of Worship and Small Groups, serving until 2014.

Mike Jahnke served as our Associate Pastor of Youth Ministries from September 2009 until June 2011.

During these years, we paved our parking lot, installed a rear projection system, and remodeled the loft area of Phase III into a youth room.

In March 2012, Scott Guhlke joined us to serve as our Pastor of Student Ministries.

Pastor Paul Bawden served as an Interim Pastor from January 2015 - June 2016, as we searched for our Teaching Pastor.

Uncion Fresca, a Spanish speaking church began to use our facility for their worship services in June 2015.

Pastor Jason Wood was called to be our Teaching Pastor in June 2016 and served until June of 2021. Under his leadership and Gospel centered teaching, we experienced continued growth in Sunday worship reaching almost 450 before we were met with the challenges of the pandemic in 2020-2021.

During Jason's tenure, we remodeled our 10:25 Place area to accommodate our growing congregation, remodeled our gym into a chapel, replaced the roof and made many other repairs and updates that were needed. As our attendance increased, our budget did too, and we were able to pay off all remaining church debt.

Pastor Brex Wollin joined the staff in March of 2018 as our Pastor of Worship. He oversees the direction of our worship ministries as well as our Connections and Welcome teams.

In June 2019, Pastor Karl Greeb joined our Pastoral staff. He was hired to oversee our small groups and discipleship ministry, as well as prepare a team to plant a second campus in Columbus.

In February 2020, we officially welcomed Uncion Fresca, led by Pastor Edwin Rodriguez, as part of Harvest. Pastor Edwin joined our staff as a part time Pastor and has led this great ministry to our Spanish speaking population.

In September 2020, in the midst of a global pandemic, we stepped out in faith and Pastor Karl, along with four families from Harvest, launched our campus in Columbus. We absorbed a small church plant named Crossroads and took over the lease from their storefront location.

We continue to remain thankful to God for his faithfulness in providing. Looking back to 1991, we can see how God has met our needs, carried us through challenges, and blessed us with growth. Looking forward, we pray for the same.