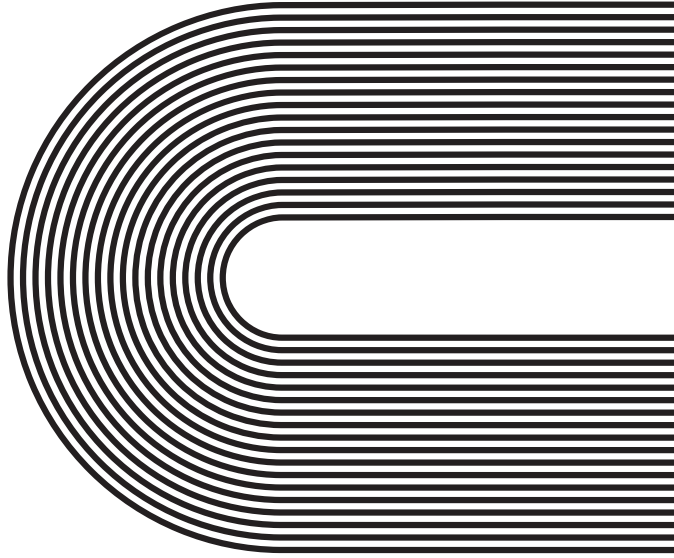


what God is doing in Manchester

2024 vision & *impact*







looking back

growth in 2023-24



ten years

of God's faithfulness

If you'd told us back in 2014 we'd see 55 baptisms, train 26 interns, send 12 people into set-apart ministry, plant a church and facilitate another six church plants, all by 2024, I don't think we'd have believed you. But God does 'immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine' (Ephesians 3:20). When we planted City Church, we had plans of what it might look like. But what God has done over the last decade is so different, and so much better. It's a reminder of Isaiah 55:9 - that God's ways are higher than our ways and his thoughts higher than our thoughts.

Today, City Church is larger and more diverse than it's ever been. But we face big challenges as we temporarily move venues and add a third service. These are also incredible opportunities – to reach new people and impact new communities, to grow deeper in faith and to persevere in prayer. No one knew what our first ten years would be like, and no one knows what the next ten will bring either. That is, no one except God. And his plans and purposes are always good. So let's lean into him in prayer; pursuing intimacy, dependence and expectancy together, seeking our God who can 'do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.'

So neither he
who plants nor
he who waters
is anything, but
only God who
gives the
growth.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:7

153 on serving teams

75 % of members serving

381 new visitors

350 subscribers & followers

14 baptisms

36 new members



growth

in service, giving & reach

This year it's really encouraging to see how our church is growing in financial stewardship to give sacrificially. One person noted how they found the Weekend Away seminar on stewardship 'life changing.' We are also growing in our time stewardship – every time a church partner visits, they are deeply encouraged and surprised by the number of people serving on a Sunday.

We might feel that church in a box (setting up and setting down each Sunday) is a difficult burden, but our church partners help us see it as a blessing because it encourages more of us to serve, and therefore experience the joy of working together in service to God.

Being a city centre church means a certain level of transience – people stay for an average of three years. We're so grateful for how quickly most get stuck in and are a great blessing while they are here. It's always hard to say goodbye but it helps us remember that we are but sojourners in a foreign land – and it won't be until the new creation that we'll all finally settle down for good!



team

together on mission

We regularly thank God for the ways he's blessed our church with so many people who love him and each other – interns, staff team, eldership, ministry teams, and trustees. We're grateful for Chris and Zena Schofield's dedicated service to us and Chris' role as Trainee Minister. Chris will be moving on to pastor City Evangelical Church in Leeds in June. Rachel Pontier has hit the ground running and led training, Connect groups, a conference, discipleship groups, seminars and our Weekend Away. We're also excited to be training up new deacons and elders for the next phase of our church's life.

We'll be saying a sad goodbye from the staff team to Jamie Brewerton, who's got a job with the NHS and George Medcroft, who'll move back to Essex at the end of the summer. They've both been incredibly hard workers, wonderful brothers in Christ and will be greatly missed. We're delighted that William Merritt will continue as a second-year intern, focusing more on the New to the UK ministry. We're working on recruiting a great team of interns and may end up with a strong team of six – the biggest team yet and an exciting time for our internship program. Please welcome and get to know our new recruits to help them settle in well!

students

growth and encouragements

God is moving in our student ministry. Though gospel fruit is not truly measured by statistics, each number represents a soul cherished by a saviour who longs for a relationship with them. Almost all the new students who came to the October Weekend Away are now integral parts of our community – they’ve grown in Christ so much already! It’s great to see many of our students stepping up into serving, committing their lives to Christ and to the church through baptism (seven of our students were baptised this year and three became members). We’re also now meeting weekly to pray for the city, the world and our friends; we eat together before Equip to connect and bond; we meet monthly for a Bible study social; and we’ve just completed our first 6-week early morning female discipleship group.

Please pray more students live radically for Jesus while at uni and that they’d benefit from our encouragement as we cheer them on to serve, connect with others, learn from what’s on offer here at City Church, and ultimately grow in love for Jesus.

70 in orbit

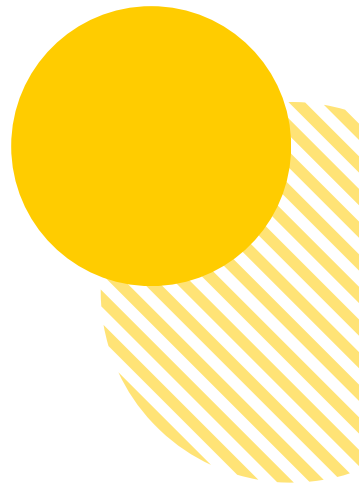
32 committed core

18 one-off events

10 members

17 serving

7 baptised



youth

discipling the next generation

Another year and another venue for our youth! We decided to shift our meetings to Central Hall to be more accessible – and a new family has joined since we made the move to the city centre. It's so encouraging to see how the families are serving one another by sharing lifts and helping each other. It's great seeing a broader age range than ever before (11-18), but it's also challenging to make sure we're discipling all our young people in an age-appropriate way.

We've launched a new small group structure during our sessions to help us better apply the gospel and answer questions. We now have 5 young people meeting one-to-one regularly with a youth team member. We've had ice skating and climbing socials and studied Ecclesiastes and Colossians. This summer, we're studying some basic doctrines and we're excited to have our first graduate – Annabel Amadin – who's turned 18 this year!



Youth is now the highlight of my week. Seeing over time how we've grown so close is such a blessing to see. I loved our Ecclesiastes series – teaching us not to set our eyes on the world but find our forever meaning in Christ.

ANNABEL AMADIN



3

new babies

15

team

14

tots

22

kids

Thomas loves going to Tots and likes to display his 'craft' at home which gives us opportunities throughout the week to talk about what he's learning and apply it to his life. Recently he said 'God is big big big and He looked after me in the hospital'.

SALLY YU,
member & parent

kids & families

growing up in Christ

It's wonderful to see growth in the way the children relate to Jesus and to each other. It's a real joy to see friendships forming and knowledge growing! Three babies were born, and six new families have joined us. We've also had at least 15 other children visit us between October-March.

The team really enjoyed being with the children at the Weekend Away this year and seeing how clearly they could pick up who Peter was and how he wanted Christians to keep going. They also got excited to share the hope we have as Christians and how amazing the new creation will be!

We've enjoyed cuddles with the new babies and getting to know our new families. It's been challenging matching the lesson plans to the Ecclesiastes sermon series but our fantastic kids team were so diligent in their prep!

connect & equip

training in godliness

It's been a great year of training! We've loved incorporating some more social meet-ups (Come Dine with Me, Historic Pubs of Manchester, and Street Food Tour) alongside Equip training tracks. Here are all this year's tracks –

- **Sharing the Gospel in Contemporary Culture**
- **A Weary Christian's Guide to a Deeper Devotional Life**
- **Ethics in the Light of Eschatology**
- **Small Group Dynamics**
- **Leading Bible Studies**
- **Perfect Unity Discussion Club**
- **God's Design for the Church**
- **Marriage MOT**

Connect is going well and as we look to transitioning to meeting weekly, starting some more groups and phasing out year-round Equip for the time being, we're encouraged to see more people being willing to step up and be trained to lead and host groups in their homes.

15 **connect groups**

155 **in connect groups**

28 **leaders**

11 **equip tracks & meet-ups**

80 **average attendance**

outreach & mission

continued growth

We continue to welcome many new people each week, many of whom are exploring Christianity either for the first time or after a long hiatus away from church and spiritual practice. We run regular seeker courses for those at that stage in their journey, but primarily believe that belonging to a Christian community is a great way to see faith lived out. We have also sought to have 1,000 evangelistic drinks with non-Christian friends, colleagues and neighbours.

The pizza place we go to after the 6:30 service (A Place Called Common) is one of the best places for those who have questions to have an informal chat and explore more about who Jesus is in an organic way. There are a growing number of Iranians coming regularly who have forsaken Islam and considering Christianity instead, at great potential cost to themselves. It was a huge blessing to baptise two of them along with twelve others who have committed their lives to Christ.

We had a record-breaking 613 people come to our Christmas services and donated hampers and gifts to local care homes. It was a joy to wrap and deliver these gifts – hopefully the start of an ongoing ministry to these care homes, in partnership with Silver Cord Ministries.

3 exploring Christianity
courses

34 attending courses

14 baptisms

613 Christmas services
attendance

48 gift bags given

8 hampers donated

football

belonging and growth

Our club is the UK's largest Christian-run football club – 3 men's teams, one in each of the three South Manchester and Cheshire Christian Football League (SMCCFL) divisions. Athletic (first team) and United (third team) are in the running for the top 2 in their respective divisions. We reached the quarter final (last 8) of the National Christian Cup, and the final of the Manchester Churches Trophy.

Shared passion for playing football brings together demographics and nationalities – resulting in a massive gospel opportunity as only 20% of players are Christians. We hear stories of friendships developing and guys opening up their lives – sharing meals, going to the pub, and watching sports. One pair went to London together for the fun! We aim to be more than a sports team – encouraging our Christian players to share Christ with other players and teammates.



discipleship

men & women growing in Christ

It's been such a blessing to see the growth of our women through early morning book clubs, walks through the Peak District, and late night Bible studies. We joined with Redeemer and Trinity Churches to run a Women's Conference – 90 women from around Manchester attended! We've launched Bible study groups that meet to dig into God's Word together. Our goal is to study 3 books of the Bible each year. We also have two men's discipleship groups. One focuses on raising up new preachers who then preach at other churches needing support. The other group meets early morning to study Scripture – so far, covering Romans & Ephesians.

We're getting to know each other, encouraged and equipped by the Word of God to testify of his great love wherever we are in Manchester. Our hope and prayer is to continue to steward the opportunities God provides for our growth and faith.





The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

LEVITICUS 19:34

new to the UK

welcoming the stranger

What a blessing to now have 45 or so different nationalities represented here at City Church. Since September, our team organised events such as Board Games Club, Hotpot Night, and Come Dine with Me at church members' homes. We've just launched a weekly English Conversation Club, meeting on Sundays before the first service.

We partner with Friends International – church members host and welcome international students to share a meal or serve at iCafe, a space to befriend and share the good news of Jesus with international students.

To help those with English as a second language, we make sure Bibles in other languages and a sermon transcript is available each week. It's wonderful to have a small glimpse of heaven – where one day people from every nation, tribe and language gather to worship the Lord together!



mission

in Manchester, the Northwest & beyond

A big part of our DNA is to support more church planting so more can hear the life-changing gospel and access the whole-life care the church provides.

Thanks to God's generosity towards us, we can release our pastors, Matt & Ralph to play a big part in three global church planting initiatives – regularly coaching other leaders, speaking at conferences and running training events across the world. They also coach and host training and collectives for local leaders and church planters here in Manchester.

We recognise more than just training and coaching is needed! So we give 13% of our finances to supporting church planting – in line with our vision to be a hub church resourcing others. This provides salaries, building funds, and training grants for church planters and their teams at CPC Fairfield, Redeemer and Crossroads Church in Dubai, Big City Church Kyiv, and Miner's Place Lagos. We also contribute to local networks – City to City Europe, Northern Gospel Project, UCCF (UK student ministry) and FIEC (the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches we're part of). Praise God for unity, friendship and the opportunity to share resources!



As a pastor new to the area, my coaching conversations with Ralph through City Church have helped me make wiser decisions, prioritise next steps, and process my own leadership insecurities in a Christ-centred way. My ministry, relationships and spiritual life are far healthier as a result.

Chris Thornton
Ford's Lane Church, Bramhall



8 in Planters' Collective

3 pastors' days

30 days of prayer
for the city

31 coaches trained

121 people coached
since 2019

20 women trained to coach
women in ministry

I'm excited for the potential church planting that could happen here because of our partnership with City Church Manchester. Please pray the gospel advances in Dubai.

Samuel Iwuchukwu
Redeemer Church Dubai

City Church pours into me through the Planter's Collective, Pastors' Days, financial gifts, and general encouragement so needed in the difficult work of church planting. Redeemer has a better pastor because of your ministry – we thank you!

Greg Willson
Redeemer Church Manchester

Coaching reveals areas I need to grow in and encourages me with tools to support other leaders.

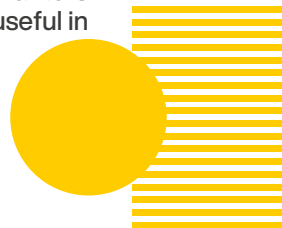
Hannah Thomas
Missionary to Spain

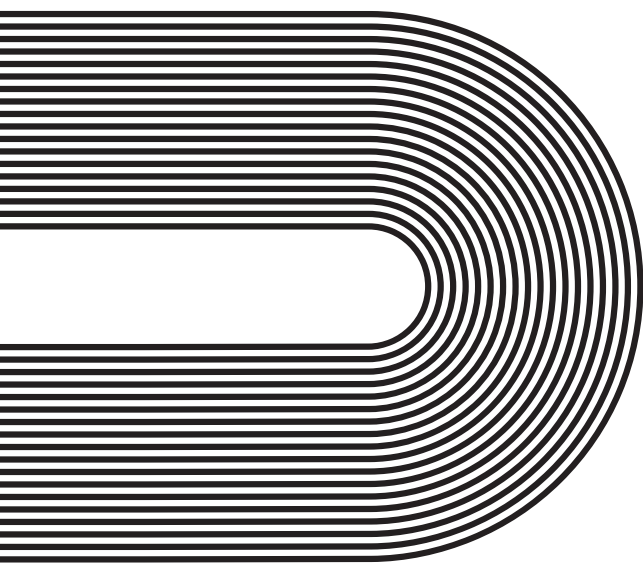
I am so thankful to God for the many ways City Church has supported and encouraged me over the years. From pastor's days to the planters collectives, City Church have been very generous with their time and resources. Long may this gospel partnership continue.

Jon Cawsey
Christ Church Stockport

I love partnering with City Church on the Northern Gospel Project. The project is having a very positive impact on Manchester and the other churches of our magnificent city! Personally, I've found the Pastors' Days, the Planters Collective and the gospel coaching training to be very useful in serving the ministry of Christ Church Manchester.

Tim Simmonds
Christ Church Manchester





looking ahead

growth goals for 2024-25

goals

Every year, we set a measurable goal to help move the needle on our ten-year vision. We're still committed to planting another church by 2027 if God wills, but we're also committed to helping our church grow and thrive during our time out of Central Hall. The elders came back from their getaway with the following goal:

As the Lord leads us into a season of change starting in September 2024, we want to pursue intimacy, dependance and expectation through gathered prayer.

Our primary aim is to –

- Encourage 60% members regularly attending new monthly prayer gatherings

Additionally we aim to –

- Start a third morning service
- Spend more time in organic, informal fellowship through weekly Connect, church lunches, and more
- Grow in our giving by £25-50/month per giving unit to cover the cost of a new venue & a third service
- Grow our serving teams by another 30 people to facilitate a third service
- Grow another 5 Connect groups

what next?

practical steps

prayer

Let's commit every step of our journey to the Lord in dependent faith. Let's pray more often together this following year.

Will you commit to joining our new monthly gatherings and our weekly Tuesday morning Zoom?

giving

Let's grow in having an abundance mindset when it comes to generosity so that we can move venue, launch a new service and grow our outreach.

Will you prayerfully consider donating, on top of your current giving, £25-50 or more per month for the following year?

serving

Let's grow in love for the Lord, each other, the wider church and the city by serving him as he builds the kingdom in Manchester, the Northwest and beyond.

Will you consider joining a serving team, stepping up into a leadership position, or leading more prayer and outreach initiatives?

Let's each step out
in faith to give an
additional £25, £50
or more per month



But my God
shall supply
all your needs
according to his
riches in glory by
Christ Jesus.


PHILIPPIANS 4:19











Inviting
everyone to
enjoy Christ
for the glory
of God.



citychurchmanchester.org

Central Hall, Oldham Street M1 1JQ