

YEAR IN REVIEW & MOVING AHEAD

2025 ANNUAL REPORT





The year 2025 at South Ridge was a time of celebration, rebuilding, transformation, and growth. Most notably, the year marked our 155th anniversary as a church. We praised the Lord for this throughout the year to thank Him for His faithfulness to South Ridge throughout all the seasons that led us to where we are today.

After many months of planning and preparation, our Built Together 2025 Capstone Project commenced in April. With the end goal of optimizing our facility and campus for ministry, it landed us in a season of transition that offered both the blessing of anticipation and hope in the Lord's provision along with a number of challenges to work through while continuing to teach and serve our community with the same level of care and support.

We started off the year in a message series entitled *The Land Between* that focused on the time when Israel was in a season of testing after being delivered from slavery but before they entered the Promised Land – a time when life was often difficult and confusing. Likewise, as we faced a variety of obstacles throughout the Capstone Project, we were continually brought back to the faithfulness of God's providence in all situations. So, we prayed together. We solved problems together. We moved our ministries around to new locations on our campus.

Our mission at South Ridge is to help people **Experience Belonging, Embrace God's Grace, and Extend God's Love**. And now that we're on the other side of the Capstone project, with the work complete and all our ministries back in place, it's a great time to reflect on how He continues to guide and sustain us, regardless of the season.

As we look back on 2025, we can see through the Capstone Project and all the other challenges, victories, and simple day-to-day activities that He is always actively at work helping and guiding us as we continue to pursue our mission and His call to love Him and one another.

Ministry, Markers & Milestones

Throughout 2025, South Ridge continued toward the completion of its Built Together 2025 focus of strengthening the 3Es of our mission to **Experience Belonging, Embrace God's Grace, and Extend God's Love**. While there were many steps forward noted in the ministry reports that follow, here are some highlights.

- 155th Anniversary:** South Ridge was founded in May 1870, and 2025 marked our 155th anniversary as a church. We celebrated this milestone throughout the year, and because May was our anniversary month, we held our 155th Anniversary Celebration Service and Lunch.
- Remember & Remain Prayer Focus:** During the month of May, we also had a focused season of prayer based in our key verse of John 15:5: *I am the vine; you are the branches. If you REMAIN in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.* Through a series of prayer prompts, the congregation prayed together each day at 1:55pm, focusing on REMEMBERING God's faithfulness over the past 155 years and REMAINING devoted to Christ and dependent on the Holy Spirit into the future.
- 2025 Built Together Capstone Project:** Our Capstone Project to renovate the lower level and replace the HVAC system of our main building was one of the most significant facility transformations in the history of our church. The renovation was completed on time and on budget, and in September, we celebrated the reopening of the lower level in time for SR Kids and SR Students to resume their fall ministries in the freshly optimized space.
- Out of the Box:** In our continuing desire to help people gain a deeper understanding of God's Word, we held two Out of the Box Sundays. We gave the congregation the opportunity to ask specific questions ahead of time (by writing them on cards and placing them in box), and a panel answered them on stage during the service. We continued to respond to the overflow of questions during a more informal and casual Out of the Box Unplugged event on a weeknight of the following week.





● **Enhancing Our Staff:** In January, we welcomed Jessica Hunter onto our staff as our Student & College Ministry Coordinator. Morgan Tanner came aboard in April as our Director of Facilities & Technology, and in December, Kristin Apple joined the staff in our new Care Assistant role.



● **Prayer:** We continued our increased focus on congregational prayer during services throughout the year, held a Night of Worship & Prayer in March, and joined with our brothers and sisters at Evangel Chapel for a prayer walk in Clinton for the National Day of Prayer in May. The congregation also participated in congregational Scripture reading and congregational prayers with increased regularity. These initiatives began as part of the Built Together 2025 goal of strengthening congregational participation and involvement.

● **Holiday Services & Special Events:** Easter and Christmas services and other special events and gatherings throughout the year were strongly attended, and these occasions provided opportunities to serve our community.

The above is simply a thumbnail sketch of numerous ministry developments and steps forward. May the Lord continue to strengthen the South Ridge congregation and may His Spirit cause the work of our hands to be fruitful for Him.



SR Groups & Gatherings

South Ridge facilitated a wide variety SR Groups and spiritual growth and community gatherings as a way to live out our mission as a church family. As we continue to help people **Experience Belonging, Embrace God's Grace, and Extend God's Love**, we seek to do so together, through deepening our connections with each other.

SR Groups

SR Groups are smaller communities that meet regularly and are designed to help us grow in relationship with each other, deepen our devotion to God, and be His hands and feet for one another. Throughout the course of the year, more than 30 groups met within our four group types: Campus & Life; Interest; Care & Support; and Family Ministry.

Notable highlights from throughout the year included:

- Record attendance in many Campus Groups & Interest Groups
- An increasing number of SR Groups studying straight through a book of the Bible
- Several SR Groups that synced their study with our Sunday morning message series in Mark's Gospel
- New SR Groups that were envisioned and developed, including a Care & Support Group to support marriages and an Interest Group for cycling (to be offered in 2026)
- New SR Groups that were launched, including Gospel Transformation and an additional Life Group for families with children.
- Focused opportunities for congregants to learn more about the SR Groups being offered and talk personally with Group Leaders during SR Groups Meet & Greets that were held in January and September
- Orientation and equipping of new group leaders through Catalyst Saturdays offered in July and November



Next-Step Gatherings

South Ridge experienced high registration and attendance for these events, as many in the congregation sought to deepen their church involvement and walk with Christ.

- **Getting Started:** This gathering for newcomers was offered in April, August, and December. It's an important first step for hearing more about South Ridge; enjoying a time of fellowship with others who are also new; and learning about ways to get more connected.
- **Discovering South Ridge:** This first step in our membership process presents a deeper look at the church, its history, mission, and beliefs. These gatherings took place in March and October.
- **Understanding Baptism:** Offered in the April and October, Understanding Baptism prepared more than 20 attendees for baptism, which took place on various Sundays in June, November, and December.

Spiritual Growth & Community-Building Gatherings

South Ridge offered a variety of other options for those in the congregation to come together around a specific focus or activity.

- **Accelerate:** In March, we welcomed author and apologist Joshua Chatraw, who spoke on the topic from his book *Telling a Better Story: How to Talk About God in a Skeptical Age*. Later in November, husband and wife team Matt and Laurie Krieg told their story of restoration and spoke on the topic Sexual Brokenness & the Gospel.
- **Night of Worship & Prayer:** In March, South Ridge hosted a special gathering with song, reflection, and guided prayer.

- **Capstone Breakfast & Clean-out:** In April, prior to the start of the work to replace our HVAC system and renovate the lower level of the main building, we invited the congregation to come together for breakfast, a time of devotion and prayer, and a work detail to prepare the lower level for construction.
- **Clinton Prayer Walk:** On May 1, National Day of Prayer, we joined together with the congregation at Evangel Chapel in Clinton to participate in a prayer walk through the downtown area.
- **Fall Picnic:** A favorite event each year, our Fall Picnic took place in September. The congregation came together to enjoy fellowship, food, inflatables for the kids, and live music from our Worship Team. We also opened the lower level of the main building for the first time so people could see the results of our Capstone renovations.
- **Men's & Women's Gatherings:** In October, we were honored to host Extend Ministry partners Michael and Nina Schaafsma to each be the main speaker at our Men's & Women's Gatherings. Michael spoke to the men on the topic of courage. For the women, Nina spoke about the beauty of sisterhood in Christ under the theme of Sisters Around the Table.
- **Thanksgiving Gathering:** The week before Thanksgiving, the congregation came together in the auditorium to hear a devotion and then share the things for which they were personally thankful. It was a joyous way to set the tone for the holiday.
- **Tree Lighting:** In December, South Ridge kicked off the holiday season with its annual tree lighting, a favorite yearly event. Those who attended braved the cold to gather together for hot drinks, bonfires, Christmas carols, and fellowship.

Family Ministry

God continued to pour out His blessing on our programs for SR Kids, SR Students, and loving and supportive partnerships with families. On Sunday mornings and through other events and interactions, kids, student, and families were able to understand God's love, lean into His Word, and grow in community with one another. We also continued to join hands with parents, with the goal of helping to guide and equip them in the discipling of their children as members of God's family.

Capstone Project Impact

Beginning in April, construction required us to make major adjustments to how we gathered for ministry — from rearranging classrooms to shifting groups into temporary meeting areas. Despite these challenges, God's faithfulness was evident, and we were able to continue to meet throughout the project.

In September, we celebrated the reopening of the renovated Lower Level. The space is more than just new floors, fresh paint, improved ceilings, updated lighting, and a modern HVAC system — it's a tangible reflection of our heart for Family Ministry. Every detail was designed to create an environment where kids, students, and families can experience belonging.

The impact has been immediate. SR Kids and SR Students now meet in spaces that feel warm, welcoming, and purposeful. Our Welcome Center sets the tone from the moment families arrive, and we have a space large enough to gather all of our students together on Sunday mornings. These updates are not just functional improvements; they are tools for Kingdom work.



SR Kids: Nursery through 6th Grade

- **Sunday mornings:** We were able to offer ministries for kids during the 10:45am service for nursery through 4th grade as often as the season allowed. While we needed to adjust our rhythms to accommodate the Capstone Project, we remained strong and consistent thanks to the flexibility and faithfulness of our volunteers. Their willingness to adapt ensured that everyone had a space to belong and encounter Jesus. On average, 200 kids joined us each week to worship, study God's Word, and connect with their leaders.
- **Volunteer support:** Thirty-three volunteers joined the SR Kids team, which expanded our capacity to serve families well and created new opportunities for children to grow in their faith.
- **Curriculum:** We continued to work through The Gospel Project curriculum, a Christ-centered, chronological study of Scripture. The children were able to gain perspective into the big picture of God's plan of redemption through Jesus Christ.
- **Enhanced activity:** Our 5th and 6th graders had opportunities to strengthen friendships and deepen their faith through special activities such as our Pool Party, Olympics, and Christmas Party. These gatherings created space for fun and connection but also helped prepare our kids for the transition into middle school with confidence in their faith.

SR Students: 7th Grade through High School

- **Crossover:** During this weekly Sunday morning event, our students explored God's Word and wrestled through big questions about faith and life. We welcomed an average of 43 students to Sunday morning programs.
- **The Ridge:** On Sunday evenings, students connected with God, their peers, and leaders through both life groups and community nights. Life groups gave space for meaningful conversations in smaller settings, while community nights brought everyone together for shared worship and fun. On average, 86 students were with us regularly on Sunday evenings.
- **Retreats:** These continued to be highlights of the year. During the summer, we took trips to Harvey Cedars and Camp Tecumseh where we had more than 110 students attend. In December, we went to Camp Orchard Hill with about 80 students for our Winter Retreat. These trips created opportunities for discipleship, worship, and unforgettable shared experiences that drew students closer to Christ and loving relationship with one another.
- **Community support:** Serving remained a key focus, and our students participated in a variety of projects. These experiences helped shape students into young men and women eager to make an impact for the Kingdom.

Family Ministry (cont.)

Partnering With Parents

We maintained our goal to support and care for parents as the main spiritual influencers in their children's lives. We journeyed alongside them to help equip them for the roles they play and celebrate significant spiritual landmarks within their families.

- Child Dedication Celebration:** Child Dedication remains one of the most meaningful milestones we celebrate as a church family. In 2025, we hosted celebrations in April and October, and 15 children were dedicated to the Lord by their parents. Each gathering included a time of worship, Scripture reading, and the powerful moment when parents shared a prayer of blessing or testimony over their child. Afterward, families joined together with relatives, friends, and the South Ridge community to enjoy a time of fellowship to commemorate this special occasion.
- Mothers & Daughters Gathering:** This special event in November brought mothers and their daughters together to appreciate the gift of one another, strengthening their bond, building new friendships with other families, and drawing closer to the Lord over breakfast and crafts.





Vacation Bible School

At the end of June, our campus was once again filled with excitement and energy as nearly 350 kids and 250 volunteers came together for an unforgettable week of Vacation Bible School. Through teaching, worship, games, and hands-on activities, kids had the opportunity to encounter God's truth in fresh and meaningful ways.

We also encouraged our kids to put their faith into action through a special partnership with Feed My Starving Children. This gave our volunteers and kids an opportunity to raise money and pack meals for those in need. Praise God for how He stirred generosity in the hearts of children and families to make a Kingdom impact!



Extend Ministry

Extending God's love to others is a value that's woven into the very fabric of South Ridge's mission. While every ministry seeks to intentionally extend God's Love, South Ridge "Extend Ministries" are specifically focused on extending God's love beyond our four walls through strategically identified partnerships, projects, and initiatives.

Partnerships

Because of the generosity of our congregation, South Ridge was able to continue to provide annual financial support for more than 20 missionaries and 10 organizations that represent a range of countries and strategic focuses. Additionally, toward the end of the year, our Extend Ministries Team onboarded two new partners: Amelia Boyd (serving on Pennsylvania college campuses with DiscipleMakers) and Zoway Media (reaching regions closed to the gospel through innovative digital initiatives).

Some of the current strategic priorities which have guided partner support decisions are:

1. Serve and spiritually impact displaced or persecuted people
2. Strategically reach closed countries, unreached people groups, and regions where the Gospel is marginalized or in the minority
3. Shape and impact youth, young adults, and families
4. Reach and disciple the local Hispanic community
5. Strategically reach and disciple people in our local region



Projects

- **Easter Giving Project:** At Easter, our congregation was invited to give financially to help Resurrection Church in Belarus to brightly shine the hope of the gospel in an especially discouraging and destabilized time for Eastern Europe. Contributions given totaled \$6,405.50, which assisted them in providing: supplies and scholarships for children's and family camps; a new van to be used for ministry both inside and outside the church; and facility updates, including renovations to a house to shelter refugees and families with relatives who are receiving treatment at a nearby cancer hospital.
- **Love in Action:** For the second year in a row, we partnered with Samaritan's Purse to participate in Operation Christmas Child for our annual Love in Action project. We packed shoeboxes full of toys, school supplies, and personal care items for under-resourced children around the world. These shoebox gifts tangibly demonstrated the gospel of Jesus in deed as well as opened doors for the gospel to be shared in word. South Ridge also offered its facility to be the shoebox collection site for our region of New Jersey. The South Ridge community packed 783 shoeboxes, and 2,688 were collected region wide.
- **Ongoing Giving:** The 15% of our offering income that's allotted for use outside of our doors was used to meet a number of urgent and strategic needs around the globe. These included: providing scholarships for Christian counseling; assisting missionary partners with medical expenses and moving costs; funding missionary internships; and financially assisting World Relief in resettling 4,000 suddenly displaced people.

Events & Initiatives

- **From Hunger to Hope Community MealPacks:** In June, during Vacation Bible School week, South Ridge partnered with the non-profit organization Feed My Starving Children to pack 150,000 nutritious meals for children in impoverished countries as part of our From Hunger to Hope initiative. All ages participated, with packing shifts each morning and afternoon. As a congregation, we raised \$43,000 toward the cost of these meals.
- **America's Grow-A-Row Community Picks:** In August, the South Ridge community participated in a "Community Pick" with local non-profit America's Grow-A-Row. This was a fantastic opportunity for all ages to extend God's love, together, by picking produce to be distributed to under-resourced communities across New Jersey.
- **Pastors Prayer Lunches:** South Ridge hosted quarterly Prayer Lunches for pastors in our region of Central New Jersey. This was an opportunity for local pastors to lock arms, support each other, and pray together for God's Kingdom to come and His will to be done.
- **Sunday Service Interactions:** Throughout the year, a number of SR Extend Partners were interviewed in Sunday services (either live or via video) and included: Dan and Leann LaBossiere, Andrew and Alanna Brown, Elly MacLean, Project Horses for Forces, and Erin Templeton. In October, we took the opportunity to celebrate long-time Extend Partners Carlos and Sandy Rios as they commenced their retirement after decades of missionary service together in Mexico. Carlos was our guest speaker that morning for both services.

Congregational & Community Care

South Ridge continued to walk with those in the congregation and local community as they experienced life changes, challenges, and loss. The Lord guided us as we met needs and provided support through a variety of avenues.

- Prayer:** Our vision continued to be seeing people spiritually connected to each other through prayer. Those in need of prayer shared prayer requests that were then sent out via ePrayer or to our staff and Prayer Team. We also coordinated special times of prayer with Elders, staff, and our Prayer Team for those who had significant illness or specific need.
- Helping Hands:** Through Helping Hands, we were able to connect those who can serve a need with those who have needs. These include providing meals, rides, donations, childcare, and home project help.
- Financial Assistance:** Housing affordability and availability continued to be significant areas of need. With rent so high and options so few, we aimed to guide and equip people with finding short-term placement and long-term solutions. We were also able to steward the Care Fund to assist those within the congregation and local community with utility bills, mortgage/rent payments, auto repairs, holiday gifts, and other material needs.
- Community Care:** In order to steward our Care Fund responsibly, we partnered with Harvest Family Success Center in Flemington to provide well for those in our local community who are in need of additional financial assistance and support.

Mental Health Support

The mental health support of our congregation was another continual area of focus. This included checking in regularly with those struggling; helping with the cost of mental health care; and creating safe environments for people to process their challenges. Given the rising need to respond to mental health struggles, we continued to hone our approach through our Care & Support Groups.

- Group Counseling: Next Steps:** This group was offered during the winter/spring ministry season. We continue to hone our group counseling offerings in order to increase accessibility.
- Group Counseling: Marriage Recovery & Restoration:** A new Group Counseling offering for married couples was created, which will launch in early 2026.
- Trauma Healing Group:** We facilitated two six-week offerings of this group using the American Bible Society's Trauma Healing Institute curriculum. We also equipped and trained a new leader for this group, who will begin serving in 2026.

Business Operations Team

In 2025 we celebrated the 155th anniversary of our church and a number of amazing achievements.

- We experienced a significant milestone with the successful completion of the 2025 Built Together Capstone project to replace our HVAC system and completely renovate the lower level of our main building. We were blessed that the project was completed on time and on budget and for so many people that gave generous donations and countless volunteer hours.
- We were truly humbled and grateful for your commitment to support both the ongoing ministry costs as well as the capital investments necessary for South Ridge to live out our mission for people to **Experience Belonging, Embrace God's Grace, and Extend God's Love.**
- Our Total Offering Income was \$2,158,957. While this number was down versus the prior year and fell short of our budget, giving to the Built Together 2025 Capstone Project was very generous and totaled \$761,021. Looking at the overall picture, giving to South Ridge was 5% higher in 2025 versus the prior year.
- As always, 15% of our total Offering Income was directed to serving the Kingdom of God beyond our campus. Your contributions to South Ridge in 2025 resulted in more than \$344,000 to support ministry outside our doors in our local community and around the world!

Please see our Financial Activity Summary and Balance Sheet on the following pages for more 2025 fiscal detail.

Financial Activity Summary

Income: January through December 2025

INCOME

General Offering	\$2,159,157
Other Income (Solar, Interest income, Facility Use, Retreat Fees, etc.)	\$201,305

Total Income	\$2,360,462
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EXPENSE

Building and Planning (Capital) (Building & Grounds, Large Facility Projects, etc.)	\$73,045
Church Administration (Ministry Assistants & Coordinators, Maintenance/Cleaning, Office Operations, Professional Services, Technology, etc.)	\$680,537
Congregational Growth & Development (Groups, Family Ministry, Care Needs, etc.)	\$70,381
Executive Operations (Pastors, Ministry Directors, Insurance, Benefits, etc.)	\$696,816
Extend Ministries* (Community Outreach, Local & Global Partnerships & Projects)	\$342,690
Programming & Media (AV Equipment/Maintenance, Programming Resources, Guest Services & Marketing Communications)	\$44,678
Property Operations (Utilities, Equipment, Small Facility Projects, Service Contracts, etc.)	\$226,313
SR Kids (Sunday am, Vacation Bible School, Outreach, Training, etc.)	\$22,530
SR Students (Retreats, Group Life, Outreach, Training, etc.)	\$93,596

Total Expense	\$2,250,586
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Designated or Restricted Income/Expense (Capstone Project, SR Kids, SR Students, Extend Ministry, etc.)	-\$1,145,285
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* An additional \$1,402 was set aside from 2025 offering income and will be disbursed in 2026 consistent with our 15% target

**Numbers have been rounded

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2025

ASSETS

Cash & bank accounts

TD Bank General Fund Checking	\$125,406
TD Choice Card Account	\$2,666
Vanguard Brokerage Account	\$1,240,217
Wesleyan Investment Fund Savings	\$102
Other Current Assets	\$349,060
TOTAL CASH & BANK ACCOUNTS	\$1,717,449

Fixed assets

Real Property	\$2,450,000
Other Assets	\$17,829
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	\$2,467,829

Total Assets

\$ 4,185,278

LIABILITIES

Designated funds & reserve accounts

Accounts Payable	\$40,368
Credit Cards	\$7,520
Accrued Expenses	\$3,715
Prepaid Income	\$16,360
Miscellaneous Restricted	\$361,443
Designated & Passthrough Accounts	\$655,628
Payroll Liabilities	\$21,445
Wesleyan Investment Foundation Loan	\$700,669
TOTAL DESIGNATED & RESERVE ACCOUNTS	\$1,807,148

TOTAL LIABILITIES & RESERVE ACCOUNTS

\$1,807,148

NET WORTH

\$2,378,130

**Numbers have been rounded*

