

Jamie Biddison - Spiritual Autobiography

My faith journey with Christ began at a young age. I remember clearly as a 6-year-old praying with my mother before bedtime that Jesus would come into my life and save me from my sins. At that moment, I felt a supernatural peace that I could not explain, and I knew I was different. From then on, I wanted Christ to direct my steps.

Growing up in a church community allowed me to expand my understanding of scripture and develop spiritually. Some of the most formative times occurred as a teenager going on summer mission trips. Witnessing the love of Christ from others living around the world with little material wealth allowed me to see the true community of Christ and His global presence. The people I met on these trips loved God with a passion that I knew I wanted myself.

As an adult, God has seen me through the trials of finding a career path and starting a family of my own. I started working in research after college but several Godly people at my church advised me to go into teaching, which I have seen as the work of the Holy Spirit guiding me. I also met my wife at church and immediately saw in her a shared desire to serve God and His people. After having 2 children we felt led to explore a new church and again were guided by some faithful friends to visit Church of the Resurrection, which has now been our church home for the last 4 years.

Experience Serving Christ:

In my former Presbyterian church, as a deacon, I helped support those with financial or physical needs, and brought communion to those unable to attend church. I also continued looking for international mission opportunities, working with a church-sponsored missionary to support a local church in the city of San Salvador. As a public high school teacher, I partnered with a wonderful group of students to start a Christian Fellowship Club, which I continue to lead. Over the last 12 years of serving with that group, I have been blessed by so many students as we read scripture, pray and support each other each Friday before school.

Current Serving Positions at Res:

My wife Lee and I are deeply blessed by our community group and the wonderful fellowship we have found there. While Lee often serves as a worship assistant on Sunday mornings, I serve as a ResKids' teacher, a ResCamp counselor, and a scripture reader. Our son James loves being an acolyte. I have been deeply touched by watching all the children in Res Kids grow in their love for Jesus, and I have been blown away by God's faithfulness and presence throughout Res while serving in the summer during Res Camp. God is working at Church of the Resurrection, and I am so blessed to be a part of it!

John Buxton - Spiritual Autobiography

Writing about myself I always find difficult, but that said, here is my story. I was born into a strict Methodist family in Towson 75 years ago. God & church have always been a part of my life, though I must admit that I did not come to know the Lord Jesus personally until 2002 in Bible Study Fellowship. I was blessed to have 3 strong believing men from the Church of the Messiah and my wife Margaret encouraged me to attend Bible Study Fellowship and it was there that Fall that I came to accept Jesus as my Savior. It was a stressful & rough patch in my life as work was chaotic with management changes and I had a drug reaction from treatment for an eye infection, which gave me a period of anxiety. God used this stress to show me my weakness, as I had always been a very confident, self-reliant man, never feeling I had any weaknesses. Our first study that year was Israel and the Minor Prophets, and through that study, I came to see from the life of David and the Prophets, that I needed Jesus to direct the rest of my life. It was then I accepted Jesus as my Savior (Halleluyah!). I have been in BSF for the last 22 years as a group leader, and love studying the word. After joining Res in 2011, I immediately joined a men's Bible Study on Tuesday morning, which I still attend today. I am in the word daily with "Jesus Calling" and Daily prayers. I sadly sin every day and have to ask God and others for forgiveness often.

I believe I serve the Lord and build His Kingdom through the way I live my life. I am devoted to my wife, children, and grandchildren, and continue to lead & serve them. I am outgoing, and share the good news of Jesus with others as God gives me opportunities to do so. I try to live my personal life by his word and interact with people and creation as called by scripture. I have served friends, co-workers and members of Res by listening to them and praying with them on a personal and not organizational basis. I have prayed with strangers when I feel the call, and helped strangers with their practical needs.

As a member of Res for 15 years, I have served as an usher, reader, on the altar (not recently) and several prayer ministries. I have set up and torn down for many Res events like Alpha, MNO, and Lenten Classrooms. I have served on Pastoral Care and have listened to people, comforted people, prayed with people, and helped people with practical needs where I have the God-given skills. One of my favorite duties at Res has been to build props for Easter Family Fun Day and Summer Camp, some of which are still used today. I love that God has given me the talent and desire to build things.

To close, I will share one of my favorite verses from Scripture: Ezekiel 36:26 "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." When I came to know Jesus, He did that for me.

Hope this helps folks get to know a little about my Spiritual life.

Ryan Combs - Spiritual Autobiography

My parents have always made biblical instruction and principles centerpieces of their parenting and teaching. Their dependence on faith in the Lord for guidance and strength through their own personal and relational flaws left an impression on me that has stuck with me through the darkest and most intense times of doubt in my life.

Although I first “prayed the prayer” when I was 12, my faith became my own in 2014. At that time, the reality of the daily walk with the Lord sunk in irreversibly when I told Christ definitively that my life is all in his hands and I cannot do it on my own.

Through doubt, sin and insecurity, I have learned that I am a depraved sinner; if left to my own devices, I would destroy myself, my relationships with others, and most importantly, my relationship with God. It took God revealing himself to me through the revelation of Scripture in John 1 for me to develop a confidence in the power of God’s grace and the reality of Christ’s role as the Word in creation, and to give up control over my life. I am learning how true joy and peace can only be found by spending time in the Word and in prayer on a regular basis. I am also learning how crucial it is to be plugged into a lively Christian community to grow spiritually and otherwise. I have confidence in the reality of His promises and in the Resurrection because God has revealed himself to me and is continuing to do so in so many ways. One of my life verses is Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. The life I live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Experience serving Christ and Building His Kingdom:

For the first year or so after 2014, I felt I was primarily the recipient of ministry. Shortly after that, I moved to Memphis TN, and quickly got involved at Second Presbyterian Church, where I lived life with a group of guys who were passionate about Christ both on Sundays and throughout the week. During that time, I served as a worship leader playing the guitar and singing in the young adult ministry and I led a few young adult bible studies. I enjoy the academic and relational aspects of studying God’s word and trying to apply it to my life alongside other believers, particularly when I am able to experience life on life with the same people outside of church and bible study.

My current job also provides an opportunity to be a light in a place mostly full of non-believers. While I occasionally, but not often, explicitly share the gospel with my non-believing co-workers, I try to be a witness for Christ with a calm, confident, trustworthy leadership approach where I treat all people as equal no matter their title or position in life.

I am also now raising 3 kids, which I see as one of the most important ministry opportunities. Sometimes I feel inadequate as a father, but I am thankful that God has given me clarity of mind to prioritize sharing the gospel with my kids: it’s all about Jesus, who is God.

Service at Church of the Resurrection:

I want to get even more involved at Resurrection, but so far I have participated in men’s bible studies and social activities consistently, both as a table leader and active participant. I also maintain close friendships with several other men at church that I see regularly outside of Sunday’s corporate worship. I see those relationships as a critical component of my church life as a form of accountability and community.

Clayton Millis - Spiritual Autobiography

I was initially introduced to Christ through my Catholic upbringing, but my personal faith was solidified during high school. A new parish priest challenged us to form a personal relationship with Jesus, and this call was reinforced when my older sister lovingly shared the Gospel of grace. That evening, through God's providence, I prayed with her and formally accepted Christ as my personal Lord and Savior, becoming born again. Following college, my wife, Julie, and I spent years prayerfully exploring various Bible-based traditions, as members of Baptist and Presbyterian congregations in Maryland. This journey ultimately led us to find our enduring home at the Church of the Resurrection during COVID. My current spiritual life centers on my primary role as a husband and father, anchoring our three children's lives to a biblical worldview against the pressures of the modern world. I believe in the power of prayer, extending beyond mealtimes into moments of daily doubt, discernment, and thanksgiving, and I actively model this for my family. I also strive to exemplify servant-leadership and integrity in the workplace. Each morning, I aim to put on the full armor of God through quiet prayer, reflection, and gratitude.

My experience serving Christ has often centered on utilizing vocational interests, particularly sports and the marketplace, to create pathways for sharing the Gospel. I have been blessed to co-lead team Bible studies and participate on campus groups like the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and, some years ago, helped launch "Men at Work," a bible-based ministry for professionals. Within the church, I have participated in corporate ministry, serving roles on the Usher Team, in Children's Ministry, and as part of the Diaconate. In all these opportunities, I sought to be a faithful steward of the talents and influence God has granted, contributing to the building of His Kingdom through creating opportunities for connection and discipleship.

My primary service at Church of the Resurrection has been supporting our family's involvement, particularly my wife's support of youth and women's ministry, along with her service as Church Administrator for 18 months. I periodically participate in community activities like Alpha and Men's Ministry events. In my professional career, I have developed key capabilities directly relevant to Vestry's stewardship, including organizational design, strategic planning, and financial management. I am eager to dedicate these skills and my commitment to accountability and mission advancement by serving alongside our Rector and fellow Vestry members to strengthen the ministry of our church.

Liz Nilsen - Spiritual Autobiography

I grew up in a family that was nominally Christian, but did not participate in life with God in any way beyond grace at holiday dinners. I began to explore whether there was a God – and what God might be like – as a teenager. By God’s grace I became friends with a self-organized group of active Christians in high school who introduced me to Jesus. With their encouragement, I was baptized at 17. In college my “baby faith” grew by leaps and bounds through Bible study, discipleship groups, and corporate worship with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.

My current spiritual life includes two “streams” that I find essential: first, an individual devotional practice of daily prayer and scripture reading along with regular times of retreat and solitude. Second, following Jesus with others, including weekly worship at Res and community group participation. I’ve been active in Bible study for many years, at Res and through other organizations. I’m also a participant with Coracle (a ministry supported by Res whose mission is to encourage “spiritual formation for Kingdom action”), which has introduced me to more contemplative practices of spirituality.

At a basic level, I seek to be present and available in personal relationships and volunteer with various groups. More specifically, my individual gifts revolve around administration and discernment. Using those gifts is a large part of my professional work, which I see as a calling: doing consulting, training and writing in the areas of collaboration, teamwork, and strategic planning. The desire to work alongside others is part of being created in God’s image. I love being able to help groups live into that vision, particularly groups that are trying to bring flourishing to their neighborhoods or communities.

I’ve been involved at Res in many ways including serving at the altar, providing for after-service fellowship, and volunteering in outreach activities. In the past two years, I stepped back to complete a graduate degree, but I have continued to be part of the prayer chain, a community group, and the team cooking meals for families welcoming new babies or otherwise needing support. Until a few months ago, I also led the “Gospel & Culture” group at Res, providing opportunities for the Res community to connect with God’s vision for his people in the world. With my studies just now completed I’m eagerly seeking new avenues to serve.

W. Morgan Watson - Spiritual Autobiography

I came to know Christ by growing up in a home where faith was part of everything we did. Church wasn't just a place we went on Sundays, it was the heart of our family and our community. We prayed together, talked about God's love and looked for his lessons in every challenge. My mother and grandmother showed me what it truly meant to live by faith. Watching them trust God through hard times taught me that He always provides a way. As I got older, there were seasons where I leaned more on my own strength and plans than on God's path for me. But even then, I learned that God never leaves your side. Through His love, grace and unending patience, I realized He was walking with me all along, even when I wasn't looking for Him.

Being part of Church of the Resurrection has helped me grow even closer to Him. This church has been a blessing, a place of prayer, support and love for me and my family. I am so thankful how God continues to work through this church community and in the life of my family every day.

I often struggle to see how God has used me to help build His Kingdom. I've made my share of mistakes and haven't always followed the path He set for me, but He's taught me that He can still use me just as I am. I've seen Him work through me when I serve at the church, coach young kids or simply try to provide support to someone who is going through troubled times. Those small moments remind me that God doesn't need me to be perfect, just faithful. When I trust in Him to lead, I see His grace at work in my life and that is where I hope I am helping build His Kingdom.

I have served as an usher and reader since joining Resurrection in 2014. Serving as an usher and reader has been a meaningful part of my faith journey. Welcoming people into worship has taught me how valuable small gestures of kindness can be to people. Reading Scripture has deepened my relationship with God and given me the confidence to share his Word. These experiences have helped me grow closer to my church family and feel the call to serve in a deeper way.

Ben Wickham – Spiritual Autobiography

I grew up north of Baltimore in a Covenant Family attending a Presbyterian church filled with the usual Bible-believing characters with their idiosyncrasies that make me smile upon remembrance. Coming of age in the midst of this, I, of course, took it all for granted even as the foundation was being laid. There was never a time when I didn't believe in the Biblical narrative and talk to God regularly, but it wasn't until I attended college that I began to think more deeply about how being a follower of Christ is more than a belief in an origin story. It's a relational experience with a risen Savior.

As my high school years culminated in a graduation, I was excited to leave my parent's home and attend college, where I could escape the world of working for another four years. My plan was to sleep in on Sundays, focus on finding new friends, and play intramural sports while maintaining some kind of GPA. As it turned out, I was wildly successful in all but the sleeping-in. Fortunately, my faith was deeply enough ingrained that I sought out a local church and Christian friends as roommates who kept me humble, offered guidance, and whom I still see regularly and hold dear. They have similar sentiments. I have often thought that in spite of my selfish desires and tendencies to wander from my faith, I'm a good example of (NIV, Prov. 22:6): "Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." I pray for similar experiences for all my children.

They say who you marry is the most important financial decision you will ever make. From my experience, I say that who you marry is likely to be the major determinant of your everlasting life. Wendy has been my resource and quick-witted team member for 31 years. She loves Christ and doesn't hesitate to keep me and our family straight. We try to run our house in ways that are pleasing to the Lord.

I currently serve Christ at Church of the Resurrection by regularly volunteering on and often leading the Usher teams that make the services run smoothly and provide structure and comfort. It brings me joy to be able to serve with not only other men and women who love Christ but also with my son Zeke and Caleb, whose youthful presence and infectious enthusiasm are contagious. It's been an excellent opportunity to get to know the members of the congregation individually.