

NEW LIFE BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH PROFILE – 2023/24

1. Who We Are

At New Life Bible Fellowship Church, **our mission** is to glorify God, introduce people to new life in Christ, and equip believers to grow into mature disciple-makers.

Our vision is that, by God’s grace, we will become a multi-generational church with a heart for all people that is equipped through the Word and prayer, to intentionally, authentically, and sacrificially live out our faith by introducing people to Jesus and serving our church, community, and beyond.

Our core values that we desire to see lived out by each member are summarized in the diagram below:



New Life’s members represent a diversity of ages, educational levels, occupations and incomes. We are primarily Caucasian (which is typical of our area), with a mixture of blue- and white-collar professions represented. Many of our ministry programs reach un-churched families from surrounding communities. We have both discipleship classes and life groups. Sunday morning services at New Life engage the congregation in Christ-centered worship with a contemporary-style worship team and a blend of old and new songs, while dynamic, expository preaching gives opportunity to grow in knowledge and understanding of God’s Word. Church members are encouraged and equipped to be active participants in ministry as we continually strive to be disciples who make disciples for the glory of God and the furtherance of His Kingdom.

Our average Sunday morning attendance in 2023 was 496, and our regular attendance roster lists about 800 people who would call New Life their home church. Our 2024 membership is 328. The leadership of New Life would feel generally at home in ministry circles like the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, the Gospel Coalition, IXMarks, the Christian Counseling and Education Foundation, and Crossway. We are currently taking our congregation through one question each week from an updated version of the Heidelberg Catechism. Our children’s Sunday school classes use Answers in Genesis curriculum.

2. Introduction and History

New Life Bible Fellowship Church is located in the midst of the farming community of Oley, Pennsylvania. This community is known for its scenic setting with a valley surrounded by rolling hills. The church is located only a few miles from the Village of Oley, with a cluster of homes surrounding the church.

New Life was founded in 1977 by a handful of members from the Fleetwood Bible Fellowship Church. Oley was identified as an ideal location for a church plant, land was acquired, and numerous steps of faith were taken to establish the church. The almost immediate bold step to construct a facility was seen in the day as a big mistake,

but as God would have it, the church grew in number. With continued steady growth an educational wing with a multi-purpose room, classrooms, and kitchen were added in 1979.

As New Life continued to grow in the 1980's, the need for a larger sanctuary and gym for activities became apparent. Both were accomplished with dedication of the gym on October 14, 1988 and the sanctuary on November 20, 1988.

The addition of an Educational Wing in 2007 provided space for the flourishing adult and youth ministries. Additionally, the gym was renovated and the existing pavilion was re-built and enlarged.

Senior pastors who have served at New Life BFC:

-Pastor Henry Shell, 1977-1983

-Pastor Jason Blair, 2015-2018

-Pastor Ken Barber, 1986-1998

-Pastor Scott Allison, 2019-present

-Pastor Art Simpson, 2000-2014

From New Life's beginning, it has been known for its dedication to pursuing the Lord's leading and venturing into unique ministries in an effort to reach people for Christ. While located in a rural area of Berks County, PA, New Life impacts many communities in the Greater Reading area. Attendance over the past 40+ years has been steady with growth.

3. Worship & Music

We have two Sunday services at 8:30 and 10:00 AM. We have adult discipleship classes during both service hours. Musically, New Life has a mostly contemporary flavor, but hymns are frequently included in the service. We strive to select songs that are doctrinally rich.

4. Sunday School

Currently, we offer discipleship classes for all ages on Sunday mornings. These classes are intentionally varied in style to provide for a variety of discipleship needs, from Bible-book studies to classes that focus on skills for the Christian life. Our children's ministry walks through the Bible chronologically, and our teens usually are studying through books of the Bible.

5. Children's Ministry

Under the direction of our full-time Children's Ministry Director, we have a thriving children's ministry program that reaches a large number of un-churched families. New Life Kids consists of nursery/ toddler care, Sunday School, Children's Church through grade 4, mid-week programs for pre-K through grade 6, and Vacation Bible School. Our VBS is a summer highlight that has a large community impact. Children are invited to join their parents for the musical portion of the worship service before being dismissed back to children's church.

6. Youth Ministry

Youth group meetings take place on Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings. The youth group also participates in special events such as summer camps, winter retreats, and various service projects throughout the year. We have a committed team of adult leaders that serve as core team leaders, who are led by our full-time youth pastor.

7. Life Groups

Community-based small groups exist for fellowship, prayer, Bible study, discipleship, accountability, and a place to "do life together". We believe that authentic relationships are built within smaller settings and Life Groups are a deliberate approach to facilitate those relationships. Life Groups are held in homes and facilitated by

trained leaders. Our men's ministry, women's ministry, and young adult ministry hold similar objectives to that of our traditional life groups, but meet at various times and locations.

8. Outreach

New Life seeks to introduce people to Christ through a variety of outreach opportunities including:

- Vacation Bible School
- Forever Young (55+ ministry with significant community impact)
- The Oley Fair
- "The Tent" outreach to bikers participating in Reading Motorcycle Club annual event
- Various service opportunities at local ministries like LC Medical (crisis pregnancy center) and Hope Rescue Mission
- Sports ministry
- Angel Tree Christmas (prison ministry)

9. Global Partnerships/Missions

Realizing the importance of obeying The Great Commission and striving to reach the lost with the Gospel, New Life is intentional in supporting and participating in outreach, both here and abroad. In addition to providing short-term missions opportunities for church members, we provide support to global partners, both domestically and internationally. We have an active Missions Team that oversees budgets and giving, as well as the needs and progress of our global partners. The committee also seeks to educate the congregation on global trends (as they affect global outreach) and the ministries of our various global partners. We host two missions-emphasis Sundays per year and also feature occasional "Missions Moment" reports during our Sunday-morning services.

10. Physical Facility

Our building is located on over 8 acres and accommodates parking for 168 vehicles including 9 ADA spaces. Our interior space contains 12 classrooms and a conference room for our various Sunday School and mid-week programs. We have a spacious, well-stocked nursery for infant care. Our gymnasium serves multiple purposes and contains a commercial kitchen. A smaller kitchen is located near our offices. We also have a welcoming fellowship hall adjacent to our sanctuary. The sanctuary seats up to 340.

11. Bible Fellowship Conference Affiliation

New Life is one of about 70 Bible Fellowship Churches, mostly in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and New York. Congregations are also found in Maryland, Florida, New Mexico, and Mexico. In total, there are about 10,000 BFC worshippers worldwide each Sunday morning.

12. Berks County and Oley Valley

Berks County is located in the Southeastern section of the state of Pennsylvania and is surrounded by Lancaster, Lehigh, Schuylkill and Chester counties. Reading city is the county seat of government and is located approximately 55 miles from Philadelphia. Berks County is one of many counties in Southeastern Pennsylvania considered the heartland of the Pennsylvania Dutch people group.

Oley Valley is located 10 miles northeast of Reading, Pennsylvania in the county of Berks. The valley covers almost all of Oley, Pike, Ruscombmanor and Alsace townships and all of these townships make up the Oley Valley School District. The Village of Oley has a strong historical heritage. In March 1983, the entire Township of Oley was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Part of the valley's rich history begins when French and German Huguenots settled in the valley in pursuit of religious freedoms. Moravians were also part of the

early settlers. Today, farms continue to make up the majority of the valley with a mixture of dairy, poultry, equestrian, and horticulture enterprises.

13. Leadership Structure

Our leadership structure consists of an Elder board, Deacon board, and Deaconess board which are congregationally nominated, elder reviewed, and then selected by lot to serve 3-year terms. Currently serving in leadership are 7 elders, 11 deacons and 15 deaconesses.

Elders have general oversight of the life and work of the church including worship, preaching, ordinances, evangelism, visitation, discipline, finances, and maintenance of the property.

Deacons & Deaconesses have the general responsibility of being sympathetic and benevolent in service to the church, providing physical and material care as needed.

A Shepherding Team is being developed. This group comprises a variety of wise, godly people from our church who have been invited to assist the elders in staying in regular contact with our members.

14. Staff & Administration

Senior Pastor (FT)

Executive Pastor (FT)

Youth Pastor (FT)

Director of Children's Ministry (FT)

Director of Worship Arts (FT)

2 Church Administrative Assistants (PT)

Pastoral Intern (FT)

Director of Building & Maintenance (FT)

Custodian (PT)

15. Finances and Budget

New Life is a financially healthy church that prioritizes wise stewardship of the resources that God has given us. We own our building and have healthy cash reserves, allowing us to invest in ministry over servicing debt.