

2018

BLACK ROCK CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT



GUEST RECEPTION

"I don't even know why I'm here," said a first-time guest as she approached our Guest Reception kiosk one Sunday morning. She had tried many other religions, but never found peace, so she decided to try visiting a church and made her way here. By the end of that day's worship service, she returned to Guest Reception to announce that she realized the peace she sought is only found in Jesus and she wanted to become a Christian. She met with the team in our Prayer Room where she surrendered her life to Christ and felt a weight lift from her shoulders. In the following weeks and months; she completed Starting Point, was baptized, connected in Community, and now serves at Black Rock. Every one of the 1,000+ people who comes through our doors has a story that God is writing in their lives. What a privilege for our team to play a role in those stories each week!

SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY

The "Shine" ministry has been impacting families with children with special needs utilizing a 1 on 1 "buddy system" to integrate these children into the Sunday school program and church environment. We have grown this year to 20 families with children ranging from ages 4 to 21 and have new families interested monthly. We have a group of 7 wonderful and consistent volunteers that help weekly. One family stated: *"Without the Shine ministry, my family would still not be able to attend church regularly and they would not be learning about Jesus' love for us or the importance of developing a relationship with Jesus. My special needs son would not have the opportunity to have fun learning about the Lord with other children, and we would most likely all miss out on attending church regularly."*

CARE MINISTRY

Five hundred Thanksgiving "Black Rock Cares" meals were distributed to families in our church as well as the local community. We provided over \$63,000 in financial support to those in need in our church family. We have also funded our Living Free groups, which provide healing, hope and support to those seeking freedom from areas of brokenness.

MOMS OF THE ROCK

It has been a privilege to see over eighty women flourish in their relationships with the Lord and one another this year through Black Rock's Moms of the Rock community. Our moms beautifully live out Scripture's call to "rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep" as our community has come alongside members who have experienced great joy as well as heart-wrenching sadness over the past year. We also saw incredible generosity among our group when we had the honor of hosting a shower for an expectant mom from Hopeline who courageously chose life for her baby. There is an evident hunger among our moms to grow in godliness as they show an eagerness to learn more about God's plan for all aspects of their lives through our various speakers and panels. We are excited about what God is doing among our community of moms and trust that He will continue to do even more.



SANCTUARY MINISTRY

Our Sanctuary ministry is passionately celebrating another year of success. This year, we've seen God do what only He can do through us by lifting the head of the discouraged, healing bodies of the sick, igniting faith within the faithless, and making the name of Jesus more famous in our cities and universities. It has been a joy to see so many young adults who are either new or seasoned in their faith turn the page with courage by realizing that we are the ones who are anointed to joyfully exemplify the love of Jesus to our neighborhoods and the nations. We're already beginning to see the fruit of what has been planted in this season: countless young adults have placed their faith in Jesus for the first time, we had 12 people publicly profess their faith in a record baptism service this past fall, 50% of our people that once identified themselves as a new guest are now members attending weekly small groups, 120 people attended our Winter Retreat in March, a new record, 44 of which were new to Sanctuary in the past 5 months. We will remember this milestone year, but believe that greater things are still to come!

SENIORS OF THE ROCK

Growing from Young at Heart into Seniors of the Rock, we call adults 55+ to build their lives on Jesus, the Solid Rock. On the first Friday each month, September through June, we provide an opportunity for nearly 200 seniors to receive inspiration and information through our catered luncheons. Seniors of the Rock has also started a monthly Bible study, emphasizing small group involvement as well as service projects.

STUDENT MINISTRY

What an incredible year in the Student Ministry at Black Rock Church! Area 56 and Club JV, our two middle school ministries, have seen over 100 students each week pour into Black Rock for amazing fun and teaching that helps them see God's Word as their foundation for life. In FUSION, our high school ministry, we have seen students come to know Jesus and grow with awe-inspiring passion and depth. Truly, it is the changed lives that we want to celebrate. Over 100 people have attended student ministry missions trips in the past year. Our large fall and winter retreats draw an average of 200 students and leaders. Over 50 students at our weekly programming, retreats, or Young Life events have placed their faith in Jesus for the first time. God is moving powerfully in our students and we are so grateful to the 50+ leaders who shepherd our students towards a thriving relationship with Jesus.

SERVING AT BLACK ROCK

Last May, over 300 people participated in our very first Love Works Day. Currently 893 people serve across our 93 internal teams and every day we add to that number! Because we believe in their passion for serving and helping people grow in their faith, our ministry continues to empower our members rather than our staff to lead our serving teams. Last but not least, we are proud of the way Serving reflects the makeup of our church: from teens to the elderly, singles and families, women and men from diverse socio-economic backgrounds serve together to love others as Jesus did. We believe that's a glimpse of heaven which we are proud to see here and now.



SENIOR PASTOR

On a recent Sunday morning, a new attender comes to the Next Steps kiosk after worship. Her name is Victoria and she is looking for guidance toward a relationship with Jesus. There, Victoria receives a Bible and signs up to be part of "Starting Point," the Black Rock discussion group designed to grow the kind of relationship with God that Victoria seeks. Then, the Next Steps volunteer asks Victoria how she started coming to Black Rock. In reply, Victoria explains that it all began because she doesn't drive.

On a frigid, snowy day in February Victoria was walking from the store with her 7-year-old granddaughter. As they shivered in the blowing wind, a woman pulled-up next to them and asked if they would like a ride. Victoria was so thankful for the kindness that she overcame her reluctance and, along with her granddaughter, got in the car.

On the way, the three of them had a friendly conversation. One thing led to another, and the driver told Victoria about the wonderful church she attends and that if she ever wanted to go, she'd give them a ride.

Victoria knew she needed God and that Jesus was reaching out to her through this woman's offer...and that is why Victoria and her granddaughter are now at Black Rock every Sunday, joyfully growing in Jesus.

I share Victoria's tale because within the ordinary details of her story is the miraculous work of God! I am thrilled to report that this was another exciting year at Black Rock where God brought hundreds upon hundreds of people like Victoria and her granddaughter into a growing relationship with Him. And because people like Victoria and her granddaughter are coming by the hundreds:

- Over the past 3 years, we have doubled our average adult Sunday worship attendance!
- Our 4 Starting Point/Next Chapter classes are running at capacity with waiting lists!

- Our Sunday morning Kids Ministry is overflowing with kids eager to learn about Jesus!
- Over 6 Christmas Eve services, we hosted 4500 worshipping Bethlehem's Savior!
- On Easter Sunday, we hosted 4500 worshipping our Risen Lord!

At Black Rock, we have reasons to praise God that number in the thousands upon thousands! While God rejoices with us, He also challenges us to overcome our worsening space-problem. We have a desperate need for more space to teach kids about Jesus...and we're begging for more space to conduct more Starting Point groups and other Sunday adult Bible seminars.

Our purpose as a church is to help adults, students and kids to grow in Jesus—and our lack of space is seriously hampering this urgent mission. That's why Black Rock is going to another level. "Shine On" is our all-church effort to fund the second floor that was part of our original building design. And so, 4 days from tonight, we will have our church-wide ingathering toward the second floor project and the elimination of our current mortgage. Please join me in prayer and participation as together we aim for excellence in our quest to Love God, Love People and Serve our World!

The "Victorias" who are streaming into our fellowship and finding God, are coming because God is doing miracles THROUGH us. Although we're ordinary people, who drive ordinary cars through ordinary snowstorms—the extraordinary Spirit of Jesus indwells us. As we pull-over and reach-out to our neighbors, God rescues souls of both young and old—which is the greatest miracle of all.

What an awesome and urgent privilege we have to share Jesus with our world!

What a joy it is to be part of God work at Black Rock!

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Steve

EXECUTIVE PASTOR

At Black Rock we have a tremendous staff who have a passion to serve God and serve others. Because the staff is so dedicated, we take leading a growing church as an incredible privilege and an incredible responsibility. We see every person who walks through the doors of our church as an amazing work of art created in the image of God. We want to do everything we can to help them grow in their faith and live up to the potential God created for them. In Luke 12:48 Jesus said, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." We believe God has blessed Black Rock with many people and it is our privilege as church leaders to help them grow and serve. We know that God demands a lot from our staff and they continue to step up to lovingly serve wherever is needed.

Despite our growth over the past year we did not add any full-time positions at the church. Hannah Guinta had a baby and stepped down so Samantha Trolice was hired as a member of the Student Ministry Team. Sam had been a wonderful volunteer and member of the church and now is a great staff member.

As a staff we also chose to place an emphasis on serving the community outside the church walls this year. We worked together to talk about what it means to serve our community and began discussions with local community officials on how we can partner with them to help our area.

Because our church continues to grow and our staff does not, we had an emphasis on being more effective and efficient in how we work. Our staff made adjustments in how we set goals, hold ourselves accountable and work together. We are excited about seeing more and more of the congregation understand who they are and

where God created them to serve inside and outside the church.

An exciting development this year was the expansion of our internship program. We have a deep desire to expand the kingdom through developing leaders who can serve not just our church but also churches in our region. This year we had ten interns either in our summer internship program or through a ten-month fellowship program.

Our commitment to training leaders is also seen as we present three candidates for ordination. These three completed the ordination process at Black Rock which includes an examination of their call by the elders and passing an ordination counsel of local pastors. Continuing our desire to train church leaders in our region, two of the candidates don't work directly for Black Rock.

As Black Rock continues to grow, much is required of our staff and they continue to step up to every challenge. They serve out of a love for God that overflows into loving the congregation and community. It is a privilege to serve this staff as Executive Pastor.

Humbly submitted,
Rev. Josh R. Feay



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We have seen tremendous growth at Black Rock Church over the last year. God continues to give us opportunities each week to introduce people to the love of Jesus and help them take their next step in their spiritual growth journey. It is an exciting time for us as we look forward to completing the second floor of the church and continue to see how we can reach kids, youth and adults with the gospel. Here are a few of the great stories from this year.

STEWARDSHIP

One of our big ownership steps at Black Rock is that of stewardship. We have run three Financial Peace University classes with some 75 people participating. During each of these we hear of the growth and actionable life change that happens in those who go through the classes. We also were able to offer the Stewardship Workshop that ran for eight weeks and helped people at BRC grow in their view that their entire life is all about stewardship.

FINANCIAL

This year was an incredible year of giving to our general and building funds. It was quite evident throughout the summer when we saw consistent giving each week and many people started to use our online giving platform, Pushpay. Of those who give at least monthly to our church, over 50% of the giving is now online. Those who give online give more consistently throughout the year, which helps our overall giving.

Through the first nine months of this year, we have seen a gain of over 200 new giving families compared to the previous period last year. Our giving to our general fund has increased over the first nine months from \$2,728,000 in 2016-17 to \$3,205,000 in 2017-18.

FACILITY

Our church building continues to be used to its full capacity. During the evenings of Monday through Thursday, every adult classroom is used and we usually have to use our kids area rooms to handle all the ministries that are meeting at the church.

We made some upgrades around the church for our kids areas and expanded some of the rooms by taking down walls and getting new tables and chairs for the kids area. We also got new Café tables and chairs along with new Café equipment with our ever-growing Café ministry. Lastly, we made improvements to our Next Steps kiosk and were able to purchase a new sound board for the Worship Center.

This last year was a great year and we look forward to the Shine On campaign to see how we can add a second floor above our current kids area to allow us to have five adult classrooms, a new area for kids and youth as well as volunteers on Sunday mornings. God is shining His light through us as we are good stewards of all that He has entrusted to us.

Jeremy Taylor



MISSIONS

This year's Global Missions ministry highlight was undoubtedly the 61st Annual Missions Conference. Our theme, "[un]KNOWN GOD," was taken from Paul's encounter with men at the Areopagus in Athens where he found an altar with the inscription, "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD" (Acts 17:22-34). Paul seized this opportunity to explain that they could know the "known God" of the Bible. On the first Sunday of the conference, Shohrat P. of Gospel Wave Media Ministry shared how God is moving among people in the "Stans" of the former Soviet Union. The following Sunday, Maggie K. from World Relief, helped us explore how God is using Jordanian churches to care for Syrian refugees. On Wednesday evening, we heard from one of our missionaries, Brad C., about how God is making Himself known to people in North Africa. The week was an inspiring reminder that God is alive and at work throughout the world. You undoubtedly know that we finance Black Rock's global missions program through our annual Faith Promise campaign. At this year's conference, over 200 people signed up as Prayer Partners for Black Rock missionaries and ministry partners. As we send missionaries to difficult, sometimes hazardous locations, they desperately need our ongoing and timely prayer support. With pledges from 530 families and individual, we reached our 2018-19 goal of \$1.2 million that allows us to support our 58 missionary families and 22 ministry partners. A few weeks ago, I listed for the congregation 40 countries where Black Rock supports a missionary or ministry:

Bosnia	Brazil	China	Congo
Croatia	Croatia	D.R.	Egypt
England	Germany	Ghana	Haiti
India	Indonesia	Israel	Jordan
Kazakhstan	Libya	Mexico	Nepal
Morocco	Namibia	Niger	Nigeria
Panama	Philippines	Romania	Russia
Rwanda	Senegal	S. Africa	Spain
S. Sudan	Syria	Taiwan	Tunisia
Turkey	U.A.E	U.S.A	

This is another illustration of Black Rock's global impact on people's lives as we seek to complete the Great Commission that Christ gave the church (Matthew 28: 16-20).

This past year, one of our most faithful missionary families, Greg and Susan Stowers, retired from their work in France where they established three churches during their career. We started supporting them in 1977 and their faithfulness is another example of our missions program's worldwide impact. Additionally, Bryan and Beckie S., after six years, left their ministry in Asia to return to the States. One of our newest missionary couples, Jaime and Emi, arrived in North Africa to start their ministry. Also, Zach Jorritsma, our newest missionary partner, started working with Bridges International Student Ministry at University of Bridgeport. It was also a great year for our short-term missions (STAMP) ministry. We sent teams to: Dominican Republic/Haiti, West Virginia (students), Panama, Bridgeport, Ghana, Nigeria and Rwanda. Additionally, we sent a STAMP response team to Houston after Hurricane Harvey and sponsored 40 foster kids to attend a week at Royal Family Kids' Camp.

As I complete my first full year solely devoted as Black Rock's Missions Pastor, I want to thank four people who have faithfully served on the Board of Missions for the past three years: Jonathan Bailey, Lisa Caporaso, Wendy Kaufman, and Manami Tsutsumi. Each has made a significant contribution to our global outreach and I am deeply grateful for their support and wisdom.

A special thank you to Dené Marcello who has served as the Board of Missions treasurer for the last five years. We will miss her, Scott and their family as they relocate to Florida. It is a pleasure to serve you, our missionaries throughout the world, and our local ministry partners. I look forward to what God has in store for us this next year.

In His Grip,
Pastor Larry

CARE MINISTRY

“Carry each other’s heavy loads. If you do, you will give the law of Christ its full meaning.”

GALATIANS 6:2

During 2017-18, Black Rock Care lived the truth of this verse through practical acts of support for our church family. Our mission is to help people meet their essential needs so that they are better able to focus on growing as Christ-followers. You may not know that the Deacons Fund is sustained only by the sacrificial giving of those in our congregation. So it is especially meaningful that last year this fund provided over \$75,000 to those in need within the church and greater community through counseling, grants, seasonal gifts and other initiatives. This fund also supplies books and other items for our 11 Living Free Groups which meet weekly, giving healing, hope and support to those who are struggling with specific life challenges such as abuse, anxiety, depression, divorce, grief and other issues. Please pray that many more in our church and the communities that we serve will take a courageous step into recovery through this ministry. Yet another highpoint in the year was the 500 Thanksgiving meals that Black Rock distributed to eligible church families along with our ministry partners: Bridgeport Rescue Mission, Hopeline, Operation Hope, Pivot Ministries, Urban Impact and YoungLives. It was amazing to see hundreds of colorful “Black Rock Cares” bags full of meal items loaded onto delivery trucks during our ingathering Sunday.

Several primary care needs are addressed in our Community Groups, and we continue partnering with facilitators as they come alongside group participants during life’s difficult seasons. We also support our ministry teams to help ensure excellent church family care. One of my greatest areas of satisfaction is joining with our outstanding staff members as we pastor this growing congregation.

Last year, Black Rock Prayer gave out over 300 wristbands imprinted with a reminder that “Prayer Changes Everything” at our Prayer Room open house. During nearly nine years on staff, I have seen a growing intensity in the “prayer

temperature” of our church. I believe that we are on the cusp of even greater breakthroughs as we continue to seek the Lord through this priceless gift of prayer. Our prayer opportunities include a Wednesday midweek meeting at 7:00pm, Sunday Prayer Room and Worship Center coverage, sessions for critical needs along with regular prayer and worship events.

I am so thankful for our Care Leadership Team of Deacons and Deaconesses. These gifted servants inspire me as they oversee the Deacons Fund and forward our mission: Mulenga Chinyumba-Chanka, Jeanine Hutchins, Susan Keeler (treasurer), Charl Malan, Brian Russell, Pete Schirmann, Catherine Sharafanowich, Pat Sorgenti (secretary), Sue Steeves and Paul Zeller. Sue Steeves will be dearly missed as she concludes her term of service this month.

Our Care Coordinators, Jeanette Benson (ongoing food), Lou Cubelli (finance), Judy Nesbitt (Care Shepherds) and Dolores Shoop (encouragement) manage nearly 30 ministries which, in turn, are led by many devoted volunteers. Sue Maxwell, care administrative assistant, enhances each of these service areas with her creativity and support for our volunteers.

Each day I bless the Lord for our Care Shepherds. These Elder appointed servants assist me with home, hospital and retirement facility visits and model Jesus’ heart for those in need.

Lastly, Sharon and I love our 55+ family, now known as Seniors of the Rock, and we continue to thank God for the honor of serving a church that loves God, loves people and serves our world!

Serving together,

Pastor Gaylord Lemke

On behalf of the Care Leadership Team (Board of Deacons)

GIVING

	ACTUAL GIVING 2016-17	PROJECTED GIVING 2017-18
GENERAL FUND & INCOME	\$3,735,000	\$4,019,000
MISSIONS FUND	\$1,220,000	\$1,220,000
BUILDING FUND	\$664,000	\$925,000
DEACONS FUND	\$97,000	\$90,000
TOTAL GIVING	\$5,716,000	\$6,254,000

BUDGET

JUNE 2018 – MAY 2019

REVENUE	2017-18	2018-19	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
GENERAL OFFERINGS	\$3,508,956	\$3,726,550	\$217,594	6%
SANCTUARY OFFERINGS	\$86,000	\$100,000	\$14,000	16%
OTHER INCOME	\$45,000	\$30,000	- \$15,000	-43%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$3,639,956	\$3,856,550	\$216,094	6%
EXPENSES	2017-18	2018-19	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$2,419,467	\$2,548,250	\$129,283	6%
INSURANCE BENEFITS	\$311,000	\$311,000	\$0	0%
TOTAL SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$2,418,967	\$2,548,250	\$129,283	5%

MINISTRIES	2017-18	2018-19	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
MUSIC MINISTRY	\$78,650	\$78,300	-\$350	0%
ADULT MINISTRY	\$15,500	\$33,000	\$17,500	112%
SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT	\$33,500	\$46,500	\$13,000	39%
CHILDREN'S MINISTRY	\$58,600	\$54,100	-\$4,500	-8%
YOUTH MINISTRIES	\$90,000	\$86,400	-\$3,600	-4%
SPECIAL NEEDS MINISTRY	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000	100%
COMMUNICATIONS	\$25,000	\$40,000	\$15,000	60%
SANCTUARY MINISTRY	\$26,500	\$31,200	\$4,700	18%
CARE & PRAYER MINISTRY	\$6,800	\$7,100	\$300	4%
TECH MINISTRY	\$10,600	\$10,000	-\$600	-6%
VIDEO MINISTRY	\$4,000	\$9,500	\$5,500	137%
STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY	\$5,000	\$12,000	\$7,000	140%
COMMUNITY INITIATIVE	\$0	\$10,000	\$10,000	100%
VISION FUND	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$0	0%
TOTAL MINISTRY	\$358,150	\$432,100	\$73,950	21%

OPERATIONS	2017-18	2018-19	\$ CHANGE	% CHANGE
OFFICE EXPENSE	\$99,250	\$101,000	\$1,750	2%
ADMIN EXPENSE	\$140,450	\$148,900	\$8,450	6%
BUILDING EXPENSES	\$170,100	\$165,000	-\$5,100	-3%
CHURCH HOUSING	\$28,750	\$41,200	\$12,450	43%
UTILITIES EXPENSE	\$104,000	\$97,000	-\$7,000	-7%
INSURANCE EXPENSE	\$65,290	\$66,000	\$710	1%
MISC EXPENSE	\$49,000	\$57,100	\$8,100	15%

TOTAL OPERATIONS	\$656,840	\$676,200	\$19,360	3%
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CAPITAL RESERVE	\$203,449	\$200,000	-\$3,449	-1%
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TOTAL SALARIES & BENEFITS	\$2,419,467	\$2,548,250	\$129,283	6%
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TOTAL MINISTRY EXPENSES	\$358,150	\$432,100	\$73,950	21%
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TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$656,840	\$676,200	\$19,360	3%
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TOTAL CAPITAL RESERVE	\$203,449	\$200,000	-\$3,449	-1%
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TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,637,906	\$3,856,550	\$219,144	6%
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REVENUE OF LOCAL BUDGET	\$3,856,550
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EXPENSES OF LOCAL BUDGET	\$3,856,550
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TOTAL	\$0
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GLOBAL MISSIONS

BUDGET

PROPOSED JUNE 1, 2018 - MAY 31, 2019 BUDGET

CATEGORIES	2017-18	2018-19	% OF BUDGET
INTL STUDENT MINISTRY	\$394,700	\$388,000	32%
US BASED SUPPORT	\$94,500	\$89,500	8%
OVERSEAS MINISTRY	\$90,300	\$85,300	8%
LEADERSHIP DEV.	\$28,000	\$28,000	3%
U.S STUDENT MINISTRY	\$39,250	\$50,250	3%
MEDICAL	\$68,000	\$73,000	6%
EQUIPPING MISSIONS	\$221,094	\$224,565	20%
RETIREMENT CONTR.	\$50,640	\$46,840	4%
DOMESTIC CROSS	\$73,500	\$73,000	6%
PRIORITY GRANTS	\$140,016	\$141,545	12%
TOTAL	\$1,200,00	\$1,200,000	100%

CARE FUND

JUNE 1, 2017 THROUGH APRIL 15, 2018

Black Rock Care uses this fund to help those in our church and also in the community.

HOW WE HELPED THOSE IN NEED THIS LAST YEAR	2016-17	2017-18
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS GENERAL	\$40,600	\$66,450
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR COUNSELING	\$4,500	\$7000
FOOD & GAS GIFT CARDS	\$10,000	\$12,951
FUNERAL ASSISTANCE	\$5,000	\$3,780
LIVING FREE SUPPORT	\$0	\$4,280
SEASONAL GIFTS	\$7,000	\$7,771
VISITS (HOME, HOSPITAL, ETC.)	\$1,300	\$1,191
OTHER	\$3,000	\$0
TOTAL	\$71,400	\$103,423

LOVE GOD

LOVE PEOPLE

SERVE OUR WORLD