

Compelled to Walk Inside

The Hill Church, launched just a year ago in 2019, is an ethnically diverse church plant currently meeting for worship in a borrowed space in downtown Roanoke. For its COVID-19 re-launch of in-person Sunday morning worship services, Pastor Charles Wilson had no idea how many people would come. After all, August 9 had started out like any other COVID-19-season Sunday morning for The Hill Church.

Across the Commonwealth and beyond, many church members have not been able to reconnect in person, much less invite visitors to church. But on this particular Sunday morning, God had plans to bring one young man into The Hill's worship service without even being invited.

Paul had just moved to downtown Roanoke from California days before and

barely knew a soul. Having felt drawn there for some reason, little did he know that God had a plan—a big reason! On his way to the gym, Paul walked past the building where the Sunday morning worship was taking place. Less than an hour later, he passed it again going the other way.

Paul says God pulled him back and he felt an inexplicable “compelling” to walk inside to see what was happening. There, Paul heard the Gospel and responded to the call of Jesus for the first time!

The next day, he met with Pastor Wilson for coffee and listened to the Gospel one more time. He completely understood and was resolute in his decision. Pastor Wilson spoke with him about obedience in baptism and what it looks like to be a growing disciple of Christ. Paul couldn't wait to be baptized, so a quick call went

out on social media for the church to gather the next night (Tuesday of that same week) at the Roanoke River for a baptism service!

In the weeks following his baptism, Paul would text Pastor Wilson regularly to ask when the next Bible study would meet. He has already gotten involved in several Bible study groups and is reading his Bible and learning more every day. Pastor Charles Wilson and The Hill Church are celebrating God's work with each guest and with each person who is saved! Pray for Paul as he begins his new life in Christ, and pray for many more to be drawn to hear and respond to the Gospel. ■

