



Gather

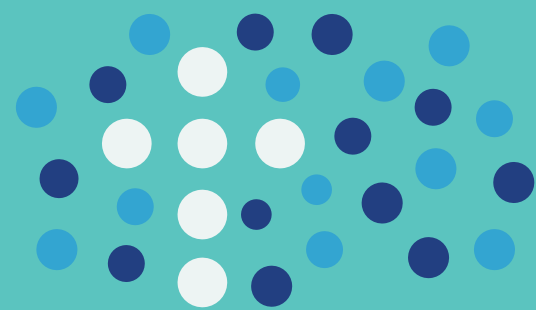
Where two or three gather in my name...



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH ARLINGTON

For where
two or three
gather in my
name, there
am I with
them.

Matthew 18:20



“FPCA is important to me for its community of compassion, grace, and care: a body of believers committed to loving each other well and living in fellowship as we point each other toward Jesus. This sort of counterculture is a balm in a world of selfishness, loneliness, and discord, grounding me as we all seek out together to live “in the world” but not “of the world.” This interaction, support, and encouragement gives energy for the light of Jesus to shine bright and impacts my own world—and the world of my children—with hope and peace.
Sonia Ellis

“FPCA is important to us for many reasons. FPCA is a place to worship the Lord and further His kingdom work with fellow Christians that are like family to us. It is a place where people are welcoming, friendly, and caring. A place where our brothers and sisters in Christ walk alongside us through all of life’s stages—good and bad. FPCA is a place of worship where scripture is the foundation of all teachings. A place where outstanding worship-inspired music is important and provided. Where parents are encouraged to bring their children into the sanctuary so that they may hear and learn about God at an early age.
Joyce and Larry Stephenson

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.
1 Peter 4:10-11 NRSV



Message from Pastor Chris Campbell



FPCA is embarking on the next step of our journey to an improved physical space to serve Christ. Since 1888, the people of this church have gathered together to make a difference—in Arlington and around the world. This is our opportunity to further God’s mission for FPCA. Here are the areas of focus for this campaign:

- First, we need to finish creating a secure area for children’s ministries.
- Second, we need to create a gathering space to better connect with guests and one another.
- Third, we need to provide ADA-compliant restrooms by the gathering space and new ramps to the narthex. This is a promised goal we have to fulfill.
- Fourth, we need to retire the debts of our roof loan and the recent loan that helped finish Step 1.

By finishing what we have started, we will fulfill our mission to make this a facility where people of all ages can gather in safety and comfort. Our building will match the hospitality that our people offer.

Our mission statement is “FPCA is transforming life by glorifying God, following Jesus, and loving our neighbor.” How will this effort help?

Glorifying God: From a physical standpoint, members and guests of all ages and abilities will have better access to our building, especially our sanctuary. Sunday worship is the one time each week when most of us gather in the same space at the same time. Anything we can do to remove barriers will make it easier for people to glorify God in worship.

Following Jesus: Discipleship is a big part of our church. By further updating the secure area for children, all classes will have updated spaces. Adults will be gathered with adults. Youth will be gathered with youth. Children will be gathered with children.

Loving Our Neighbor: In addition to improving connections with guests and one another, our gathering space can also be used for receptions, community meetings, and even as a large space to mobilize mission projects.

Without implementing the Gather Campaign, we would be saddled with debt. It would be short-sighted to leave the facility half finished, not secured for children and families, with the remaining deferred maintenance kicked farther down the road at an even more expensive cost. So, what am I asking you to consider?

- Pray for our church and pray about your investment in it.
- Pray about a 3-year financial commitment that is “above and beyond” your regular giving to the church.
- Stay informed by reading campaign materials, attending upcoming events, and asking questions. Your response and financial commitment will determine how much we can do. We can do anything if we do it together, committed to Christ and his mission.

Pastor Chris

Gather Sermon Series Begins: **March 9**
Commitment Sunday: **April 6**

Recounting the Lord's Faithfulness

In 1888, just 4 years after Arlington was incorporated, 25 men and women "met with the Rev. D. G. Molloy to covenant with each other to serve God" by forming the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of Arlington. Just as they completed their first church building, even before the scaffolding had been removed from the belfry, lightning struck, and the church burned to the ground. Undaunted, the congregation and Red Oak Presbytery raised sufficient funds by nightfall to rebuild. They gathered together to turn tragedy into triumph, and the new building was dedicated in November 1891.

In 1906, the authority of the church changed to the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, and it became the First Presbyterian Church of Arlington (FPCA). When Dr. S. M. Bennett and his family arrived in Arlington in 1914, the church had 85 members. During his ministry, the congregation grew rapidly.

In 1917, they began a building program that provided a new church building and a new manse. But, by the mid 1950's, because of church growth and lack of room for expansion in downtown Arlington, the congregation elected to build a new church at 1200 South Collins.

Dedicated in 1956, that new building was only the beginning. Over the years, the congregation added the Bennett spire, the Reuter pipe organ, the fellowship hall, more Christian education facilities and the W. L. Hughes courtyard. The last big expansion, in 1987, included new office space, a parlor and the chapel. Again and again, this congregation has gathered the courage and the resources to move forward.

Today, FPCA is a vital and dedicated group of Christians. In many ways and for many years, FPCA has helped make Arlington a good place to live and raise a family, and it continues to do so. Our outreach is worldwide, and we also love and look after one another. For example, FPCA:

- Is actively reaching out to Carter Junior High students, faculty, and staff
- Supports missionaries at home and in the field
- Participates in H.O.P.E. Tutoring, supports Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services, contributes to Arlington Charities, and supports the Arlington Life Shelter, among other efforts

For decades, we have opted for minimal building maintenance while we sought to fund our ministry and mission. Deferred maintenance accumulated, and our facility has fallen behind in meeting the needs of members and guests.

Now, we are once again caring for our building and our future. Since 2020, even amidst a pandemic, we have accomplished many repairs and improvements. The roof is fixed. The entire building has a fire-suppression system, and infrastructure throughout the church has been upgraded. New floors and fresh paint are giving life to our Sunday school rooms and halls. Of course, the unanticipated expenses limited the projects we hoped to accomplish in the first phase of work, and we have debt to retire. Even with those challenges, we gather in a safer building now. We just have a little more left to do.



What are we doing?

This second step of our capital campaign has four main goals:

First, we need to finish creating a secure area for children's ministries. This component has been widely discussed, and we understand why it is necessary to have secure spaces for kids in churches. We may not like that necessity, but we understand it and will work to keep our youngest ones safe.

Second, we need to create a gathering space for before and after worship. This space will help us better connect with guests and one another. A gathering area will help our building make sense and provide us with a usable area close to both the sanctuary and the chapel.

Third, we need to improve accessibility. We will add updated, ADA-compliant restrooms near the gathering space and ramps that connect the gathering space and red hall to the narthex. That is a promised goal we still need to fulfill.

Fourth, we need to retire the debt we have acquired. This includes our roof loan and our recent loan through the denomination to help finish Step 1 of the renovation.



Why are we doing it?

By finishing what we have started, we will fulfill our mission to make this a safer and more accessible facility for people of all ages. We will be able to connect better with each other and with guests so that our building can match our hospitality. Our FPCA mission statement is "transforming life by glorifying God, following Jesus, and loving our neighbor." How will this effort help?

Glorifying God: From a physical standpoint, members and guests of all ages and abilities will have better access to our building, especially our sanctuary. Sunday worship is the one time each week when most of us gather in the same space at the same time. Anything we can do to remove barriers just makes it easier for people to glorify God in worship.

Following Jesus: Discipleship is a big part of our church. By finishing the secure area for children, all classes will have updated spaces. Adults will be gathered with adults. Youth will be gathered with youth. And children will be gathered with children. Adults will have quieter classrooms, youth will have an appropriate space that is their own, and children will be safer.

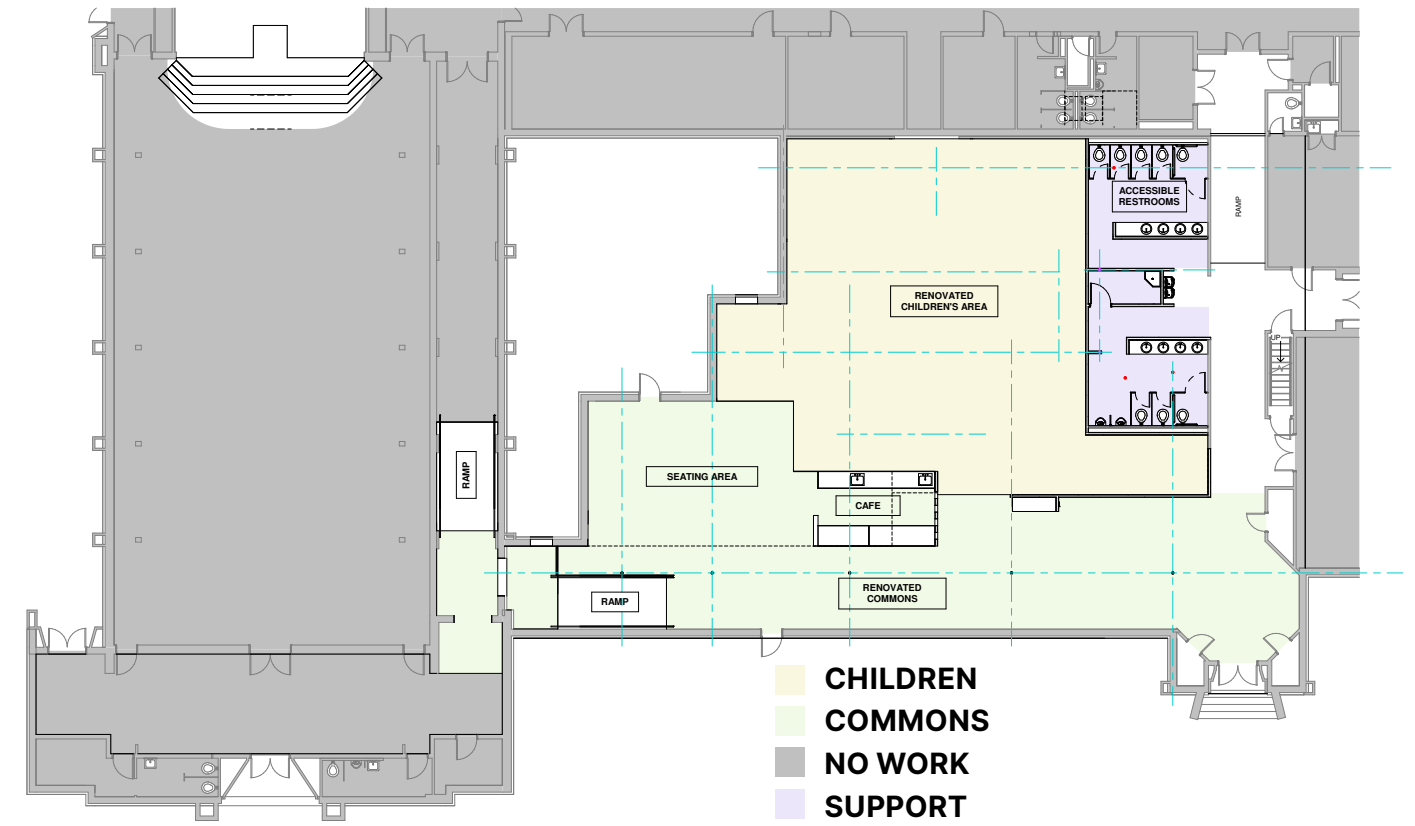
Loving Our Neighbor: From a discipleship standpoint, our gathering space will provide a better space to connect with guests and each other. Our current narthex is small, noisy, and not climate controlled. Conversation is difficult, and it is hard to try to share information. Our gathering space can also be used for receptions, community meetings, and even as a large space to mobilize mission projects. Without the Gather Campaign, we would be saddled with debt. That takes away from programs and staff. It would communicate that we are short-sighted and do not take our responsibility to leave the facility in good shape for the generations to come. It would communicate that we are not serious about protecting children and families. It would kick the remaining deferred maintenance down the road even longer, thus making it even more expensive.



Why are we doing this now?

For well over a year, the spring of 2025 was our target date for this phase of our effort because we still have some pressing needs to address. The longer we wait, the more expensive it will be. The longer we wait, the more scattered we will become. We have done what the city required us to do. Now we can do what the needs of our church require us to do.

Design Plans and Renderings



What is God calling you to do?

This is not a question of what your friends, church, or pastor want you to do. This is about what God is calling you to do. Only you can answer this question. We encourage you to seek God, spend time praying about this, and discern what God wants for you. The following are the steps you can take to discover what you are being called to do.

READ AND ENGAGE

in the campaign materials provided.

PARTICIPATE

in the events and worship services.

PRAY

asking God for guidance.

DISCUSS

your commitment with your family members.

CONSIDER

your gift and participation in this campaign.



“

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.

And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

COLOSSIANS 3:15-17 NRSV

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we have to remodel the front section of the church?

We have done the “invisible infrastructure” tasks (fire suppression system, new roof, insulation, etc.). Now, it is time to make it known that we are a welcoming group of people who really want to live our mission statement. First, we need a more open look. Drive down Collins Street and glance over at the church. It is difficult to see what is happening inside. The parlor and kitchen are closed off, and both have seen better days. By opening the parlor and kitchen to that front hallway, we can make the front of the church more open, more welcoming. Within this area, we will still be able to meet and serve food and drink. We will have a larger space to visit with guests and each other. Second, by finishing the conversion of the old office area into a secure children’s area, we can provide a safer place for our young ones. It will be bright and cheery. The windows open to the closed front courtyard, letting in the light but in a more secure area. It will also be a space where children can laugh and be children without disturbing adult classes.

Where are the children going to have Sunday school?

The entry to the children’s Sunday school area will be close to the former office entrance. It will be convenient for parents to drop off their children and then go to either Sunday school or worship. The area will be more secure than currently.

If we enlarge the narthex and parlor area, will we be worshipping in the fellowship hall again for months?

We do not foresee having to worship in the fellowship hall.

What do we still owe from the first loan?

Due to the generosity of members, we have been able to apply gifts toward the principle of the roof loan. As of printing, we owe about \$163,000 on the roof loan.

We are planning to provide safe space for the children. What about space for the youth and their activities?

Our youth will have their own room in the 200 hallway that will be appropriate for their use and needs.

Didn’t we already have a capital campaign to renovate the church?

Yes, we had a capital campaign in 2020 to provide for the first part of the renovations. We always planned to conduct a second campaign.



Do we have to use all \$500,000 of the second Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP) loan?

No, we expect to close that loan with an approximate balance of \$350,000.

How can we contemplate making more changes when we cannot pay for the changes we have already made?

The additional changes are needed for a 21st century church facility. We needed to comply with city codes. We needed to fix the roof. We still need to take care of our children. We still need to make the church accessible to our elderly and less mobile. We need to be good stewards of what we have, and we need to be good stewards of what our children will inherit.

Can we set our goal on just retiring the debt and let it go at that? Maybe start a new fund for maintenance?

We could. But that would be penny wise and pound foolish. The work we have done so far needs just a little more to make a significant difference. We will retire the debt. But with this effort, we will also be able to gather in a more comfortable, safer, more accessible building.

If the parlor is going to be an open gathering space, will there be another space we can close off to hold a class/meeting/party without having traffic and noise pollution disturbing the class/meeting/party?

Yes. We have an abundance of rooms of differing sizes to accommodate groups and classes.

How are we going to get rid of this debt?

That is a key part of what the Gather Campaign is about. The first gifts we receive will be immediately applied to reduce our debt.

Wasn’t there some thought of a fund for continuing maintenance?

In 2019, the session approved establishing our Deferred Maintenance Fund. For the past several years, a portion of our general operating budget has been transferred into that fund. We can feel secure that we are proactively preparing for future needs and requirements.

Is there somewhere we can either cut expenses or rearrange the budget?

The session always strives to be the best stewards of this church’s giving. The 2025 budget has factored in several increases like insurance and utilities, while adjusting other areas such as personnel. Even with these changes, our general operating budget cannot accommodate any of the components of this campaign, much less all four of them.

Will Step 2 renovations provide rooms for community groups to rent on weeknights to bring in extra revenue?

Yes. Rooms and spaces like the fellowship hall are available now for outside groups to use. The gathering space in front will be an additional area that groups could rent for use.

Can we get new striping in the parking lot?

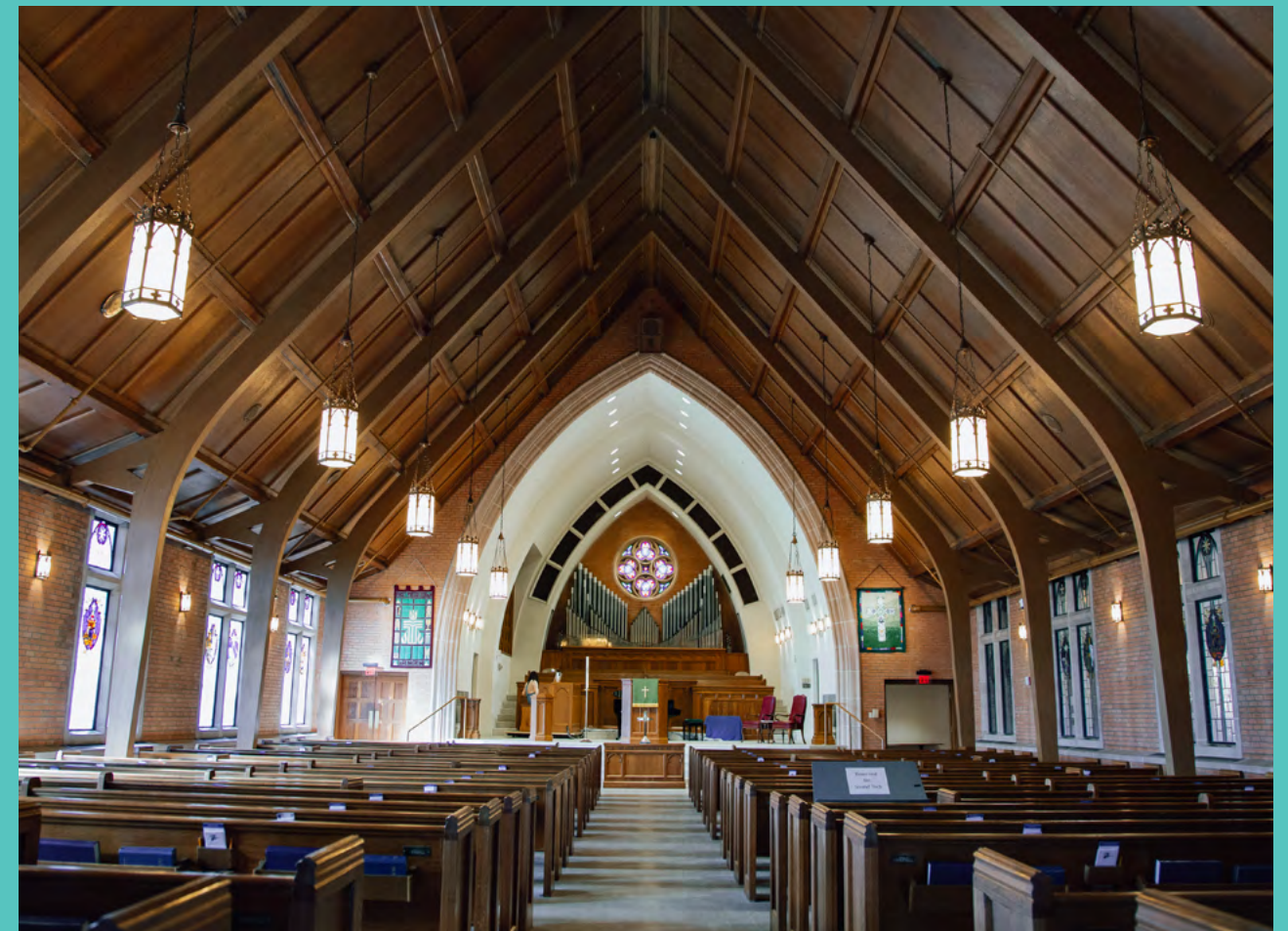
This is a need that hopefully can be accommodated in our general operating budget soon. Currently, it is not part of the scope of the Gather Campaign.



Sermon Series: Why Do We Gather?

This campaign is about gathering the people of FPCA to undertake a new effort. The following pages provide an opportunity to dive deeper into our biblical study of the ways we gather in his name: we gather to worship, to connect, to grow, and then to scatter. Bring this journal to church each week and let it serve as a starting point for conversation in your home. Think about FPCA—how we gather to worship and

connect with God, how we gather to grow in faith and disciple one another, and how we gather and then scatter to serve the world beyond our walls. We gather to meet God in this place—all of it, not just the sanctuary. We gather to find strength and purpose. We gather to love one another. Over the next 5 weeks, we will explore the ways we gather here and what that means to each of us.



Where two or three gather in my name...

Practical Ideas for Living & Giving Generously

Nearly every day, we make financial decisions. Some are small—should you get a cup of coffee at McDonald's or splurge for the pumpkin spice latte at Starbucks? Some are big— which house, which car, which college? Some concern the future—how much should you spend on Christmas, which retirement funds should you choose?

Probably the most challenging decision we make with money is the decision to give. Giving creates tension. We wonder, "If I give this away, how will the gap be filled?" That is why giving is such a big deal. Nothing invites God into our lives like giving. Giving is a tangible way we declare our trust in and commitment to God. Giving often paves the way for God to show up in our lives in a powerful way.

Giving is not just a financial decision—it is a deeply spiritual decision.

We have put some ideas together here to help you consider how God has blessed you and how the Spirit might invite you to trust the Lord during the Gather Campaign. You will find ideas that will help you pray and consider how God will have you participate.



Our prayer is that you would experience the power of God in your life through generous giving and living. The most effective path to generosity is a spiritual path where you set your heart on things above. Then, your financial priorities will naturally flow out of your spiritual priorities.

People often describe this as "living a generous lifestyle." It is always a temptation to give to God in such a way that it makes little impact on how you live. The challenge of living a generous lifestyle is to intentionally and prayerfully find ways to do just that—to let your giving touch your living!

A gift that would touch the heart of God must first touch the life of the giver! This is the spirit of lifestyle generosity—"If it is for my God, my gift must have meaning and value to me."

Lifestyle generosity is a level of giving that affects you—your plans, your activities, your attitude, and your approach to life. It means giving up something in one area so that you can give more of yourself in another.

Generosity Journey

An **Initial Giver** is someone who decides to give for the first time, out of a response to God's Word about giving. This is someone who decides to give something and trust God and the leaders of the Church with this gift. (2 Corinthians 8:7-15)

A **Consistent Giver** is someone who decides to give something and to give it on a consistent basis to exercise the discipline of giving on a regular basis. Often, someone who decides to make their gift an online recurring gift will be someone who is learning the behavior of consistency. (2 Corinthians 9:6-8)

An **Intentional Giver** is someone who is beginning to think about their giving in relation to other things on which they spend their money. This giver starts to make their giving an intentional choice that reflects how they prioritize it in relation to other things they spend their money on. (Luke 14:28-35)



A **Sacrificial Giver** is someone who recognizes the cost that Christ paid on the cross for us and is surrendered to honoring God with 100% of their resources as a result. A Sacrificial Giver is someone who gives in a way that changes them, in a way that reflects that their giving is governing their spending/saving rather than their spending/saving governing their giving. (Colossians 1:15-18, 22-23)

A **Lifetime Giver** is someone who is thinking about the longer tail of generosity rather than just the shorter term of month-to-month generosity or even year-to-year. A Lifetime Giver makes decisions in the short term that have longer term effects as it relates to their generosity capacity. A Lifetime Giver might be someone who has a lifetime giving goal, something that will govern their larger-ticket decisions. Much like a Sacrificial Giver makes a commitment that will govern his/her monthly and annual decisions, a Lifetime Giver makes a lifetime or longer-term giving commitment that governs his/her larger-item purchases like homes, cars, investments, and the like. (1 Timothy 6:6-19)



The Significance of Making A Commitment

During worship on April 6, Commitment Sunday, our FPCA family will have the opportunity to celebrate God’s grace and generosity as we complete our estimate of giving cards.

You will receive your physical card before Commitment Sunday. Below is an example of the card.



We are invited to commit our hearts in faith to share the love of Jesus Christ in our community. Imagine what we can achieve with God's help! Through the Gather Campaign, I/we will endeavor to give over and above my/our regular offerings.

Over the next 3 years, I/we plan to give accordingly:

\$ _____ Weekly for 156 Weeks

\$ _____ Monthly for 36 Months

\$ _____ Annually for 3 Years

I/We wish to give to the Gather Campaign by means other than cash (for example: stocks, bonds, IRA distributions, securities):

Description: _____

Estimated Value of Asset Given: _____

Signature: _____

Your commitment is an indication of your intention to give as you are able.



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Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:7-8 (NIV)

Personal Information (Please print):

Date: _____

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____

State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Why turn in a commitment card?

Commitment Card Benefits

One of the goals for any initiative is 100% participation from every family in our church. We encourage you to prayerfully consider completing a commitment card for this initiative. This portion of the journal is designed to help explain the significance (practically and spiritually) of turning in a card.

A commitment card:

- Requires a decision over delay, action over avoidance
- Provides opportunity for personal (self) assessment
- Motivates a specific increase in one's generosity
- Communicates the importance of personal growth in giving (Most important decisions in life are confirmed by written documents.)
- Offers an occasion for a church-wide step of faith and commitment (a growth event)
- Provides financial information that enables leaders to make wise decisions
- Enables church leaders to assess and measure congregational generosity

The card, from day one, represents the culmination of an important spiritual journey:

- Allows a point of conversation and decision for an individual and couple
- Provides a timeline for making a decision personally and organizationally rather than an undefined closure



This campaign is an opportunity for us to understand the “why” of commitment cards in giver-centric language, instead of church-centric language. Emerging generations of Christians have less interest in the needs of the finance team to form a budget for the church or the need “to keep the lights on and pay the salaries.”

- What if we all thought of a commitment card in terms of the spiritual checkup it could provide?
- What if we saw commitment cards as an opportunity not to be missed to reassess one's gratitude to God?
- What if we saw commitment cards as a sign of trust for the future and the joy of joining God in the advancement of the Kingdom?
- What if we saw commitment cards as a reminder of the life-giving, family-strengthening, and joyful experience from being in a right relationship with God's abundance entrusted to us?

Therefore, we try to call for, and resource, family discussion around the breakfast table and nighttime prayers—even intergenerational conversations about the purpose and mission for a family to steward both the values and the valuables of the family, even past the current generation. Tools provided in this journal can help you to think about ways to grow in your giving journey, not just the amount of your gift from one year to the next. We are inviting you to do this, not because of what we want from you, but because of what we want for you.

What do we believe God is calling each of us to do as we are asked to participate in this campaign?

THREE-YEAR GOAL: \$1,750,000

As you pray about what God is asking you to give during this time, consider how generosity plays a role in living a life of significance. Use this guide as a tool, allowing it to inspire and challenge you to commit more deeply to living significantly.



NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS	AMOUNT OF EACH COMMITMENT
2	\$100,000
4	\$75,000
6	\$50,000
7	\$36,000
8	\$24,000
10	\$15,000
12	\$10,000
20	\$7,200
25	\$3,600
Other Commitments	Under \$3,600



Commitment Calculator

If God has led you to make a financial commitment to this project, we know it is helpful to see how your giving could be every week, month, and year. We've provided the following calculator to help you see it, but no one should feel confined to this schedule.

GIFT CALCULATIONS FOR THREE-YEAR COMMITMENT			
TOTAL 3-YEAR COMMITMENT	ANNUALLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY
\$100,000	\$33,333	\$2,778	\$641
\$75,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$481
\$50,000	\$16,667	\$1,389	\$321
\$36,000	\$12,000	\$1,000	\$231
\$24,000	\$8,000	\$667	\$154
\$15,000	\$5,000	\$417	\$96
\$10,000	\$3,333	\$278	\$64
\$7,200	\$2,400	\$200	\$46
\$3,600	\$1,200	\$100	\$23

The challenge before us is a large one.

The giving profiles we have provided above demonstrate a number of ways we can work as a church family to stand up and achieve this significant goal. Please pray about your involvement in this campaign. Seek God's wisdom and be clear this is His calling for you. If you believe it is God's idea, we ask you to consider opening your heart in the coming days and give God the room He needs to shape your decision.





Thank you for your part in the Gather Campaign!

Thank you for being a part of the Gather Campaign. Our sincere prayer is that this journal and events throughout the campaign will produce a greater trust in God in all areas of your life. I know that if 100% of our households engage intentionally and unite in commitment, we will achieve the goals set out in this campaign. Throughout these 5 weeks, here are a few things I want to invite you to participate in.

1. Attend Commitment Sunday—April 6, 2025.
2. Pray for God's favor and blessing to go before us.
3. Become informed by engaging with the campaign materials, by attending events, and by asking questions.
4. Commit to discussing and praying about making a 3-year commitment over and above your current giving.
5. Be an ambassador of accurate information.

Let's all join together today in praying for the Gather Campaign. Through the Holy Spirit, we will be refreshed, renewed, and ready to invest together to more fully fulfill FPCA's mission of "transforming life by glorifying God, following Jesus, and loving our neighbor."

Pastor Chris



We Gather Here in Jesus' Name (Come, Share the Lord)

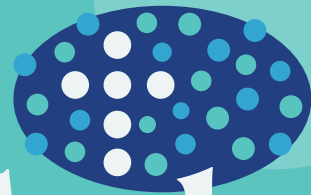
We gather here in Jesus' name; his love is burning in our hearts like living flame; for through the loving Son the Father makes us one: come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord. No one is a stranger here; everyone belongs. Finding our forgiveness here, we in turn forgive all wrongs. He joins us here; he breaks the bread; the Lord who pours the cup is risen from the dead; the one we love the most is now our gracious host: come, take the bread; come, drink the wine; come, share the Lord. We are now a family, of which the Lord is head. Though unseen, he meets us here in the breaking of the bread. We'll gather soon where angels sing; we'll see the glory of our Lord and coming King; now we anticipate the feast for which we wait: come, take the bread; come drink the wine; come, share the Lord.



FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE GATHER
IN MY NAME, THERE AM I WITH THEM.



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