



STANDING ON THE PROMISES

Securing the Next Century

WILSON PARK
METHODIST CHURCH
SUNDAY WORSHIP
9:00 AM
SANCTUARY
10:00 AM
D. 40 SUNDAY SCHOOL
11:00 AM
MCFARLAND

Boache St
University Blvd

TABLE OF CONTENTS

05 Pastor's Letter

06 History Snapshot

09 Vision & Goals

10 Planning for the Future

16 Projected Cost

18 How Will You Respond?

22 Lenten Study & Prayer Guide

23 Week One Guide

29 Week Two Guide

35 Week Three Guide

41 Week Four Guide

47 Week Five Guide

53 Week Six Guide

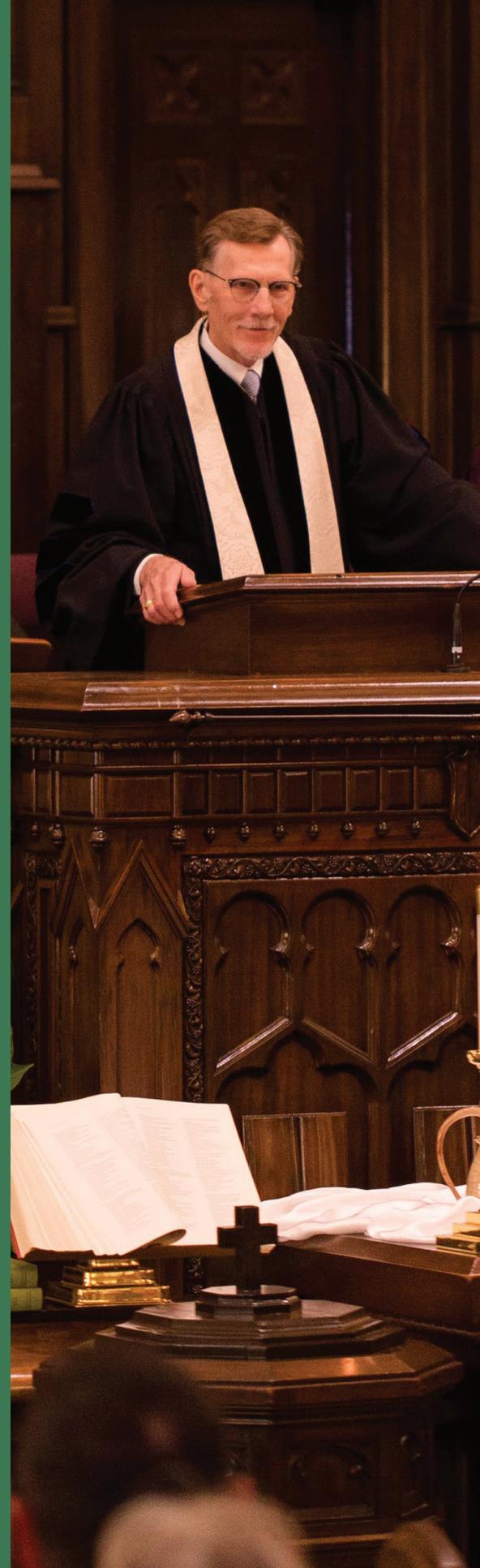
59 Ways to Give

62 FAQs



**FOR IN JESUS CHRIST
EVERY ONE OF GOD'S
PROMISES IS A "YES."
FOR THIS REASON IT IS
THROUGH CHRIST THAT WE
SAY THE "AMEN,"
TO THE GLORY OF GOD.**

2 Corinthians 1:20



Dear McFarlin.

For almost 100 years, McFarlin has faithfully embraced and shared the life-changing, world-changing Good News of God's love in Jesus Christ. Believing God would use this church to advance God's promises to redeem lives and transform the world, generation after generation has stood together. Because so many have stood on the promises of God through times of great challenge and in seasons of growth and expansion, we are part of this church at a unique moment in time when we are both meeting current challenges and advancing effective ministry with vigor and adaptivity. As we approach our centennial in 2024, I believe we are called to act boldly to secure another century of high impact ministry.

To assist us in moving intentionally and faithfully forward, we have created this Standing on the Promises: Securing the Next Century guide. This guide is designed to open our eyes to how some very practical and necessary building renovations, together with a new Missions Center, can be our way of saying "Yes!" to the promises of God and of affirming with a hearty "Amen!" that God intends another 100 years of vital ministry from us and the generations to follow.

Please spend some quality time engaging in our worship gatherings, our Lenten sermon series, special Sunday school curriculum starting March 6 and this guide. Ask God to give you a deeper engagement with Jesus Christ, a passion for our church's accomplishment of God's mission and a greater openness to God's calling on your life. There is no greater promise we can keep than our "yes" to another century of Changing Lives That Change the World according to the way of Jesus. There is no greater investment we can make than to use our God-given abilities and resources to secure the advancement of God's mission for generations to come. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Standing on the promises with you,

Pastor Rockford

Pastor Rockford

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR HISTORY AT MCFARLIN

1890

Mr. and Mrs. McFarlin moved to Norman from Texas to engage in cattle farming and open a feed store. On July 28, 1893, their infant son, Robert, Jr., died and was buried in the IOOF cemetery. The McFarlin's would later give all the funding needed to build a new Methodist Episcopal Church South in Norman out of gratitude for the love and care they received from the people called Methodist after the death of their son.

1924

On Sunday, December 7, McFarlin Memorial Methodist Church was dedicated as a place where the youth and people of Norman, and whomsoever should find it in their heart, could worship.

1938

On July 24, the two Methodist denominations in Norman (Methodist Episcopal Church and McFarlin, which was part of the Methodist Episcopal Church South denomination) joined together to become one church. This was one year before the two denominations officially merged to become one, united church.

1947

McFarlin increased efforts to strengthen its connection with the Wesley Foundation at the University of Oklahoma, creating the Campus Church Relations Committee and increasing financial support.

1950

The first major repair to the building occurred with the replacement of the roof. For a church that had not needed to give much thought to repairs through the years, the cost of the roof replacement at that time was cause for concern. With a cost of \$6,400, and an annual church budget of \$28,341, McFarlin raised the funds needed through a pie supper.

1968

The Methodist Church and Evangelical United Brethren Church merged to form the United Methodist Church.

1979

The building was in need of major repairs and a plan was begun for a \$500,000 bond issue to finance the repairs and renovations. Covenant Visitors was launched in this year as well, which evolved into our Care Ministries. The Care Ministry Council oversaw a prayer chain, prayer requests, provision of meals and notes at times of births, deaths and baptisms, as well as officially greeting new members.

1984

Food and Shelter for Friends began in the basement of McFarlin.

1988

The Noack organ was installed in our historic sanctuary.

1998

On Sunday, April 5, a ground-breaking gala for "The Spirit is Building" campaign for a new addition to the original building was held. By December of that year, 785 families or individuals had pledged \$4,048,031 so that the growing church would have adequate space to continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

2001

The Contemporary Lifeline Worship service was created.

2005

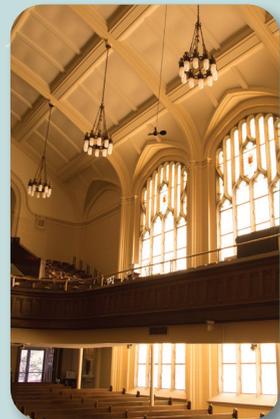
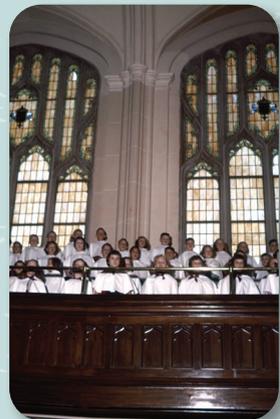
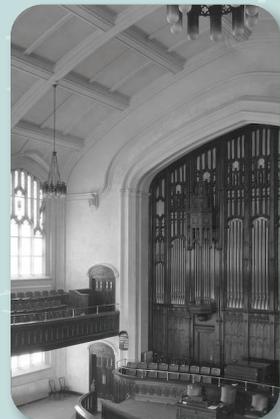
McFarlin's largest Spring Break mission trip took place; 250 people went and served in Mexico.

2016

McFarlin's Food Pantry expanded by creating the Mobile Food Pantry, which takes food to people in the neighborhoods of our four partner schools.

2021

McFarlin continues Changing Lives That Change the World through worship, discipleship, mission and care. We had an average worship attendance of 1,787 (online and in-person), 45 new members, 26 baptisms, 1,215 active community outreach and mission volunteers and 1,069 Sunday School and Small Group Members.





STANDING ON THE PROMISES

Securing the Next Century

Standing on the Promises: Securing the Next Century is a three-year generosity initiative that will lead us to say “Yes” and “Amen” to God’s promises for the church. By saying “Yes” with our lives and our resources to greater levels of commitment we are standing on the promises of God that find their “Yes” in Christ. Our theme text proclaims: “For in Jesus Christ every one of God’s promises is a ‘Yes.’ For this reason, it is through Christ that we say the ‘Amen,’ to the glory of God” (2 Cor 1.20). We remember this bold promise made by Jesus as Son of God in the Gospel of Matthew: “I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” By each of us adding our “Yes” and “Amen,” we express our faithfulness to Christ and act to secure the efficient and safe functionality of McFarlin’s beautiful and historic campus for a next century of highly effective and timely ministry.

“Standing on the Promises” is our way of naming what we believe is God’s call to do now what is needed to secure another century. It is an invitation for us do our part to trust God and demonstrate confidence like those from 1924 to the present who have given their “Yes” and “Amen” to God’s grace and work in and through McFarlin. This initiative offers each of us an opportunity to grow in generosity and to experience the thrill of accomplishing something that is rich with meaning and longevity, something that surpasses much of the ordinary and temporary things that consume our time and effort.

God has done amazing things through McFarlin Memorial United Methodist Church over the past 100 years, and now we are being offered the pleasure of such meaningful engagement with even more opportunities for far-reaching impact. We believe God has a vision for McFarlin to be a high-impact church in Norman, a church that changes and redeems persons and families near and far, a church that transforms the well-being of our community, our region and even places in remote locations around the world.

And it all begins with us.

Won’t you join us and consider what you might do and how it might add value and meaning to your life; if you see the ministry necessity of the projects; say “Yes” and “Amen” and decide to give sacrificially?

Let’s Stand on God’s Promises together! Let’s do all in our ability to secure McFarlin’s next century of Christ-centered ministry according to the teachings and example of Jesus, our Redeemer and Savior for the world.

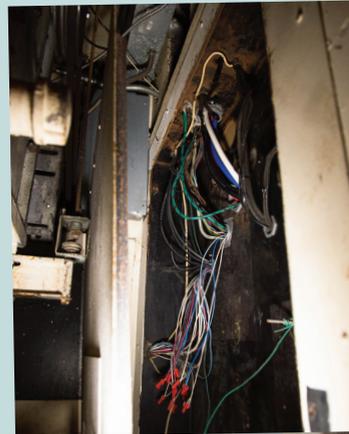
SECURING THE NEXT CENTURY

PROJECTS WITHIN OUR VISION

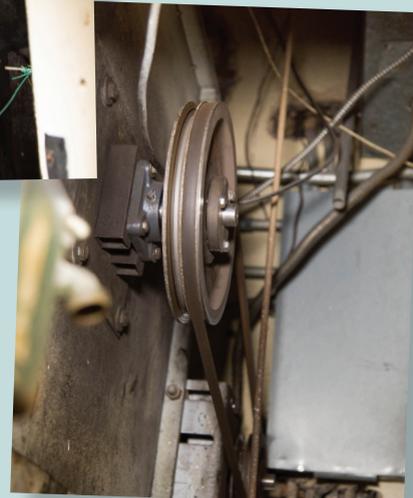
INFRASTRUCTURE PHASE ONE

NEW AIR CONDITIONING & HEATING UNITS

Our mission is Changing Lives That Change the World. We know if we are to continue offering excellent worship, discipleship, mission and care ministries, we must upgrade and maintain our historic building so that more people can gather together to hear God speak through Scripture, express our love for him through song, grow in our faith and serve God and our community fully. We will replace the existing HVAC system and upgrade pipes that are nearly 100 years old. We also need to switch over from a two-pipe to a more cost-efficient four-pipe HVAC system. Imagine coming to worship one Sunday in August and having no air conditioning. Imagine coming to Sunday School in January and having no heat. Imagine coming to church on any day and not having running water. We want to create an excellent environment where our focus and attention is on sharing the good news of Jesus Christ.



The ability to change from heat to cool and vice versa takes approximately five hours.



Both the Sanctuary and the 2nd floor classroom air handler units suffered broken shafts in the last five years.



UPGRADE FAILING PIPES

Many of you already know and embrace why we need to be proactive about upgrades to pipes and mechanical equipment that are dated, beyond their normal lifespan and in danger of failure—some as old as 97 years. We know that such maintenance issues eventually cost us more than if we package together the upgrades and accomplish them with foresight, intention and good strategy. Similar to the old adage “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” our recent feasibility study proved that we see this priority.



In the southwest entryway men's bathroom, the water pipe corroded and burst, flooding the floor and causing damage to part of the first floor Children's Ministries area, which were removed and replaced.

A short term fix was initiated and all floors of the Sunday school building were temporarily impacted.

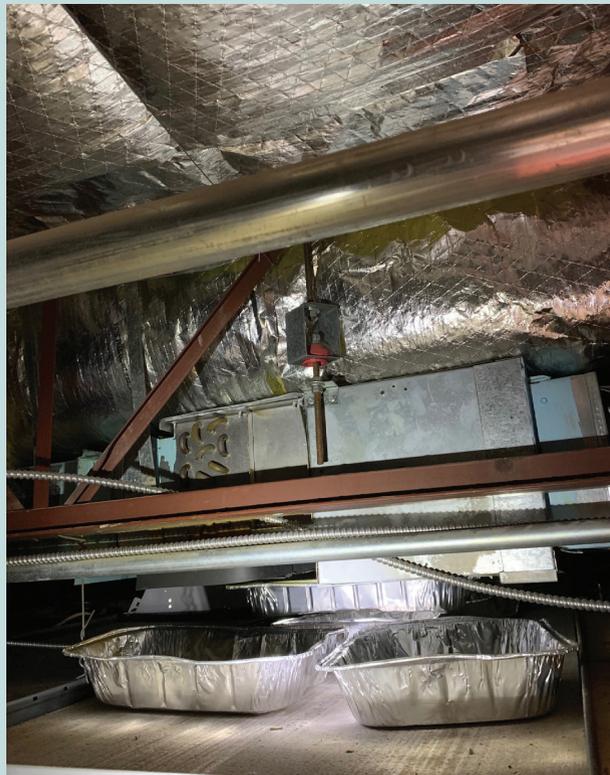
Critical water and HVAC pipes were installed in the perimeter chanel below ground.



INFRASTRUCTURE PHASE ONE

CLASSROOM FRESH AIR UNITS IN THE 2001 BUILDING

By replacing the existing fresh air units which continue to break down upon repair, we will create secure spaces in which fresh air from outside is moved inside, removing the current condensation and humidity issues. We desire to give people of all ages the very best experience on Sunday mornings and throughout the week. If we are going to continue loving and leading the people who walk through our doors—especially our children and youth—and send them out from this place to change lives, we must provide a healthy environment and improve the air quality in the new part of our building.



Condensation has caused damage to the ceiling tiles, causing mold to grow and the tiles to sag and fall through. Condensation is also causing rust damage to the ceiling structure and registers.



We use roasting pans and plastic containers to catch condensation overflow, but that is a temporary bandage and can't prevent all possible damage.

FIRE PROTECTION IN THE 1924 BUILDING

McFarlin's sanctuary was lovingly and carefully designed to be an inspiring place where the youth of Oklahoma and the people of Norman—and whomsoever should find it in their heart—could worship. The beautiful carved wood, stained glass and Noack organ offer a grand yet peaceful space for all to come and offer praise and thanksgiving to God. In order to do any maintenance or upgrading to the 1924 building, McFarlin will be required to install fire protection between the sanctuary and the rest of the building, so we can avoid adding sprinklers in the sanctuary that would damage the wood and the organ. As a part of the fire protection, we will also need to replace the existing elevator at the southwest entry.



Existing



Potential Replacement

(Colors of wood and glass to match existing design)

INFRASTRUCTURE PHASE TWO

SOUTHWEST ELEVATOR UPGRADE

As a part of the fire protection, we will also need to replace the existing elevator at the southwest entry.

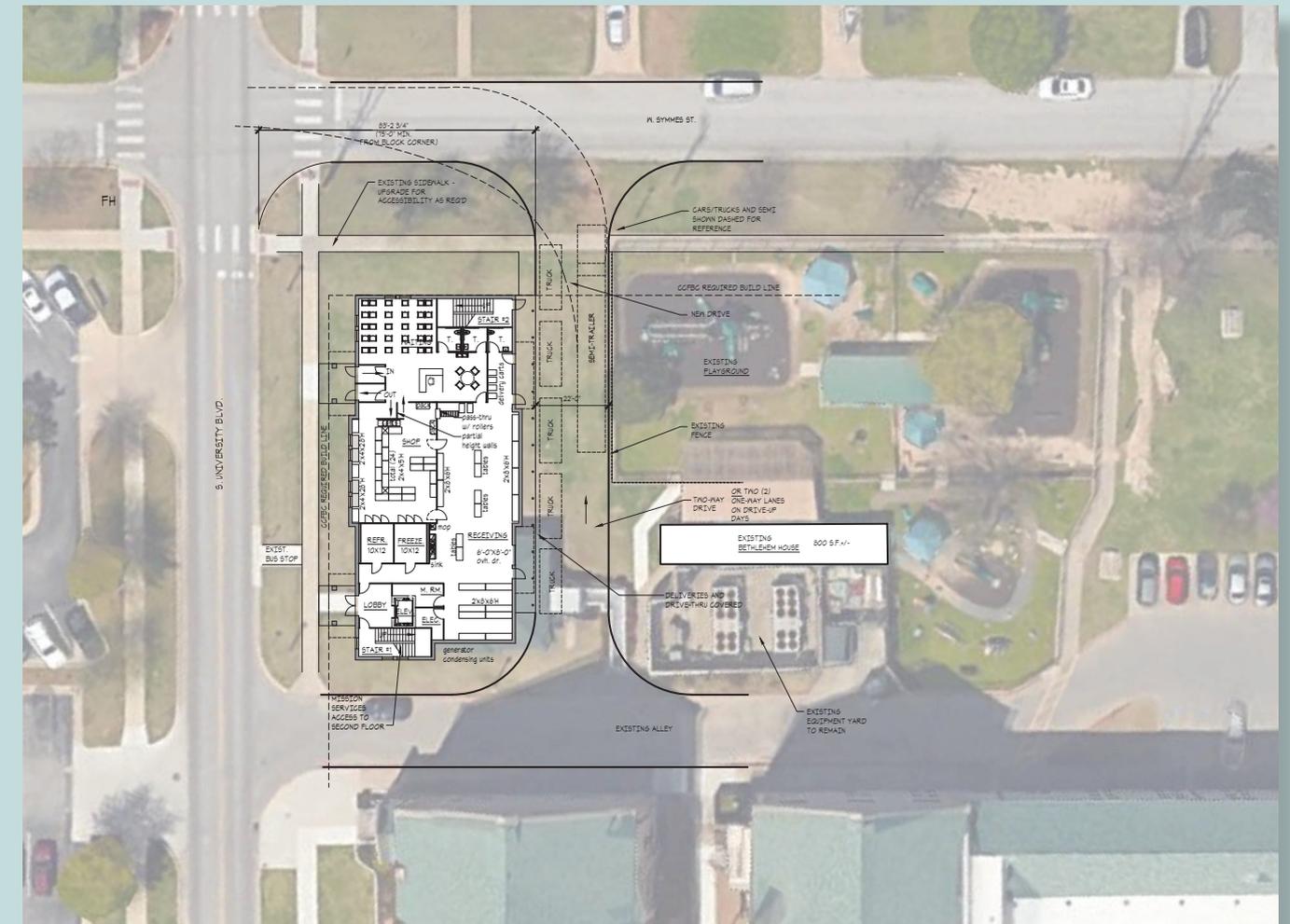


MISSIONS CENTER

The coming together of the necessity of mechanical and safety upgrades in the main building with the need for a new missions ministry facility is an instance of divinely orchestrated convergence—something that we find repeatedly in scripture, church history and in our own stories of life and faith. There are those moments when, by the grace of God and the mystery of God’s wisdom, things just come together. We are standing at such a moment of convergence and standing on the promises of God that cannot fail, standing in a moment of opportunity for securing the next century.

A church that is invested heavily in high-impact community missions is a church that catches a next wave of vitality. The Missions Center is just such an investment. Churches that remain vital among the challenges of the contemporary culture are churches that have multiple high impact mission outreach ministries that make real differences in the community. McFarlin’s new Missions Center will be large enough to house ministries beyond our food ministries. The second floor is designed to be built out later once the specific ministries have been discerned based on needs in the community, together with the gifts, callings and volunteers within McFarlin. Ministries such as, but not limited to: assistance with utility bills; transportation; prescription costs; ID replacement; job placement; signing up for SNAP (food stamps); health, dental, mental health, pro bono legal services all with appropriate legal safeguards; assistance with applying for Medicaid and Medicare; and others yet to be determined.

We are indeed standing at a moment of God-inspired convergence and opportunity! We are being invited to engage in Standing on the Promises as a way of Securing the Next Century!



BE ENCOURAGED

We have some surprising, exciting and encouraging news. We have an **unsolicited, donor-initiated gift that amounts to about one-third of the total project cost**. The gift began in the donor’s heart by the initiating work of God who laid an unavoidable calling to underwrite the construction of a new Missions Center as replacement for the 87-year-old house that is now used for food pantry ministries. The donor also affirms the necessity of the structural repairs and upgrades to the main building. So, **the donor is providing a dollar-for-dollar, up to \$2 million matching gift—matching the first \$2 million pledged to the main building projects with \$2 million to fund a new Missions Center**. Therefore, we now believe the time is right to say “Yes” to a new Missions Center.

TOTAL PROJECTED COST

\$6.2M

INFRASTRUCTURE PHASE 1

\$3.8M

- **\$2 million** for the new HVAC system and piping
- **\$500,000** for electrical work
- **\$900,000** for fire protection
- **\$400,000** for fresh air units

INFRASTRUCTURE PHASE 2

\$350K

- Phase 2 the replacement of the elevator at the southwest entry as part of the fire protection upgrade requirements. It is estimated at **\$350,000**.

MISSIONS CENTER

\$2M

- Replaces the current Aldersgate House for food pantry and other missions.

Please note, these numbers are estimates that include contingency costs. With a \$6.2 million Standing on the Promises campaign, the project would be totally funded at the end of three years.



HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?

We are asking you to go on a spiritual journey with God and your family—to take the biggest steps of generosity you’ve ever taken.

1. PRAY FERVENTLY.

Pray that God would multiply our efforts to make disciples and make much of Christ. Pray that He would do abundantly more than we ask or imagine for His great name.

My Prayer for Standing on the Promises is:

2. COMMIT FULLY.

Help us achieve the goal. Stand side by side with your church family. Commit to do what God asks. Put your “Yes!” on the table.

3. GROW INTENTIONALLY.

Attend each Sunday from March 6 through April 10. Engage in the SOTP study with your small group. Learn all you can about God’s heart and will for you and your resources.

A Growth Area for me through Standing on the Promises is:

4. GIVE GENEROUSLY.

Ask God to show you what it looks like to give in a way that changes you. Take whatever steps are required to see it through.

HOW CAN I MAKE AN IMPACT?

MONTHLY GIFT OVER THREE YEARS	TOTAL GIFT OVER THREE YEARS
\$55,556	\$2,000,000
\$13,889	\$500,000
\$6,944	\$250,000
\$2,778	\$100,000
\$2,083	\$75,000
\$1,389	\$50,000
\$972	\$35,000
\$556	\$20,000
\$278	\$10,000
\$208	\$7,500
\$133	\$4,800
\$100	\$3,600
<\$100	<\$3,600

Everyone and every gift are essential. Each of us giving sacrificially, doing all that we can do in proportion to how we have been blessed, creates the greatest possible impact, so all together we accomplish what we are called to do.

WHAT THE PRAYERS OF
JESUS
TELL US ABOUT THE HEART OF GOD

STANDING ON THE PROMISES
Securing the Next Century

COMMITMENT CARD

heart to respond to God's call to find the peace and promise you

more than we thought possible.

nce great satisfaction and experienced God's blessings in a dollar-for-dollar matching gift, up to a total of \$2 million!

COMMITMENT SUNDAY
APRIL 10, 2022

THREE WAYS TO GIVE

- one-time cash gift
- 36-month goal for giving
- stored resources (stocks, bonds, savings, etc.)
* description of stored resources gift:

MY/OUR THREE-YEAR COMMITMENT
I/We plan to give accordingly:

weekly for 156 weeks	\$	<input type="text"/>
monthly for 36 months	\$	<input type="text"/>
annually for 3 years	\$	<input type="text"/>
a one-time gift	\$	<input type="text"/>

MY/OUR TOTAL 3-YEAR COMMITMENT

\$

May 2022 - May 2025

Name

Address

City State Zip

Email

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE A **STEP?**

SACRIFICE.

Would you prayerfully consider what God might be calling you to give up during the next three years to allow you to give more to His Kingdom through the work of McFarlin?

TRUST GOD.

Will you join us by trusting God in a way we have never done before? We need every person at McFarlin to unite in faith that God will work out all of the details.

EVERYONE ENGAGE.

We can't do this alone. We can't do this with half of our body. We need everyone in our church to join together in unity as we stand up, take a step and live a life that is Standing on the Promises.

PRAY.

This journey is so much more spiritual than financial. Please pray for His wisdom, His courage and His direction every step of the way.

LENTEN PRAYER & STUDY GUIDE

WEEK ONE FOLLOW

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:57-62



WEEK ONE PRAYER GUIDE

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2022

READ: Psalm 23:1-3, 6

REFLECT: Read Psalm 23:1-3, 6 through slowly several times, aloud if possible. Circle the words or phrases that tell of all the things the Lord, the shepherd, does for the “sheep” who follow Him. Consider what God may be saying to you through these verses and how you might respond.

PRAY: When I stop to consider you as my Good Shepherd and all that you promise to do for those who follow you, I wonder why I stray so often from your right paths. Thank you for your goodness and love that follow me as I follow you, my Shepherd, my Savior, my Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ I pray, Amen.

MONDAY, MARCH 7

READ: Matthew 4:23-25

REFLECT: Name some of the reasons great crowds were following Jesus. Name some of the reasons you follow Jesus.

PRAY: Lord Jesus, you came teaching and preaching the good news of God’s kingdom and confirming it through your compassionate, miraculous healings. Speak the message of good news to my heart and let my reasons for following you go deeper than what’s in it for me. In your name I pray, Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 8

READ: Luke 9:57-58

REFLECT: What would it look like to follow Jesus wherever he might send you? What do you think Jesus meant in verse 58 and how would you have responded?

PRAY: Lord Jesus, create in me a heart that not only desires to follow you, but is willing to follow you wherever you lead. Thank you that I can trust that you are with me always. In your name I pray, Amen.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

READ: Luke 9:59-60

REFLECT: Ecclesiastes tells us there are certain times in this life for certain things—a time to live and a time to die; a time to mourn and a time to laugh ... In this life there will be things that pull us away from following Jesus in the moment. What is something that is causing you difficulty in following Jesus?

PRAY: Lord, so many times it is hard to discern what following you looks like in the moment. Help me to understand daily what you want me to do and guide me in the next right step. In the name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 10

READ: Luke 9:61-62

REFLECT: “Putting a hand to the plow” is another way of saying “this is what I’ve decided to do.” How might looking back after deciding to follow Jesus make one “unfit for the kingdom of God?”

PRAY: O Lord, it can be so tempting to look back at the things that once held my attention and affection and find myself focusing more on the past than on following you. Keep my eyes firmly focused on following you, knowing there is no better place to be than with you, Jesus! In your name I pray, Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 11

READ: Genesis 12:1-4

REFLECT: Abram (later known as Abraham) was no spring chicken when God called him to leave all he knew and follow God’s leading. God promised Abram some amazing things, but Abram had to follow God’s instructions to GO before he would see any of those promises fulfilled. Think of a move you’ve made in your life. Perhaps it was a move to a new job or a different home/city. What factors played a role in your decision to move? How was prayer a part of that decision?

PRAY: God of the past, present and future, give me the courage to follow you when you say GO! It may be a physical move or a spiritual move. Either way, God, strengthen me to follow your lead. In Christ’s name I pray, Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

READ: Genesis 24:56-58

REFLECT: Abraham sent his servant back to his homeland to get a wife for Isaac, Abraham’s son. In answer to prayer, God worked through an amazing series of circumstances to lead the servant to Rebekah. Now Rebekah had a choice to make ... stay in the place where she felt comfortable and safe. Or follow God’s lead to go on a journey full of promise for the future. How would you have responded? How will you respond to the offer to go on this journey of Standing on the Promises of God through Lent?

PRAY: Ancient of Days, God Almighty, stir my heart to choose to follow you into a future that is full of promise! In the holy, powerful name of Jesus Christ, the Lord, I pray, Amen.

WEEK ONE STUDY GUIDE

Opening Prayer (read prayer for Sunday from Prayer Guide)

Opening Question:

Lent is a season of introspection, where we individually and collectively examine the ways and the whats that hold us back from more deeply and closely following Jesus. What is a hurdle or holding you back from being a more committed follower of Jesus?

Read Scripture (Luke 9:57-62)

Watch Video

Week one of Lent is Following the Promises of God. Head over to our McFarlin UMC YouTube channel and watch the first video of our discipleship series, Following.

To find us on YouTube, go to www.youtube.com. Search "McFarlin UMC" in the search bar to find our church's channel. Then scroll down until you see the Standing on the Promises playlist to find this week's lesson!



Lenten Questions:

When was a time you felt as if you were following close to Jesus?

When you are not following as close as you wish, what's holding you back or getting in your way to taking those steps?

Lent is the season where many Christians give up something that is holding them back or add a practice to enhance their walk with Jesus. In the space below and/or with your group, share what you're willing to commit to in order to better follow Jesus.

Generosity Questions:

What might be your "Let me first" statements when it comes to committing to Standing on the Promises?

How are our financial commitments to the church a reflection or extension of spiritually following Jesus?

Campaign Invitation: We are not asking you today to make your financial commitment to our Standing on the Promises campaign. We would ask that you simply join us on the journey, following along as we follow the sacrificial journey Jesus will be making to Jerusalem, the cross and the tomb during this Lenten season.

Closing Prayer: Jesus, I know you sacrificed it all for me and for the world. Help me keep an open heart and open mind in order that I might hear your call to follow you in new ways throughout Lent and the rest of my life. Amen.



WEEK TWO

TRUST

He said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith!”

Luke 12:22-28

WEEK TWO PRAYER GUIDE

SUNDAY MARCH 13

READ: Proverbs 3:5

REFLECT: Read Proverbs 3:5 through slowly several times, aloud if possible. Circle the words or phrases that stand out to you and consider how they relate to one another. Consider what God may be saying to you through this verse. How will you respond to God's offer to trust Him completely?

PRAY: You who are completely trustworthy, forgive me for the times I have relied on my own insight instead of asking for yours. I acknowledge that your way is always the better way. Grant me clarity to discern your leading and courage to walk on your straight paths. In the name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

MONDAY MARCH 14

READ: Luke 12:22-23

REFLECT: Many of us may never have to worry about where our next meal is coming from or if we will have clothing to keep us covered and warm. Yet, how often do you and do I take for granted these basic provisions from our trustworthy God?

PRAY: Lord God, faithful and true, show me today how to live out these words of yours, "For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing." I trust you to teach me and grow me as a follower of Christ! Thank you Jesus! Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 15

READ: Luke 12:24

REFLECT: Weather permitting, go for a walk today and pay attention to the birds. Where do they live? What are they doing? How are they surviving during these winter-turning-to-springtime months?

PRAY: How amazing are your ways, God! You care for the birds in ways that I've never noticed, and you promise to care for me, too. Thank you that my value is not determined by what I do, but by who you are—the one who loves us unconditionally. Help me to trust you more. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

READ: Luke 12:25-26

REFLECT: What causes you to worry? Worry can be defined as mental distress or agitation resulting from concern—usually for something impending or anticipated. Trust, on the other hand, is defined as to rely upon or place confidence in someone

or something; to have confidence; hope. How does knowing God is trustworthy give you a new perspective on worry?

PRAY: You who are absolutely trustworthy, Lord God Almighty, our God who loves and cares for us even when we are unaware, we praise you for these words from Luke's gospel telling us we don't have to worry. We can trust in you. Thank you, Lord, for always being there for me. In the name of Christ the Lord I pray, Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17

READ: Luke 12:27-28

REFLECT: How much do you trust God? Do you trust Him to simply give you what you need to survive or do you trust Him to do more? To do MUCH more!

PRAY: Thank you, gracious and generous God that you want to do MUCH more in our lives, way beyond what we need or even ask for. Grow my faith so that I may be a living example of one who trusts in you! I ask this in the name of your Son, Jesus, Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

READ: 1 Peter 5:7

REFLECT: Why can it be difficult to cast (to throw off, away) our anxieties? Does it help to know there is someone who will take those anxieties upon himself—that they are not just thrown away and forgotten? How?

PRAY: Lord God, you remind us over and over that you care for us. You don't call us to follow you blindly, but to trust in your goodness, your grace, your power and your unending love seen in Jesus. I will trust in you, Lord God, because you care for me. May my love for you overflow with thanksgiving and praise. In Christ's name I pray, Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 19

READ: Genesis 28:10-15

REFLECT: Jacob was running when he had an amazing encounter with God. God made many promises to Jacob: the promise of land, descendants and the promise of future blessings to others. These promises had been made to Jacob's ancestors, Jacob, and his descendants. God also made promises that were specifically for Jacob: promises of God's presence with him, watching over him, and never forgetting him.

How has God been faithful in your past? To your family and faith lineage? How does knowing God kept those promises encourage you to trust Him today?

PRAY: God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, I praise you for the promises you have made and fulfilled to each generation that has gone before me, and for the promises still to be made and kept. You alone are completely trustworthy. Strengthen my faith to trust you more. In Christ's name I pray, Amen.

WEEK TWO STUDY GUIDE

Opening Prayer (read prayer for Sunday from Prayer Guide)

Opening Question:

Today we focus on growing deeper in our trust of God, particularly trusting God will always provide for us. How do you understand the ways God provides for you?

Read Scripture (Luke 12:22-28)

Watch Video

Week two of Lent is Trusting the Promises of God. Head over to our McFarlin UMC YouTube channel and watch the second video of our discipleship series, Trusting.

To find us on YouTube, go to www.youtube.com. Search "McFarlin UMC" in the search bar to find our church's channel. Then scroll down until you see the Standing on the Promises playlist to find this week's lesson!



Lenten Questions:

Thinking of our own hierarchy of needs (physiological, safety, belonging, esteem and self-actualization), where do you spend the most time worrying?

How does worry manifest itself in your life?

We believe trust is the antidote to worry. We aren't saying when we trust, God will magically fill our pantries. We believe placing our trust in God means there is no challenge or adversity before us that, with God, we cannot overcome. What scripture or biblical story can you turn to when you're worrying to remind you to trust that God's got you?

Generosity Questions:

Often worry stems either directly or indirectly from financial concerns, primarily that we do not have any extra to give. How do you think this passage from Luke might calm some of these worries?

Luke 12:22-28 reminds us that God has given us so much, taken care of so many of our needs. How is giving these gifts back to the work of God an external sign of an inward trust?

What would life look like and how would you be able to give if there were no worries in your world?

Campaign Invitation: You are invited to boldly name what the "barking dog" is in your life and describe what it will take to trust that "God's got you."

Closing Prayer: God, you feed each and every bird and make sure we have beautiful flowers to brighten our world. I pray today that all of us would see how you have provided for us in our lives in the past, and how much more you'll continue to bless us with as we grow in trust. Amen.



WEEK THREE

PRIORITIZE

And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Luke 12:29-34

WEEK THREE PRAYER GUIDE

SUNDAY, MARCH 20

READ: Psalm 34:10

REFLECT: Read Psalm 34:10 through slowly several times, aloud if possible. What words or phrases stand out to you? How might God be speaking to you through this verse? How will you respond?

PRAY: Lord of the heavens and the earth, speak to me! Let your voice be loud and clear and stir my heart to follow what you reveal to me. Let your priorities become my priorities today, tomorrow and forever! Thank you Lord Jesus, Amen.

MONDAY, MARCH 21

READ: Luke 12:29-31

REFLECT: Think about what it means to strive for something. Webster defines strive as “to devote serious effort or energy.” How do you decide where to devote your serious effort and energy? How does the above scripture challenge your choices of where to spend your time, effort, energies and even your finances?

PRAY: When I am caught up in the daily striving after what seems to be so urgent, remind me that striving after you is always the right thing to do. You promise to provide what I need when I need it so I do not have to worry. Help me to live like I believe it's true. In Christ's name I pray, Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 22

READ: Luke 12:32

REFLECT: What causes you to be afraid? Bring each one of those fears to your Heavenly Father and tell Him what makes you afraid. Listen to His strong, comforting voice speak your name, telling you, “Do not be afraid, for it is my good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” What more can we ask? Everything that God—His entire kingdom—He gives to us, through His Son, Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God!

PRAY: O Giving God, thank you that I don't have to be afraid for you have promised to give me your kingdom. All that you have, your kingdom in heaven and your kingdom to come upon the earth, you give freely to your followers. Help me to remember when I am afraid, you have already given me all I need. In your holy name I pray, Amen.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

READ: Luke 12:33-34

REFLECT: What might it look like to have an “unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys”? What is the connection between your treasure and your heart?

PRAY: Many times I feel that my priorities are not in line with your priorities, Lord. I know that I should care more about storing up treasures in heaven than here on earth, but it's hard to know how to do that in real life. Help me! Let my heart be with your heart, Lord. In the powerful name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24

READ: Proverbs 22:9

REFLECT: What does it look like in your life to be generous? With whom are you sharing your “bread”?

PRAY: Bread of life, feed me until I want no more! Move me to generously share with others of what you give me. In Christ's name, Amen.

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

READ: Psalm 37:3-4

REFLECT: When was the last time you took delight in the Lord? To delight is to take great pleasure. Take a few minutes right now and ask God to give you pleasure in Him. To put into your mind a time when you were so pleased with something God showed you, or said to you, or did for you. God is so very personal with each one of us. He wants to be in a close relationship with you. That you would delight in Him and He in you pleases His heart. So much so that he promises to give you the desires of your heart.

PRAY: O King of my heart, let your pleasure overwhelm me and overflow back onto you. May my trust in you grow stronger and the desires of my heart please your heart. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26

READ: Leviticus 23:10

REFLECT: Why do you think God would specifically tell the people to give the first fruits of their harvest to God's representatives, the priests? In what way do you prioritize your giving to God?

PRAY: Giving God, everything we have comes from you. Work in me that I may hold loosely that which is not mine to keep and give freely that which you ask me to give back to you. In your Son Jesus Christ's name I pray, Amen.

WEEK THREE STUDY GUIDE

Opening Prayer (read prayer for Sunday from Prayer Guide)

Opening Question:

When you think about where your money is spent, what are the top five “pots” of spending?

Read Scripture (Luke 12:29-34)

Watch Video

Week three of Lent is Prioritizing the Promises of God. Head over to our McFarlin UMC YouTube channel and watch the third video of our discipleship series, Prioritizing.

To find us on YouTube, go to www.youtube.com. Search “McFarlin UMC” in the search bar to find our church’s channel. Then scroll down until you see the Standing on the Promises playlist to find this week’s lesson!



Lenten Questions:

Jesus has been clear these past three weeks in Luke about how following Him must be our first priority. When you think about your life and the time, energy and emotions you use, what are your real priorities and what are your hoped-for priorities?

What would it take to have your real priorities align with your hoped-for priorities, where God is first in all your decisions?

We have seasons where God is our clear priority. This is often after a profound religious experience, like a mission trip, church camp or a powerful worship service. Yet eventually that “high” dwindles, and our priorities realign to how they were before. Reflect on a time when God was your clear priority and what kind of commitment it might take to recapture that passion.

Generosity Questions:

Our budgets and spending are often a reflection of our values. It’s not about the quantitative amount of money we give, but about the sacrifice we prioritize. This campaign for Securing the Next Century takes moving beyond a traditional pledge, going above to strive for God’s kingdom. As we move towards Commitment Sunday, where are some areas you can sacrifice for God?

How might looking at your spending in terms of apples help you prioritize supporting this campaign? What kind of shape is your apple in?

Does your spending govern your giving, or does your giving govern your spending?

Campaign Invitation: Research and find an expense tracker app for your phone or computer. With the one you trust, see how you spend your money. What picture does it paint of your finances? Where do you prioritize your finances, and how does that reflect on your faith?

Closing Prayer: Ever-present God, empower me to keep you ever before my vision and decisions. Enable me to see you and your influence on every place I walk, on every thing I buy and every person I meet. Amen.



WEEK FOUR SACRIFICE

A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.

You are those who have stood by me in my trials; and I confer on you, just as my Father has conferred on me, a kingdom, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Luke 22:24-30

WEEK FOUR PRAYER GUIDE

SUNDAY, MARCH 27

READ: Psalm 54:6

REFLECT: Read Psalm 54:6 through slowly several times, aloud if possible. Circle the words or phrases that stand out to you and consider how they relate to one another. How might God be speaking to you through this verse? What is your response?

PRAY: Lord, I confess it's not my natural response to freely sacrifice anything! And yet, that's exactly what you did for us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, your Son. Help me to let go of what I cling to so tightly, and freely, sacrificially give, praising your name! In the good name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

MONDAY, MARCH 28

READ: Luke 22:24-26

REFLECT: Over whom do you exercise authority or power? How do you view your role as one in authority?

PRAY: O Father, show me how to use my authority in ways that bring honor and glory to you. It is so easy to follow the ways of those in the culture around me. Enable me to sacrifice when needed in order to walk in your ways and to further your kingdom here on earth. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

TUESDAY, MARCH 29

READ: Luke 22:27

REFLECT: Have you ever waited tables at a restaurant? Consider what it's like to serve in that way. Jesus adds a twist to the common scenario of waiter/waitress and guest giving us a new way of looking at serving and sacrifice. How might these verses be speaking to you today?

PRAY: Thank you Lord God Almighty, for the perfect example of One who sacrificially serves. No matter my perceived status in life, I come to you now with my hands and my heart open to sacrificially serve my Lord and King, Jesus! For the fame of His name, Amen.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30

READ: Luke 22:28-30

REFLECT: What are the benefits of standing with Christ and with his church even when there are trials? Who has stood by you in your times of trials and troubles? How has their loyalty and sacrifice during those times strengthened you?

PRAY: May I stand strong with you, Lord, even in the trials so that your kingdom may indeed come on earth through the work of your church, McFarlin. In the name of Jesus Christ I pray, Amen.

THURSDAY, MARCH 31

READ: 2 Corinthians 8:3-5

REFLECT: When was the last time you thought of giving to the Lord as a "privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people"? How do you usually view your giving to the Lord through the church?

PRAY: What a joy it is to have a God like you, who allows me to work alongside you through the privilege of giving! Use my giving in ways that exceeds expectations as I give myself first of all to you. In the powerful name of Jesus I pray, Amen.

FRIDAY, APRIL 1

READ: 1 Timothy 6:17

REFLECT: Pause throughout your day today to remember it is God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

PRAY: Thank you Lord God, faithful and true, for reminding me to put my hope in you and not in the riches of this world. You are my Provider, who richly provides me with everything for my enjoyment. Amazing!

SATURDAY, APRIL 2

READ: 1 Timothy 6:18-19

REFLECT: Consider how being "rich in good deeds, generous and willing to share" can lead to being able to "take hold of the life that is truly life." What feelings have you experienced after doing a good deed for someone or being generous?

PRAY: Lord, I am most alive when you are working in me and through me. Spur me on to be rich in good deeds, generous and willing to share for your sake and by your power. Lay up for this church a firm foundation for the coming age! In Christ's name I pray, Amen.

WEEK FOUR STUDY GUIDE

Opening Prayer (read prayer for Sunday from Prayer Guide)

Opening Question:

When have you experienced the blessing of someone sacrificing for you?

Read Scripture (Luke 22:24-30)

Watch Video

Week four of Lent is Sacrificing for the Promises of God. Head over to our McFarlin UMC YouTube channel and watch the fourth video of our discipleship series, Sacrificing.

To find us on YouTube, go to www.youtube.com. Search "McFarlin UMC" in the search bar to find our church's channel. Then scroll down until you see the Standing on the Promises playlist to find this week's lesson!



Lenten Questions:

What does greatness mean to the world? What are the values, ideals and practices that define Christian greatness?

The hope of the Christian walk is that we would all grow in Christian greatness. Christian greatness is often understood by the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Which of these fruits do you excel in, and which do you need to work on cultivating to grow in Christian greatness?

As Lent is the season of repentance, repentance sometimes looks like reallocation—reallocation of time, energy, priorities or resources. To repent, we sacrifice what we have or what we need in order to better reorient ourselves with God. What would reallocation in your life look like?

Generosity Questions:

In Luke 22 this week, greatness is based on service. During this season of Lent, we are asking that your sacrificial service be financial. When you sacrifice for this campaign, you are serving this church in serving God's kingdom purpose. How might this sacrifice look relating to this campaign?

After hearing about this campaign initiative and catching the vision, how does your sacrifice enable the future service, and thus greatness, of McFarlin for the next century?

Campaign Invitation: Choosing to sacrifice is not something to engage in without prayerful discernment. If you haven't specifically been asking God, pray this week asking God to give you vision and strength on where you can sacrifice in order to help build God's kingdom and bolster our church.

Closing Prayer: God, you showed us ultimate sacrificial love in Jesus' journey to Jerusalem and his dying on the cross. You do not ask us to literally sacrifice our life, but to sacrifice our service to you. Help us know you are with us in our sacrifice, with your Holy Spirit inspiring us in moments of both weakness and strength. Amen.



WEEK FIVE SURRENDER

He came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed him. When he reached the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not come into the time of trial." Then he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, knelt down and prayed, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me; yet, not my will but yours be done." Then an angel from heaven appeared to him and gave him strength. In his anguish he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground. When he got up from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping because of grief, and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Get up and pray that you may not come into the time of trial."

Luke 22:39-46

WEEK FIVE PRAYER GUIDE

SUNDAY, APRIL 3

READ: Psalm 68:19

REFLECT: Read Psalm 68:19 through slowly several times, aloud if possible. Circle the words or phrases that stand out to you. Consider what God might be saying to you through this verse and how you might respond to God's offer to daily bear your burdens.

PRAY: Burden-bearing God, I confess that too many times I try to carry my burdens all by myself. Today I choose to surrender to you those things that burden me, that weigh on my heart and control my thoughts. I surrender them all to you, my Savior and my God! Praise be to you, O Lord, My Savior, who promises to carry my burdens every single day. Amen.

MONDAY, APRIL 4

READ: Matthew 11:28

REFLECT: When are you especially prone to feeling weary? Weary can be defined as exhausted in strength, endurance, vigor or freshness. How might coming to Jesus give you rest from your weariness?

PRAY: Lord Jesus, you know all things. You know what exhausts me and you know the rest that I so desperately need. Thank you for promising rest to those who come to you, who choose to follow you and let you be their guide and their God. I come to you now for rest. In your name I pray, Amen.

TUESDAY, APRIL 5

READ: Matthew 11:29-30

REFLECT: Do you like to be in charge or are you a person who is comfortable learning as you go? How might you respond to Jesus' invitation to take his yoke (do things His way) and learn from Him? Is the promise of rest for your soul one that you have personally experienced?

PRAY: I want to live yoked to you always, Lord Jesus! Help me to be willing to learn from you as I go. Thank you for the promised rest for my soul that is available to me now and forever. In your name I pray, Amen.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6

READ: Philippians 4:12-13

REFLECT: What has been your experience of living in plenty and in want? How did you find strength in those situations?

PRAY: Lord, I don't think of needing your strength when I have what I want. It's when I don't think I have enough that I find myself asking for your help. The truth is I need you all the time, even more so when I think I have plenty—for that's when I forget about you altogether. Give me strength to live for you no matter what my circumstances. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

THURSDAY, APRIL 7

READ: Hebrews 13:5

REFLECT: When are you most content? Do you find it easy or difficult to be content with what you have? Why?

PRAY: God of my life, it can be so easy for me to love money more than you. But money is not what will bring me real contentment. My contentment in this life and the next comes from your promise to never leave me or forsake me. Because I belong to you, I can stand on your promise to be with me always. Thank you Lord Jesus! In your name I pray, Amen.

FRIDAY, APRIL 8

READ: Proverbs 16:3

REFLECT: Webster's definition of commit means to carry into action deliberately. As we approach Commitment Sunday, what might it look like for you to commit your work to the Lord? How do your plans align with God's plans?

PRAY: God of the past, present and future, show me how to align my plans with yours for the future of your kingdom through McFarlin. For the glory of your name Jesus, Amen.

SATURDAY, APRIL 9

READ: Psalm 145:3-5

REFLECT: McFarlin was established in 1924, almost 100 years ago! Generations of this congregation have commended the works of the Lord over the years telling of God's mighty acts! Take time today to meditate on God's wonderful works through McFarlin over the years. Then ask Him to show you what your part will be in the wonderful works still to be done!

PRAY: Great are you, Lord, and most worthy of praise! I praise you for the mighty works you have done through this church and I ask you to guide us as we move forward following your lead. Show me clearly what my part is so future generations will be able to commend your works to another. In the name of Christ I pray, Amen.

WEEK FIVE STUDY GUIDE

Opening Prayer (read prayer for Sunday from Prayer Guide)

Opening Question:

When have you needed, witnessed or experienced sacrifice leading to strength?

Read Scripture (Luke 22:39-46)

Watch Video

Week five of Lent is Surrendering to the Promises of God. Head over to our McFarlin UMC YouTube channel and watch the fifth video of our discipleship series, Surrendering.

To find us on YouTube, go to www.youtube.com. Search "McFarlin UMC" in the search bar to find our church's channel. Then scroll down until you see the Standing on the Promises playlist to find this week's lesson!



Lenten Questions:

Which of Jesus' miracles is your favorite or the most important to you? Why?

Seeing Jesus wrestle with his call to surrender is often a comfort to believers as it models that it's ok to struggle, and that in our own surrendering we are to pray like Jesus did. When you are faced with a challenge, how might praying, "Not my will but yours," give you strength?

What strength or support do you need in your journey of surrendering?

Generosity Questions:

We know that supporting this capital campaign will require some degree of surrendering by all in order to achieve our goal of \$6.2 million. What is exciting about this campaign for you that makes surrendering worth it?

This campaign will last for three years; as with any journey of sacrifice and surrender there are times where we wonder if it's worth it or if we have the strength to continue. How can you remind yourself of the importance and essentiality of surrendering?

Campaign Invitation: Next week is Commitment Sunday, where we will celebrate all the commitments we make when surrendering to the promises of God. This week, pray over your commitment card as you discern in what financial ways you might support the Standing on the Promises campaign.

Closing Prayer: Strengthening God, when Jesus felt overwhelmed, you were there for him. In prayer, we have constant connection and access to you, knowing you never turn away from us. Sustain us today that we might not be overcome, but instead overcome each and every challenge before us as we seek to stand on your promises. Amen.



WEEK SIX COMMIT

After he had said this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

When he had come near Bethphage and Bethany, at the place called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you, and as you enter it you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say this, 'The Lord needs it.'" So those who were sent departed and found it as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They said, "The Lord needs it." Then they brought it to Jesus; and after throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. As he rode along, people kept spreading their cloaks on the road. As he was now approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying,

"Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven,
and glory in the highest heaven!"

Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, order your disciples to stop." He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the stones would shout out."

Luke 19:28-40

WEEK SIX PRAYER GUIDE

SUNDAY, APRIL 10
COMMITMENT SUNDAY

READ: Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

REFLECT: After His resurrection, Jesus gave instructions as to what His followers were to be doing until His return. How is the church, specifically McFarlin, uniquely equipped to carry out those instructions? How could your commitment to the church make a difference in what McFarlin is able to do until Jesus returns?

PRAY: I thank you, Lord Jesus, for your promise to be with us always, to the end of the age. And we pray we will, by the power of your Holy Spirit and the resources you provide, carry out your good and perfect will your way. In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray, Amen.

JOIN US IN MAKING HOLY WEEK HOLY

APRIL 14

Maundy Thursday // 7pm Fenn Hall

APRIL 15

Good Friday // 7pm Sanctuary

APRIL 16

Easter Egg Hunt // 10:30am North Lawn

APRIL 17

Easter at McFarlin

- Sunrise 6:30am
- Sanctuary 8am, 9:30am and 11am
- Modern 11am



Scan the QR Code with your camera for a full calendar of all our Lent-related events!
mcfarlinumc.org/lent2022

WEEK SIX STUDY GUIDE

Opening Prayer (read prayer for Sunday from Prayer Guide)

Opening Question:

When in your life have you made and kept a commitment, and your life was better for it?

Read Scripture (Luke 19:28-40)

Watch Video

Week six of Lent is Committing to the Promises of God. Head over to our McFarlin UMC YouTube channel and watch the sixth and final video of our discipleship series, Committing.

To find us on YouTube, go to www.youtube.com. Search "McFarlin UMC" in the search bar to find our church's channel. Then scroll down until you see the Standing on the Promises playlist to find this week's lesson!



Lenten Questions:

Who helped prepare the way to Jesus for you? Who helped bring you to faith and welcome you to McFarlin?

What does it mean for Jesus to be Lord of your life?

As we leave this season of Lent and enter into Easter, what does Jesus need from you to prepare the way for others?

Generosity Questions:

How might committing to this campaign change your life?

How might committing to this campaign change your community here in Norman?

Campaign Invitation: Today's the day! We invite you to fill out your commitment card and lay it down during Palm Sunday and Commitment Sunday worship. Pray for the small group or your friends with whom you have journeyed this Lenten season. Ponder the countless saints who came before you to make McFarlin what it is today, and imagine what impact this will have in another 100 years.

Closing Prayer: God, you committed the greatest gift to us through Jesus Christ. Now let us respond with our "Yes" and "Amen," so others may find life in committing to you! Yes and Amen!



HOW DO I GO ABOVE AND BEYOND MY CURRENT GIVING?

Practical and creative ways to expand your generosity to secure the next century

Generosity Initiatives rely on church members making gifts to **expand and accelerate** their current level of giving. The best path to increased giving is the spiritual path, where you set your heart on things above. Financial priorities then take shape from the spiritual priorities.

One way of defining this is **“Lifestyle Stewardship,”** a term used to describe a level of giving that affects one’s living. The challenge of Lifestyle Stewardship is to find ways, boldly and prayerfully, to let your giving touch your living!

King David declared, **“I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing”** (2 Samuel 24:24 NIV). David understood the gift that would touch the heart of God must first touch the heart of the giver! This is the spirit of Lifestyle Stewardship: If it is for my God, my gift must have value and meaning to me.

Often, Lifestyle Stewardship means giving up something in one area so that you can give more of yourself in another. The three keys to effectiveness in Lifestyle Stewardship are:

- Reassess lifestyle
- Rearrange priorities
- Reallocate resources

Many believers have been amazed at their ability to give more generously to their church. The following seven steps are offered to help you in this regard.

1. PRACTICE PRIORITY BUDGETING

Many families will choose to rearrange their priorities and give up something in their current budget in order to give more to a generosity initiative. Priority budgeting may mean postponing a planned expenditure such as a new car, vacation, home remodeling or other major purchase. Many Christians giving to capital stewardship campaigns find a way to give through sacrificial commitments made in faith and coupled with priority budgeting.

2. REDIRECT PRESENT EXPENDITURES

Often, families have significant short-term expenditures for unique occasions. One example is the large expenditure a family incurs for a child to attend college. A family realized that their daughters would be graduating from college during the two years of the generosity initiative and, as a result, they were able to increase their commitment to the second year of the campaign by thousands of dollars by giving what they had been spending on their daughters' tuitions. Another example would be the cash flow that is freed up when a loan is paid.

3. INCREASED GIVING WITH INCREASED INCOME

Some people receive periodic increases in salary or bonuses from their employers. The temptation for many of us is to increase our lifestyle to fit the higher income. In many instances, families have decided they will commit the full amount of salary increases.

4. GIVE FROM YOUR EXCESS

A young man decided two collectors' baseball cards worth over \$20,000 he had been holding for a number of years would be the most appropriate means of touching sacrifice for his family. Some families save money over a period of years for a special project. A couple had saved \$80,000 to build a lake cabin. When their church entered a generosity initiative, they decided the needs of the church were greater than their need for a second home.

5. COMMIT UNEXPECTED CASH

Often, people pray for God to show them a way they can give beyond what they can presently see or afford. Sometimes, the answers come unexpectedly. A couple had been praying for weeks about their commitment to the church generosity initiative. Much to their surprise, they received an inheritance of several thousand dollars. They gave the entire amount to their church as part of their long-term commitment, in addition to a commitment from their regular income.

6. CONSIDER THE CHARITABLE IRA

In 2015, Congress enacted a permanent extension of the IRA charitable rollover. As a result, individuals age 70 or older can make gifts directly from their IRA to charity. An IRA charitable rollover is a wonderful way you can help continue our work and also receive a tax benefit this year.

Benefits of an IRA Charitable Rollover

- Avoid taxes on transfers of up to \$100,000 from your IRA to McFarlin
- Satisfy your required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year
- Reduce your taxable income, even if you do not itemize deductions
- Make a gift that is not subject to the 60% deduction limits on charitable gifts

7. DONATE APPRECIATED ASSETS (STORED RESOURCES)

Many people own stocks that are worth significantly more than the original purchase price. That is good news. The bad news is that if these stocks are sold, a significant portion of the gain would be lost to taxation.

Gifts of appreciated assets—typically investment securities or real estate—can be very advantageous to both the donor and to the church. By transferring ownership of the asset to the church, the donor avoids capital gains taxes on the sale of the asset. In addition, the donor receives an income tax charitable deduction for the full market value of the asset. That, in effect, makes these gifts less costly to make.

EXAMPLE

APPRECIATED ASSETS EXAMPLE

	SELL ASSET THEN DONATE NET PROCEEDS	DONATE ASSET DIRECTLY TO CHURCH
VALUE OF ASSET CURRENTLY	\$12,000	\$12,000
ORIGINAL PURCHASE PRICE	\$3,000	\$3,000
AMOUNT OF APPRECIATION	\$9,000	\$9,000
CAPITAL GAINS TAX* IF SOLD	\$1,800	-
CHURCH RECEIVES	\$10,200	\$12,000
(ASSET VALUE MINUS TAXES)		

*ASSUMES 12-MONTH HOLDING PERIOD, 15% CAPITAL GAINS TAX, 5% STATE INCOME TAX RATE.

Though it is important to invest your giving to further the mission of the ministry God has laid on your heart, it is also important to consider the tax implications of making a gift to the church. Before making a commitment of this type, please consult your CPA, tax attorney or other financial advisor.

A FINAL WORD

Giving does not have to be in equal increments over the three-year period of the campaign. You might be able to give more in the second year than in the first. As you think about your financial commitment to the Standing on the Promises, think not just of your potential to give right now, but also of your potential to give in the future. It might be that you can make a three-year commitment in which 20–30% is given in the first year, 20–30% is given in the second year and 30–40% is given in the final year.

Finally, as you consider your financial commitment to the Lord's work, you might want to consider estate planning. Many sincere, committed Christian people have not made provision for God in their wills and estate planning. Now might be a good time to do that. It might be as simple as including a provision in your will that 10% of the value of your estate will be donated to the church holding your letter of membership at the time of your passing. Or it could involve a planned gift such as a charitable remainder trust. While such gifts do not provide immediate financial benefit to a generosity initiative, they are marvelous gifts of faith commitment to carry on the work of the church for future generations.

FAQs

PLEASE KNOW: It is our utmost desire and intention to provide transparency, clarity and respect for the capabilities, intellect and talents of all laity, staff and pastors for all are critical to the success of this all-church effort of Standing on the Promises: Securing the Next Century, so that we can do just that—faithfully trust God together so we can accomplish now what is so very much needed both now and for the generations to come.

To that end we offer answers to the following Frequently Asked Questions. If you don't find answers here, there is an email address and phone number at the end of this set of questions so that you might seek clarification.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

WHY NOW? IS THIS REALLY THE BEST TIME TO TAKE ON A CHALLENGE OF THIS SIZE?

Many of you already know and embrace why we need to be proactive about upgrades to pipes and mechanical equipment that are dated, beyond their normal life span and in danger of failure—some as old as 97 years. We know such maintenance issues eventually cost us more than if we package together the upgrades and accomplish them with foresight, intention and good strategy. Similar to the old adage “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” our recent feasibility study proved we see this priority.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES SHOULD THE CAMPAIGN BE ONLY PARTIALLY FUNDED?

Once total resources are known from the campaign results, the Building Committee will meet, in conjunction with the chairs of Finance and Trustees, to determine priorities and finalize plans. Priority must be given to addressing the fire code requirements in the stairwell and elevator, included in the Standing on the Promises project, to obtain City of Norman approval to move forward with the Sanctuary building infrastructure issues. Those decisions will be brought to the congregation for discernment, and then to the Administrative Council convened as a Charge Conference before work begins.

WHAT IS THE STRATEGY TO FUND COST OVERRUNS?

1. While the goal is to avoid any debt for the church, if needed, emergency funding could be made available from one of the following sources:
 - a. A distribution from the original McFarlin Trust (that is, not our McFarlin Foundation) with no obligation to repay.
 - b. Our existing line of credit from a local bank.
2. Minor cost overruns will be handled by the Building Committee.
3. If it is determined that any major cumulative cost overrun could exceed \$50,000, a decision to accept would require a very timely consultation with the Faith & Finance Committee (a committee that includes Senior Pastor, Business Administrator, representatives from SPRC and Trustees, a Lay Leader, and a Lay Member to Annual Conference, in addition to several at-large committee members) in conjunction with the Building Committee, and may include a recommendation to the Administrative Council for approval, depending on the amount of the overrun.

WHO WILL HAVE BROAD OVERSIGHT AND DAY-TO-DAY OVERSIGHT OF THE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT?

The Building Committee, with regular reports to the Administrative Council.

WILL OTHER LAITY BE INVOLVED AND TO WHAT EXTENT?

The Faith & Finance Committee and the Board of Trustees will provide feedback and receive regular reports from the Building Committee.

All three report to the Administrative Council so that together many of our lay leadership will be involved.

WHAT ABOUT DEBT? IS IT POSSIBLE WE MIGHT FINANCE ANY PORTION OF THIS?

1. The clear goal is to avoid any long-term debt for the church, and to that end we are pledged to make every effort.
2. Of course, there are always potential factors we cannot fully control, including cost overruns and other developments.
3. Emergency funding could be made available from one of the following sources:
 - a. A distribution from the original McFarlin Trust (that is, not our McFarlin Foundation that is held with a Tulsa financial institution) with no obligation to repay.
 - b. If needed, a draw on our already existing line of credit from a local bank could be made. Those funds would be repaid from proceeds received in our Standing on the Promises campaign.
 - c. Such a draw on a line of credit would only be made at an amount up to a conservative percentage of our pledges to the project.

WILL MY COMMITMENT BE CONFIDENTIAL?

Yes. Only the Business Administrator, the Payroll and Accounting Coordinator and the Senior Pastor will have access to your commitment information.

HOW CAN I GIVE TO STANDING ON THE PROMISES?

Bring your commitment card on Sunday, April 10 (or any time before!). You can also contact Stephen Mitchell, McFarlin's Business Administrator, at any time with questions. He can be reached directly at 405-321-3484 ext. 177 or by email at smitchell@mcfarlinumc.org

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR STANDING ON THE PROMISES? WHAT ARE THE KEY DATES?

- Dec. 2021-Jan. 2022: Initial Phase
- Lent, March 6-April 10: All-Church Phase
- Monday, March 28: Advance Commitment Day
- Sunday, April 10: Commitment Sunday
- Sunday, May 1: First Fruits Sunday

MISSION CENTER AND FOOD PANTRY QUESTIONS

WITH FUTURE FOOD RESOURCE CENTERS COMING TO NORMAN, WHY DOES MCFARLIN NEED AN EXPANDED FOOD PANTRY?

1. McFarlin's Food Pantry is a key resource in Norman for addressing food insecurity. Even in light of Food & Shelter's new food resource building, the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma has said Norman cannot afford to have current food pantries like McFarlin's close. In response, McFarlin needs to upgrade its Food Pantry by building a Missions Center that would not only increase the capacity and quality of the food services, but also make space for additional, expanded Missions ministries to meet other needs in the community not fully met by and in collaboration with other resources.
2. McFarlin's Food Pantry is unique because it serves clients twice a month, while many other food pantries or resource centers do so only once a month. An expanded food pantry will increase efficiency and effectiveness by providing some choice to clients and create capacity to meet an expected increase in needs due to the future closure of access for Norman residents to the Moore Food Resource Center.
3. The Food Pantry is a robust and signature ministry of McFarlin that not only serves those who need food support, but also attracts new members for whom it is important that the church they choose makes such a high impact difference with a variety of missions ministries—not limited to food ministries—in the community and beyond.

A Joint Statement of Need for Food Provision in Norman McFarlin Food Pantry and Food & Shelter

Community Need for Food Provision in Norman and Cleveland County

Over 33,000 people or about 12% of the population in Cleveland County do not have enough food. Those persons represent an annual food budget shortfall of \$17.6M. McFarlin's is the largest food pantry in Cleveland County and annually meets the needs of approximately 11,500 persons or 35% of the 33,000 persons in need.

The Need for McFarlin's Food Pantry AND Food & Shelter

Currently, about 5,000 of the 33,000 persons in need from Norman find food at the Moore Food Resource Center. When Norman's Food & Shelter opens its new Share Center for food assistance in the Fall, those 5,000 will no longer have access to the Moore center, thereby increasing the need for food in Norman.

The Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma has stated to the director of Food & Shelter, April Heiple, that more access to food is needed in Norman, not less, and that the new Share Center will be needed to help close the gap. **Without McFarlin, the largest food pantry in the county, the size of the need would be even greater.**

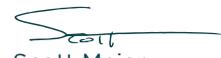
The vision and function of the Share Center at Food & Shelter is more than food provision. It will provide services focused on getting people into and keeping them in housing. It will include long-term housing, an onsite food pantry, office space for DHS, SSI, the Norman Housing Authority and Social Services for Veterans.

The vision of McFarlin's Missions Ministry is to create *multiple* high-impact, difference-making ministries that add to our current international, regional and local mission ministries and our current food, utilities, construction and other assistance ministries. To achieve this vision, McFarlin is committed to coordinating with and complementing those services that will be provided by Food & Shelter.

In summary, Food & Shelter and McFarlin are working together, as we have done in the past, to coordinate the provision of essential services for those in need in Norman. We understand and agree that the need for food assistance is greater than either of us can meet. We believe that our efforts will not create duplication.



Rev. Rockford Johnson
Senior Pastor, McFarlin Memorial UMC



Scott Meier
Director of Missions, McFarlin Memorial UMC



April Heiple
Director, Food & Shelter

"If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The LORD will guide you continually."

Instructions of the Lord—Isaiah 58:10-11

WHERE WILL THE FOOD PANTRY OPERATE DURING CONSTRUCTION (ANTICIPATED AS A MINIMUM 8-9 MONTH PROJECT)?

We propose moving operations to the West Lot into portable containers. But, if containers can't handle the power requirements and heat, we would move seven refrigerators or freezers to Bethlehem House from Aldersgate House to avoid the cost of providing additional power to containers in the West Lot. Ideally, we would utilize containers with HVAC built in and enough power to run two refrigerators or freezers.

COULD WE USE THE BETHLEHEM HOUSE FOR REFRIGERATORS AND FREEZERS?

We could utilize the East single door exit into the chained-in fence area to receive and move out Mobile Food Pantry food and refrigerated and frozen food for Aldersgate. This is not a preferred method, but we should be able to use the West double door exit when construction is not near the current sidewalk.

WHAT IS THE ADDITIONAL PROJECTED COST TO OPERATE THE FOOD PANTRY DURING CONSTRUCTION?

Interim accommodations will likely require us to bring in three to four portable construction offices with electricity; that is, three 8-foot by 40-foot (or wider) containers required to accommodate current storage and work areas. Wider containers might be required to enable stocking and packing. The Food Pantry might share office space with the construction company in their onsite portable

office. Estimated cost is up to \$20,000 for nine months, with an option to reduce the cost of some containers by about \$4,000 by also using the North wall of Fenn Hall to store food during peak food bank delivery. This also includes the possibility of working with the food bank to make smaller, more frequent deliveries. This assumes electric usage is approximately the same as Aldersgate House.

HOW WOULD INTERIM FOOD PANTRY COSTS BE FUNDED?

Electrical usage is paid from church budget as it currently is. The \$15,000 to \$20,000 container costs are included in the Missions Center project cost.

WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC SOURCES OF NEW REVENUE TO FUND THE MISSIONS CENTER OPERATING AND ONGOING CAPITAL COSTS ONCE IT IS COMPLETED?

1. Operating Costs: It is anticipated that projected operating costs do not increase due to increased efficiencies of construction and systems (this assumption will be confirmed by Guernsey Engineering comparing current usage with new equipment projected usage). However, if an increase in cost occurs, it would be paid for from the following sources:
 - a. Trustee operating budget funds for church utilities, etc. (as existing Aldersgate House costs are currently covered).
 - b. Funds from the food pantry directed receipt account, as a recommendation from the Food Pantry Committee, with full approval from the Faith & Finance Committee.
2. Capital costs would be covered from either:
 - a. The Trustee Operating budget.
 - b. Funds from the food pantry directed receipt account, as a recommendation from the Food Pantry Committee, with full approval from the Faith & Finance Committee.

FUTURE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH/DENOMINATION QUESTIONS

HOW MIGHT FUTURE DENOMINATIONAL DECISIONS RELATED TO QUESTIONS OF GAY MARRIAGE AND ORDINATION IMPACT THE UNITY OF MCFARLIN, RETENTION OF MEMBERSHIP AND OUR OWNERSHIP OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND THIS PROPERTY?

1. First, if you believe in McFarlin's mission and enjoy McFarlin and engage here now, then you can be sure that you and we can stay together and continue with the strong and effective ministries of Worship, Discipleship, Mission and Care, and continue the meaningful relationships rooted in faith that are the McFarlin we now know and love.
2. McFarlin is like many UMC churches. Although our members lean both ways on the issues of gay marriage and ordination, the vast majority—at least 75% and likely 85% or even more—of the congregation believes we can continue living and doing ministry together as we have for decades. You may say 15–25% is a large loss. However, that figure measures the numbers of congregants on both ends of the spectrum. Once a decision is made that leans either to the traditional or to the progressive persuasion, in all probability those on the end of the spectrum who agree with the decision will remain with the 75–85% already willing to stay together as we now are. Thus, the number of potentially departing members is decreased. And please know every current member and participant is vital and valuable and dear to our hearts and important for our mission. Any and every possible departure creates grief over the loss.
3. We are not destined to split down the middle. Yes, once a decision finally comes, we likely will see some adjustments. BUT that happens both ways—some may depart, others may arrive due to the wider, similar issues in other churches and the culture generally.
4. While it may be true that—sometime in 2023, 2024 or later—a small fraction of faithful

McFarlin members might feel compelled to relocate their life of faith because they perceive that McFarlin would either allow or not allow practices in line with their convictions. Still, McFarlin will remain to carry on with all the effective and beloved ministry life and work that has been our life together for almost a century.

5. As to ownership of the building, it is held in legal trust for the Oklahoma Conference of the UMC (OKUMC) so that if McFarlin ceased to be a UMC, the property would revert to the OKUMC. However, because of current plans and projections as to what the denomination will decide, there is a clear desire to avoid fights over property and to craft an official way for churches who stay in the UMC and churches choose to leave to join another emerging Methodist denomination might keep their property.



For the official language, see Paragraph 2501 in the UM Book of Discipline which can be found by searching online for “Book of Discipline 2501 requirement of trust clause,” or by scanning this QR code.

6. Whatever is decided by the denomination, McFarlin will continue in its current location and building long into the future. There have been no denominational change plans put forward that would cause the loss of our property, and none are expected that would do so. Whatever plan is adopted finally will define how local churches may settle the question of with which Methodist denomination the church is affiliated going forward. Current rules stipulate each local church owns its property and assets but only “in trust” which means, according to the current rules, that “if, at any point, it becomes clear the holder can no longer or chooses no longer to function as part of The United Methodist Church (UMC), it forfeits all rights to continue to hold the property, and the property itself and all other assets transfer to the annual (Oklahoma) conference board of trustees.” However, it is quite clear that whatever plan the

General (worldwide governing) Conference of the UMC adopts, there will be provision for a period of transition that will define allowances for local churches to retain their property without purchase during a period of defined transition—whether the church remains with the post-decision UMC or were to affiliate with another defined and allowed Methodist denomination per decisions for such transition by the General Conference of the UMC.

7. Locally, given that McFarlin is a church that has embraced unity with diversity in Sunday School classes, small groups, even within families and as a whole, and has practiced that for decades, it is reasonable to conclude that McFarlin will continue to do the same and choose to remain together for the greater and eternal mission of Changing Lives That Change the World. In other words, making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Choosing to remain together then would mean staying together in this building and retaining this building long, long into the future.

HOW MIGHT THE SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE OF THE UNITED METHODIST DENOMINATION IMPACT US?

First, it is helpful to know that in our system of governance we are required to abide by the rules established by the General (worldwide) Conference of the UMC. And, those rules and principles explicitly recognize that the local churches are the most important expressions of ministry of our worldwide church. Without intact, effective and thriving local churches, there is no denomination. Thus, plans for change that have been put forward and that may be adopted clearly favor the local church remaining strong and effective.

HOW WILL THE WHOLE CHURCH KNOW WHAT IS DEVELOPING WITH THE UMC DENOMINATION WITH REGARD TO GENERAL CONFERENCE DECISIONS?

1. Our General Conference Guidance Team is committed to keeping the church informed and prepared for whatever develops.

2. For more information regarding how McFarlin is being guided, prepared and informed with regard to General Conference and its timeline, potential decisions and impact on McFarlin, please go to www.mcfarlinumc.org/about/general-conference.

HOW CAN I ASK FURTHER QUESTIONS?

Please contact our McFarlin Standing on the Promises campaign leadership with other questions at promises@mcfarlinumc.org. If you are not able to email, please call 405-321-3484 for either Senior Associate Pastor Wendi Neal, ext. 105, or Business Administrator Stephen Mitchell, ext. 177.

HOW CAN I FIND UPDATES?



Please visit mcfarlinumc.org/promises for our Standing on the Promises: Securing the Next Century information page.



419 S. University Blvd., Norman, OK 73069
mcfarlinumc.org