

A stylized illustration of a church with a green steeple and a cross on top. The church is rendered in shades of orange, yellow, and teal. The text 'Better Together' is written in a large, dark teal, cursive font across the center of the church.

# Better Together

**JOURNAL**

*Sermon | Prayer | Gratitude*





*This journal belongs to:*

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This “Better Together” Journal is a fresh approach that incorporates everything you need to know about the campaign and building plans. We are integrating all generations in this journal. We hope that children and students will pay attention to the opportunity to pray daily and mediate on the scriptures. This is the first time we have devoted space exclusively designed for our young people to participate.

Beginning on Monday, September 9 and lasting through Sunday, October 13, we invite you to join us in daily reading and prayer for our “Better Together” campaign. We not only want to build on our facilities and strengthen our endowment, we also want to build and strengthen our faith.

Asbury has many great traditions, but one of our best is, we are truly an intergenerational congregation. We focus on the needs of our children, students and adults. Since most decisions to follow Jesus come before the age of 18, it makes sense for us to do all within our power to reach our kids for the Lord Jesus. “Better Together” is happening because we want to bring our students back to our main building. They deserve the best we can offer. Having students across the parking lot is confusing to newcomers and creates separation within our congregation. I want our students to rejoin us. By returning them to our main campus, we will be able to transform Venue 68 into a Christian-based development and outreach center. We have strategic partners who we can empower to reach people within our local community in meaningful ways. A third component of “Better Together” is an enhancement to provide better access to our building for our senior adults by creating a north drop-off zone closer to the doors. Finally, by strengthening our endowment, we can help offset future financial obligations.

The Lord willing, I will be speaking for five consecutive Sundays (September 15 – October 13). I ask for your prayers and presence during this series. We have limited opportunities for such a time as this. We are praying to make the most of these moments. The five messages, “Follow the Leader, Seek the Lord, Be Strong in the Lord, Bless the Lord and Dedicate to the Lord,” follow the biblical text of the Israelites building the Temple. King David wanted to hand off a great legacy to his son, Solomon. The intent was to bring glory to God. I want you to follow the daily readings showing what others have done when faced with opportunities and challenges.

We share the same intent. We want God to be glorified. We are Helping Others Follow Jesus because we believe He is the key to life, both here, now and eternally. This is our opportunity to invest in God’s kingdom through Asbury.

Join with me in praying this will be one of the most significant works of God in the wonderful history of our congregation. I hope this journal will be a useful tool in discerning what God is calling you to do to help us be “Better Together.”

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

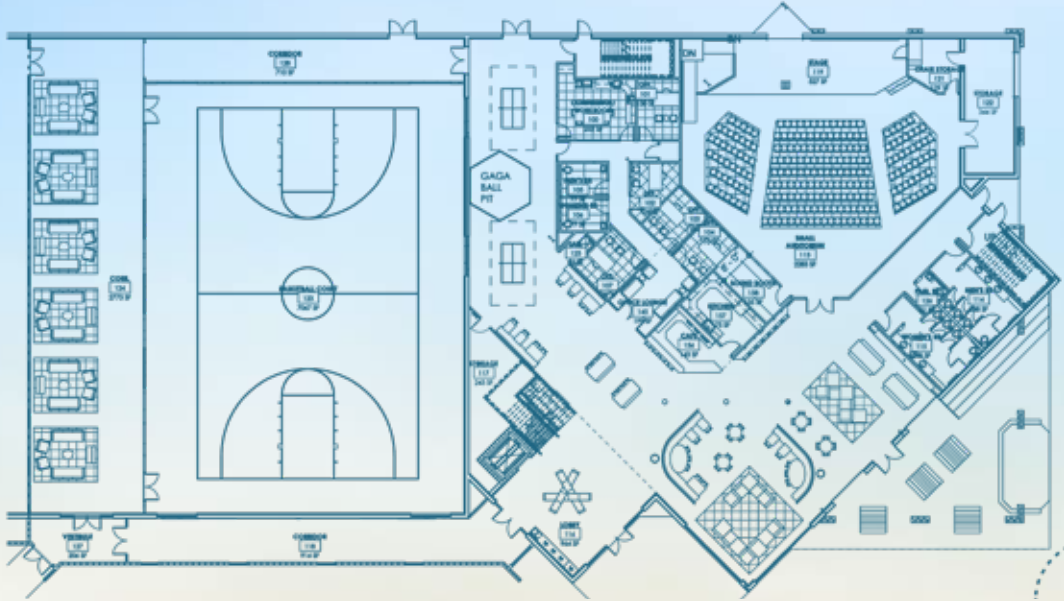
Senior Pastor

EXTERIOR ◦ —————→ *Asbury Student Center*

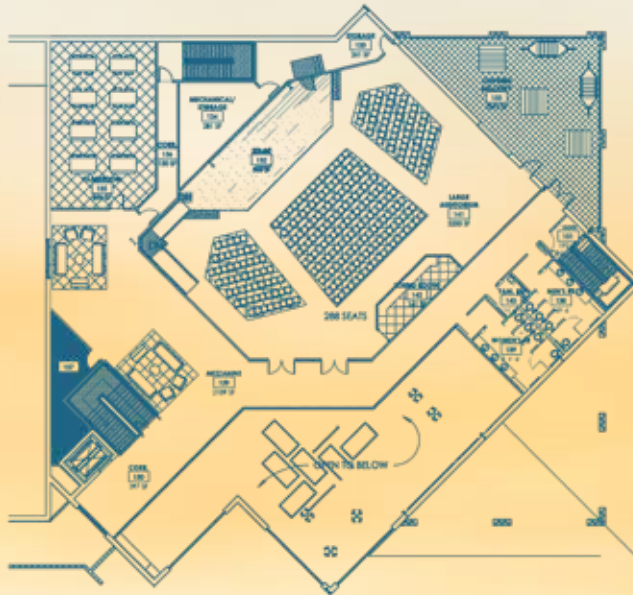


# FLOOR PLAN → *Asbury Student Center*

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR





LOBBY AREA  *Asbury Student Center*

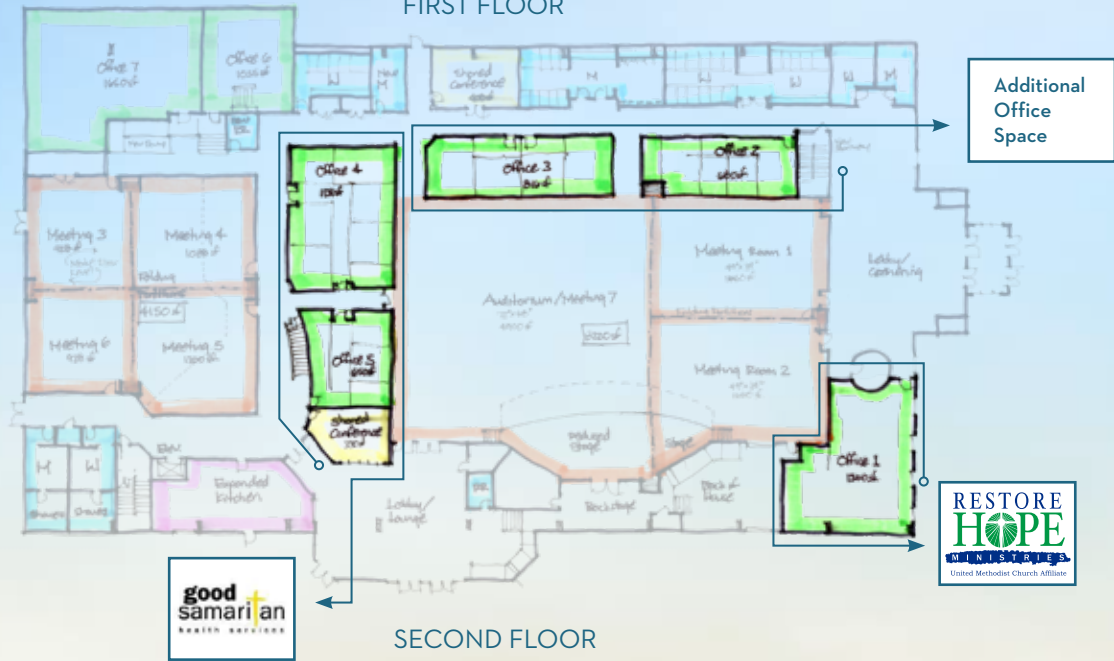


PATIO AREAS  *Asbury Student Center*

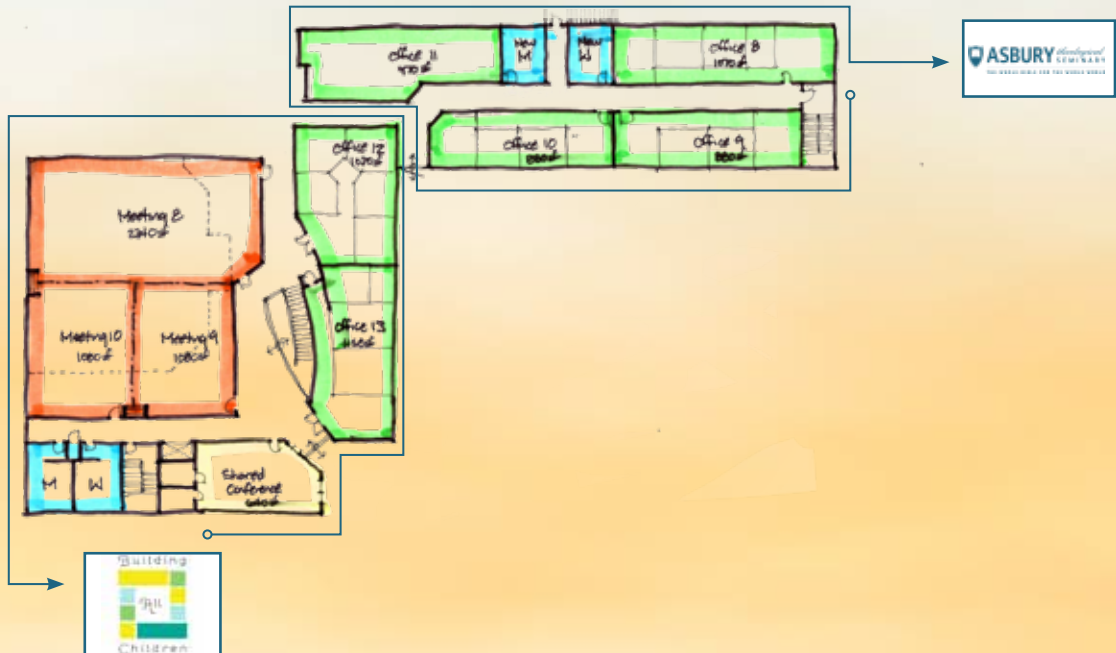


# FLOOR PLAN → Development Center

## FIRST FLOOR



## SECOND FLOOR





EXTERIOR →

*North Entrance*

RENDERING 1



RENDERING 2





Consider using this journal not only for yourself, but also as an opportunity to meet with others in a small group. The Christian faith is about making disciples of Jesus.

This journal provides a mutually blessed way for you to do precisely that. Below are some questions your small group may use for discussion each week.

## **Weekly Small Group Reflection Questions:**

Review the key scripture(s).

Review the key point(s) from the sermon.

How were you encouraged?

How were you challenged?

What questions did it create?

What convictions did it bring?

What was the pastor asking of you, even expecting you to do in response?

How has the Lord spoken to you through this sermon?

What are you going to do as a result?

# Follow the Leader

Monday, September 9, 2019 | **1 Chronicles 28:1-8**

In “A Tale of Two Cities,” Charles Dickens wrote *“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. It was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness.”* King David had been wise, heroic and had known success. He had also tasted depression and crushing despair. Let’s give him credit – he finished well. He lined things up to the best of his ability and he ended with a great legacy. As Israel’s leader, it was time for him to speak to his nation. He empowered his successor (his son, Solomon) to follow well.

Noted author, John Maxwell, claims, *“Leadership is **influence**.”* Effective leadership inspires us to do more than we could on our own. Leaders cast vision. They plan and prepare. Leaders unite people. Without leadership, we do our own thing. *“Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but blessed is he who keeps the law.”* (Proverbs 29:18) The book of Judges concludes with a depressing and chaotic result of the absence of leadership: *“In those days, there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”* (21:25) Judges is a black hole of *“the worst of times.”*

In his book, “The Leadership Engine,” Noel Tichy describes the four dynamics of effective leadership: Good ideas, energy, values and timing. Good ideas need energy to execute. Ideas and energy deficient in good character destroy. Yet, no matter how smart, energetic and noble, opportunities did not exist had we lived in the Himalayas in the 1400s. Ecclesiastes 3 famously says there is a time for everything to come together.

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**APPLICATION:** Asbury’s leadership has prayerfully determined “Better Together” is a great plan. “Better Together” energizes us. Just as King David was able to bring people together to support his initiative, we believe now is the right time to act. We pray for a people like Nehemiah led, who had a “mind to work.” We pray for a unified church who, shortly after Pentecost, came together with one heart.











# Follow the Leader

Saturday, September 14, 2019 | **Ephesians 4:1-16**

- 1) What are your thoughts, feelings and application from reading today's text?
- 2) How does it tie in with the upcoming sermon?

Write down (at least) one person/thing/situation for which you are thankful.

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## **BUT FIRST, PRAY.**

Lord, help us to be pure and blameless, filled with the fruit of righteousness.

(Philippians. 1:10-11)







# Seek the Lord

Wednesday, September 18, 2019 | **Matthew 6:25-34**

1) What are your thoughts, feelings and application from reading today's text?

2) How does it tie in with the upcoming sermon?

Write down (at least) one person/thing/situation for which you are thankful.

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## BUT FIRST, PRAY.

Lord, use us to magnify Christ to our families and our local community.

(Philippians. 1:20)

# Seek the Lord

Thursday, September 19, 2019 | **Philippians 2:1-11**

- 1) What are your thoughts, feelings and application from reading today's text?
- 2) How does it tie in with the upcoming sermon?

Write down (at least) one person/thing/situation for which you are thankful.

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## **BUT FIRST, PRAY.**

Lord, help us stand firm, in love and unity, serving together for the faith of the gospel.

(Philippians. 1:27-2:2)



# Seek the Lord

Saturday, September 21, 2019 | **Hebrews 12:1-11**

- 1) What are your thoughts, feelings and application from reading today's text?
- 2) How does it tie in with the upcoming sermon?

Write down (at least) one person/thing/situation for which you are thankful.

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## **BUT FIRST, PRAY.**

Lord, shape us into prayerful people of humble obedience that we might look like Jesus.

(Philippians. 2:6-8)





# Be Strong in the Lord

Monday, September 23, 2019 | **1 Chronicles 28:20-21**

In every facet of life, the pressures leaders face can cause them to lose their nerve. Leaders are sabotaged and triangulated. Leaders can lose their identity by trying to please all the people, all the time. I like the saying, *“We have an audience of One.”* We like to please people, but we are ultimately here to please the Lord. When we forget this truth, we will follow the wrong path.

It would have been easy for the Apostle Paul to have lost his nerve and quit. He did not quit. He put on the whole armor of God. That helped him persevere. However, he took more than a defensive posture. He stood firm. He attacked with the sword of the Spirit. He also stayed strong by the prayers of the saints and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

We are so much stronger when we are not alone. We need previous generations to coach, train and deploy us. We learn from our wounds and share our wisdom with others. Having wisdom and relationships is a major goal of life. Jesus gave us the Holy Spirit – the “comforter, the counselor.” We need the presence of God and the company of other believers. If Christians claim to not need the church, I want to ask, *“Then how did you ever hear the gospel?”* We are Christians only because others have passed the faith to us. We are commanded to pass it forward, too. We are stronger together.

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**APPLICATION:** David told his son, Solomon, the same thing Moses told the Israelites when they were about to cross the Jordan under the leadership of his successor (Deuteronomy 31 and Joshua 1). The legacy of faith was to be handed off to the next generation. King Jehoshaphat was referred to with this line: *“His heart was courageous in the ways of the Lord.”* (2 Chronicles 17:6) Wow! What a great line! Be courageous – for the Lord.















# Bless the Lord

Monday, September 30, 2019 | **1 Chronicles 29:10-20**

God has lavishly blessed us through Jesus, the Holy Spirit and His church. It is essential we feel blessed by God. “Blessed” is who we are in Jesus Christ. *“I am blessed”* is our identity. If we do not think we are blessed, we believe we are ignored (at best) or cursed (at worst).

After receiving His grace, we get to return the favor – we can bless the Lord in return. To bless the Lord means to praise God’s holy Name. Praise becomes its own love language. Exalting God fills us with gratitude, generosity and joy. It shifts the focus from our limitations to God’s surpassing power. Our applause of God becomes the language of heaven. When we bless the Lord, we speak good of Him.

To bless the Lord means to speak and sing. Our words have such power. They reflect what is in our hearts. When we continually speak the praises of God, we are lifted up. I think of one of the managers of a restaurant I frequent who always says when I ask her how she is: *“I am blessed and highly favored.”* In fact, I join with her when she says it. She could answer in a lot of ways – but this is her habit.

We don’t just bless the Lord when everything goes our way. Think of Job. After losing all his possessions, his health and his children, he said: *“Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”* (Job 1:21) When Paul was in Philippi (Acts 16) he was beaten with rods and thrown into jail, yet he and Silas were singing hymns and praying while in stocks and chains. Blessing the Lord was at the heart of the early church.

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**APPLICATION:** We can develop our affections for God in many ways. Learning to bless the Lord is strategic. It opens our hearts to His love. It removes obstacles and barriers that prevent our hearts from being free. Many Psalms reveal this theme. Blessing God is a frequent language of the converted heart.



# Bless the Lord

Wednesday, October 2, 2019 | **Psalm 26**

1) What are your thoughts, feelings and application from reading today's text?

2) How does it tie in with the upcoming sermon?

Write down (at least) one person/thing/situation for which you are thankful.

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## **BUT FIRST, PRAY.**

Lord, thank You for Your generous gift of righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ.

(Philippians. 3:9)



# Bless the Lord

Friday, October 4, 2019 | **Psalm 67**

- 1) What are your thoughts, feelings and application from reading today's text?
- 2) How does it tie in with the upcoming sermon?

Write down (at least) one person/thing/situation for which you are thankful.

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## BUT FIRST, PRAY.

Lord, let us forget what lies behind and reach forward to the new things that are ahead.

(Philippians. 3:13)

# Bless the Lord

Saturday, October 5, 2019 | **Psalm 103**

- 1) What are your thoughts, feelings and application from reading today's text?
- 2) How does it tie in with the upcoming sermon?

Write down (at least) one person/thing/situation for which you are thankful.

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## **BUT FIRST, PRAY.**

Lord, help us to press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ.

(Philippians. 3:14)

# Bless the Lord

Sunday, October 6, 2019 | **1 Chronicles 29:10-20**

## SERMON NOTES:

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### **BUT FIRST, PRAY.**

Lord, set our minds, not on earthly things, but on heaven and Jesus Christ.

(Philippians. 3:19-20)

















*To our God and Father  
be glory forever and ever.*

*Amen.*

Philippians 4:20





## GRATITUDE CONVERSATION STARTERS

Share what you're grateful for this week! Each day cut out 1 or 2 slips of paper and share the question with your parents. Better yet, your whole family! Place your finished slips in the container we gave you. If you complete them all and bring them back to church with you on Sunday, congrats! You can head to the prize box.



What is something about your teacher that you are grateful for.

What is something about each of your siblings that you are grateful for?

Who did something nice for you today? What was it?

What was something at church that you are grateful for?

Why are you thankful for God?

What abilities did God give you that you are grateful for?

What is your favorite season? Why?

What's one thing a friend did for you recently that you are thankful for?

What is something you love doing with your parents?

How does it feel to do something nice for someone?



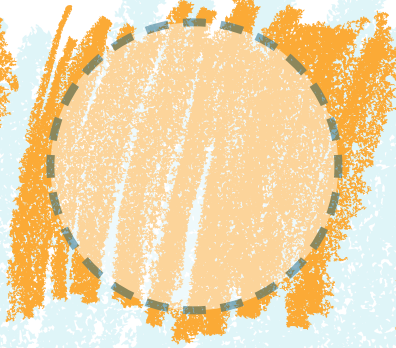
# THE LORD'S PRAYER STICKER CHART

The Lord's Prayer is the ultimate example of how to pray. Let's memorize it this week. Each night put together the puzzle that you made at church with your parent or family. Then practice saying it. You'll have it memorized before you know it. Place a sticker on each day that you remember to do your puzzle with your family. If you complete your chart and bring it back to us, you'll earn another trip to the prize box!

**MONDAY**



**TUESDAY**



**WEDNESDAY**



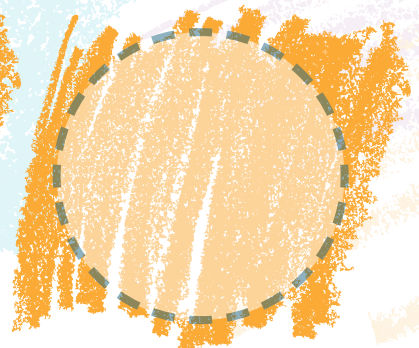
**THURSDAY**



**FRIDAY**



**SATURDAY**



Helping  
Others  
Follow  
Jesus





# STICKERS

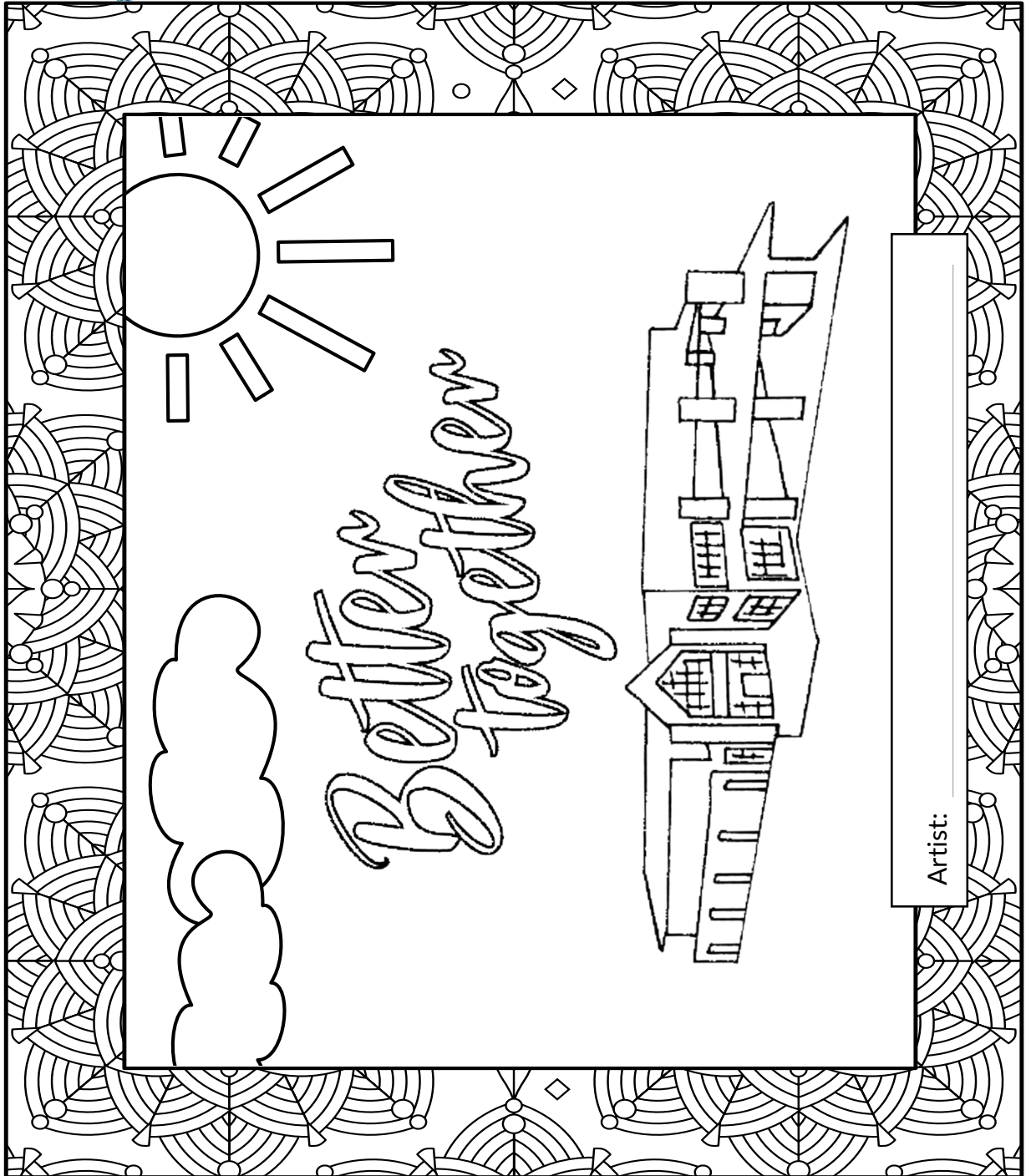


Helping Others Follow Jesus



# FAITH AND COURAGE

Don't forget the popsicle stick kit that you got in your class! Join your family and build your own church. In the meantime, color this awesome picture of the new building we're raising money for. Bring it, or a photo of your popsicle church, back to us on Sunday. You've earned another trip to the prize box.



Artist: \_\_\_\_\_





# GENEROSITY/ SACRIFICE CHORE CHART

Time to be generous with our time, so we can be generous to our church! Talk to your parents about ways to earn money to fill your bottle. We've given you lots of suggestions for how you can earn some cash and coins. Feel free to come up with some of your own ideas, too. On Sunday, bring back the money you earned for a fun Sunday of celebration and surprises.

## 2-3 YEARS

- Pick up toys and books
- Put trash in garbage can
- Dust
- Put away silverware
- Wash baseboards
- Fold rags and dishclothes
- Put clothes in hamper
- Put clothes away in drawers

## 4-6 YEARS

- All previous chores
- Take care of pets
- Set and clear the table
- Match socks
- Put away groceries
- Make bed
- Wipe down dirty walls
- Empty trashes
- Sweep with small broom

## 7-11 YEARS

- All previous chores
- Fold laundry
- Sweep
- Vacuum
- Take out trash
- Wash mirrors
- Meal prep
- Take trashcan to curb
- Weed flowers/garden
- Clean out the car
- Clean toilets
- Clean room
- Organize toy room
- Bring in mail/newspaper

## 12+ YEARS

- All previous chores
- Mow lawn
- Babysit siblings
- Wash windows
- Iron
- Wash car
- Cook simple meals
- Laundry
- Mop floors
- Clean bathroom
- Clean out fridge

Helping  
Others  
Follow  
Jesus



# BEFORE YOU START THIS JOURNAL...

start thinking and planning with your friends about how you can accomplish the activity on the Sacrifice page in the coming weeks. We can't wait to see how you impact the future of Asbury Students through your dedication and sacrifice.



## GRATITUDE

**Activity:** What if you woke up tomorrow with only the things that you thanked God for the day before? It's easy to forget just how many things God has given us when we are focused on our situations and surroundings more than Him. This week, every night before you go to sleep this week, write down the things that you are grateful for.

### SUNDAY

What do you take for granted in everyday life? Write down as many as you can.

- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| 1:  | 11: | 21: |
| 2:  | 12: | 22: |
| 3:  | 13: | 23: |
| 4:  | 14: | 24: |
| 5:  | 15: | 25: |
| 6:  | 16: | 26: |
| 7:  | 17: | 27: |
| 8:  | 18: | 28: |
| 9:  | 19: | 29: |
| 10: | 20: | 30: |

# GRATITUDE

**Activity:** What if you woke up tomorrow with only the things that you thanked God for the day before? It's easy to forget just how many things God has given us when we are focused on our situations and surroundings more than Him. This week, every night before you go to sleep this week, write down the things that you are grateful for.

## MONDAY

Write down people you are thankful for.

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|-----|-----|-----|
| 1:  | 11: | 21: |
| 2:  | 12: | 22: |
| 3:  | 13: | 23: |
| 4:  | 14: | 24: |
| 5:  | 15: | 25: |
| 6:  | 16: | 26: |
| 7:  | 17: | 27: |
| 8:  | 18: | 28: |
| 9:  | 19: | 29: |
| 10: | 20: | 30: |

## TUESDAY

Write down experiences/opportunities you are grateful for (small or big).

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|-----|-----|-----|
| 1:  | 11: | 21: |
| 2:  | 12: | 22: |
| 3:  | 13: | 23: |
| 4:  | 14: | 24: |
| 5:  | 15: | 25: |
| 6:  | 16: | 26: |
| 7:  | 17: | 27: |
| 8:  | 18: | 28: |
| 9:  | 19: | 29: |
| 10: | 20: | 30: |

# GRATITUDE

**Activity:** What if you woke up tomorrow with only the things that you thanked God for the day before? It's easy to forget just how many things God has given us when we are focused on our situations and surroundings more than Him. This week, every night before you go to sleep this week, write down the things that you are grateful for.

## WEDNESDAY

Write down items/possessions you are grateful for.

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|-----|-----|-----|
| 1:  | 11: | 21: |
| 2:  | 12: | 22: |
| 3:  | 13: | 23: |
| 4:  | 14: | 24: |
| 5:  | 15: | 25: |
| 6:  | 16: | 26: |
| 7:  | 17: | 27: |
| 8:  | 18: | 28: |
| 9:  | 19: | 29: |
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## THURSDAY

Write down good things happening in your life you are thankful for.

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| 1:  | 11: | 21: |
| 2:  | 12: | 22: |
| 3:  | 13: | 23: |
| 4:  | 14: | 24: |
| 5:  | 15: | 25: |
| 6:  | 16: | 26: |
| 7:  | 17: | 27: |
| 8:  | 18: | 28: |
| 9:  | 19: | 29: |
| 10: | 20: | 30: |

# GRATITUDE

**Activity:** What if you woke up tomorrow with only the things that you thanked God for the day before? It's easy to forget just how many things God has given us when we are focused on our situations and surroundings more than Him. This week, every night before you go to sleep this week, write down the things that you are grateful for.

## FRIDAY

Write down any past or present growing/challenging experiences that you are grateful for.

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| 1:  | 11: | 21: |
| 2:  | 12: | 22: |
| 3:  | 13: | 23: |
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We may not always be thankful for growing and challenging experiences, but when we thank God in the difficult seasons, we have an opportunity to realize how God has never left.

## SATURDAY

Write down the people and experiences you've had at Asbury that you are grateful for.

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|-----|-----|-----|
| 1:  | 11: | 21: |
| 2:  | 12: | 22: |
| 3:  | 13: | 23: |
| 4:  | 14: | 24: |
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FRANZES  
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# PRAYER

**Devotional:** God shows us time and time again through Scripture why it's important to pray. We see Jesus praying regularly throughout His life, during the good times and bad. Jesus showed His disciples, and us, an example for how we should pray using the Lord's Prayer as a guide.

## Read Philippians 4:6-7

It says that we should bring our prayers and requests to God in EVERY situation. Is that a little convicting? It is for us. We realize we are quick to tell our friends and family about the different situations we find ourselves in. Whether we are excited, annoyed or sad about the things going on in our lives, we seldom talk to God first. When we do spend time with Him, it's usually to ask for things. How will you be mindful about bringing your prayers, petitions, and thankfulness to God this week?



Sometimes we feel embarrassed to pray out loud because we think we are going to say the wrong thing. God doesn't expect us to say impressive prayers, He just asks us to bring all our worries, desires, fears and thankfulness to Him.



# PRAYER

**Activity:** Spend time each day this week reflecting on your day with the four prompts below. Spend time talking to God about each of these things. It can be as simple or as in depth as you want. God is always listening when we share our hearts with Him.

## SUNDAY

Write down the good parts:

Write down the bad parts:

Write down what you are grateful for:

Write down some prayer requests:

## MONDAY

Write down the good parts:

Write down the bad parts:

Write down what you are grateful for:

Write down some prayer requests:

# PRAYER

**Activity:** Spend time each day this week reflecting on your day with the four prompts below. Spend time talking to God about each of these things. It can be as simple or as in depth as you want. God is always listening when we share our hearts with Him.

## TUESDAY

Write down the good parts:

Write down the bad parts:

Write down what you are grateful for:

Write down some prayer requests:

## WEDNESDAY

Write down the good parts:

Write down the bad parts:

Write down what you are grateful for:

Write down some prayer requests:

# PRAYER

**Activity:** Spend time each day this week reflecting on your day with the four prompts below. Spend time talking to God about each of these things. It can be as simple or as in depth as you want. God is always listening when we share our hearts with Him.

## THURSDAY

Write down the good parts:

Write down the bad parts:

Write down what you are grateful for:

Write down some prayer requests:

## FRIDAY

Write down the good parts:

Write down the bad parts:

Write down what you are grateful for:

Write down some prayer requests:

# PRAYER

**Activity:** Spend time each day this week reflecting on your day with the four prompts below. Spend time talking to God about each of these things. It can be as simple or as in depth as you want. God is always listening when we share our hearts with Him.

## SATURDAY

Write down the good parts:

Write down the bad parts:

Write down what you are grateful for:

Write down some prayer requests:

## THOUGHTS

# FAITH AND COURAGE

**Is faith a hard concept for you to understand?** For us, it can be. Faith is believing in something you can't see and sometimes that can be intimidating. When we have faith in God and take His words to heart, we are able to have more courage because we are reminded that He is in **EVERY** situation.

God often times calls us to things that we cannot do on our own. The enemy tries to take our eyes off what God has called us to by making us feel small and insignificant. It makes it easier to step out of our comfort zone when we remember that God promises that He will never leave or forsake us. Despite the lies the enemy tells us, we know that having faith in God can stretch us to our limits at times. However, when faith and courage come together, it can make a lasting impact.

We've learned God doesn't call us to live in our comfort zone. Instead, He challenges us to push through discomfort so that others can know about Him through our actions, words and character. When we have faith in God, we have faith that He will use us, if we let Him. Every small act of obedience to God matters. Sometimes it just takes saying "yes" to doing the small things so that when God asks us to do the big things, we have the courage to do it.

**This week, we want you to look for ways you can be courageous and grow in your faith. On the following page, each day, write down an act of courage or kindness you did for someone else. We are challenging you to go outside your comfort zone and do more than pay for someone's meal behind you in the drive thru.**

Examples of ways that you can be courageous in your faith: putting on your Instagram story if anyone has a prayer request and faithfully pray for whoever responds, continuously invite the person who sits alone at lunch to join you and your friends, go out of your way to write a note to someone at school about how you see Christ in them, help your elderly neighbor do a task outside and ask them if you can pray for them afterwards, praying for your sibling who is going through a difficult season, etc.

**Have courage that you can do uncomfortable things for God. It is amazing to witness how the people's faith around you will grow because of your obedience.**

**FAITH AND  
COURAGE**

# **ACTS OF COURAGE**

**SUNDAY**

**MONDAY**

**TUESDAY**

**WEDNESDAY**

**THURSDAY**

**FRIDAY**

**SATURDAY**

# FAITH AND COURAGE

**Activity:** We want you to write a letter to yourself in the future. Where would you like to see your faith grow by the time the building is built? Keep these letters because we will use them for a project in the new building while it is under construction.

A large rectangular area for writing a letter. It features a vertical red margin line on the left side and horizontal blue lines for the body of the text. The area is empty, ready for the user to write their letter.





# GENEROSITY

It's hard to imagine what generosity looks like for a student when most of your resources are given to you by your parents. However, there is still ownership for the items and money that you work for or are given to you. This week, we want to encourage you to be more generous with your time, abilities, efforts, possessions, and money.

The membership vows here at Asbury call us to build up the church through our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness. Have you been generous with all of those parts of your life? Sometimes generosity can be uncomfortable and it may not always be our first response; however, God can use your generosity to bring Him glory in big ways if you let him.

## MONDAY

How can you be generous with your presence this week at home and school? We want to challenge you to come to church on Wednesday night and Sunday this week. Commit to being generous with your time.



# GENEROSITY

## TUESDAY

How can you be generous in the ways that you witness to others this week? Who will you intentionally show the Love of Christ to or invite to Church this week? Maybe there has been someone placed on your heart that you know could really use someone encouraging them to come with you.

## WEDNESDAY

How can you be generous with your service or time this week? This may be at home, school, in your neighborhood or for a stranger. Get creative and go love people well by serving others.

# GENEROSITY

## THURSDAY

How can you be generous with your prayers for others and for Asbury this week? You could maybe choose to not get on social media/video games all day and instead commit to praying for the people around you.



## FRIDAY

How can you be generous with your gifts moving into the next week? Gifts are more than just money. They include time, abilities, and talents that God has given you. Start being generous with your gifts today and over this next week and watch how God transforms your thoughts through your generosity.



# SACRIFICE

# BIG SACRIFICE

\* TAKE OWNERSHIP

We realize that our church is better together than we are on our own. We can make lasting impacts on other people's lives while having fun together too. We know this to be true through the opportunities we get when we serve alongside our friends.

Start brainstorming and planning some ways that you can join with your friends to raise money as a group for the new building. Be creative and think outside of the box for ways to make a difference in the future of Asbury.

Examples of this could be a bake sale, lemonade stand, car wash, color run, cleaning car windows after church on a Sunday Morning, raking leaves, etc.


**Can you set a group goal for giving toward the new building?**

**Group goal:**

**Monday:** Can you sacrifice your own desires this week and give your money to the building campaign. Any time you want to go out to eat this week, get a Starbucks drink, etc. choose to set that money aside and donate it to the future of Asbury Student Ministries. Every small act of obedience leads to immense change in the lives of others. Bring any money raised with you to Church on October 13 during the Youth Service. Any money that you bring on Sunday will enter you in a drawing to win a day with your youth pastor and three friends for a day of fun.

**Can you set a personal goal for giving toward the new building?**

**Personal goal:**

A decorative border of intricate line art surrounds the text. It features large, stylized flowers with spiral centers, leaves with various patterns like stripes and dots, and swirling vine-like motifs. The border is composed of multiple layers of these elements, creating a rich, textured frame.

# GREATER LOVE

has no one than this,  
that someone lay  
down his life for his  
friends.

- John 15:13



# *Discipleship Community Overview*

WEEK 1 - Gratitude

WEEK 2 - Prayer

WEEK 3 - Faith and Courage

WEEK 4 - Generosity

WEEK 5 - Sacrifice

# GRATITUDE Luke 7:36-50

Think about your day (today): How many times have you already said the words out loud, "Thank you!"?

In prayer: \_\_\_\_\_

To a friend or acquaintance: \_\_\_\_\_

To a family member: \_\_\_\_\_

To a stranger, service person, etc.: \_\_\_\_\_

Avoiding an overly simple answer: Define gratitude. **What is gratitude?**

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What might be some opposites of gratitude?

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Describe a person you know that exemplifies a life of gratitude.

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## Our Gospel story:

What do you suppose was the dominant motive(s) of this woman in doing what she did?

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In what ways do you see that Jesus "saw" this woman differently than others-in-the-room "saw" her?

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WHY do you suppose Jesus saw this woman differently?

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What are specific ways that we Christ-followers can choose to see such people differently, more like Jesus sees them?

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What is the connection of this story with today's key focus on GRATITUDE?

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How does one develop a grateful heart?

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# PRAYER Matthew 6:5-15

<b>When</b> you pray ...	Jesus teaches us to put prayer into practice.
<b>Our</b> Father ...	The Lord's Prayer is linked with community.
Give us this day our daily bread	We are encouraged to ask for <b>God's provision</b>
<b>Forgive</b> us our debts ...	Forgiveness gets the most attention in the prayer.

Prayer is rooted in gratitude and awe.

Affection for God begins with adoration and praise.

"Your will be done" means we are aligning ourselves with God.

Pray for Asbury during our time of Better Together.

According to Jesus (6:5), what are some wrong motivations that some people have in prayer?  
What harsh name did Jesus call such people?

In teaching the simplicity of prayer, what are the petitions Jesus recommended?

Your \_\_\_\_\_ come  
Your \_\_\_\_\_ be done  
Give us our \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ us our 'debts'  
Lead us away from \_\_\_\_\_  
Deliver us from \_\_\_\_\_

From your understanding of biblical teaching, what happens when God's people pray ... for others?

# PRAYER Matthew 6:5 -15

From the same vantage point, what results when God's people neglect the practice of prayer?

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What can we do to more effectively become and/or be a Discipleship Community of prayer?

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Discuss the importance of prayer as the people of Asbury respond to our **Better Together** initiative.

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## Focused Prayer:

Form groups of 6-8 people. As we unhurriedly pray together this morning, our prayer coordinator will lead us through the Lord's Prayer and will pause several times, providing one-minute in each pause for folks in your group to add specific prayers to the statement spoken:

*Hallowed by your name . . .*

*Your kingdom come . . .*

*Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven . . .*

*Give us today our daily bread . . .*

*Forgive us our 'debts' as we forgive our debtors . . .*

*Lead us not into temptation . . .*

*Deliver us from evil . . .*

# FAITH AND COURAGE Numbers 13-14

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In your Discipleship Community, who are the Calebs and Joshuas, those who motivate others in the Community toward faith and courage?

What caused Caleb and Joshua's voices to differ from that of the other ten explorers? What did the ten see and hear? What did Caleb and Joshua see and hear?

What were the consequences of the Israelite's disobedience to God? (14:23)

Hebrews 11:1

*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.*

Based on that definition, how are Caleb and Joshua men of faith?

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What is the connection between faith and courage?

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Describe and discuss the faith and courage it takes to "wholeheartedly" (14:24) follow Jesus in our own day and culture.

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As God pointed the Israelites to "the promised land," Jesus pointed his followers to the Kingdom God/ Kingdom of Heaven. And just as the Israelites of Numbers 13-14 needed faith and courage to enter the promised land, those who choose to follow Jesus must have faith and courage to "enter the kingdom of God."

What have you found to be the source of Christian faith and courage?  
(This question is more personal story telling than declarative truth.)

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# GENEROSITY

Luke 21:1-4; John 6:1-22; Luke 10:25-37; Luke 19:1-10;  
2 Corinthians 8:1-5

What are some motivators toward generosity?

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Giving - Tithing - Sharing - Generosity How are these similar and how do these differ?

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How does one become a person of generosity?

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## **Focused Prayer:**

Thank God for specific ways you have seen and/or experienced His generosity.

Thank Jesus for His generosity of sacrifice.

Confess to the Lord any areas of lack in your own generosity.

Ask the Lord to persistently transform your heart toward generosity.

Ask God to cause the people of Asbury to generously participate in the **Better Together** vision, initiative and financial campaign.

# SACRIFICE Luke 8:1-3

***“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”***

-Jim Elliott, missionary to Ecuadorian Auca people

What is one “thing” you would die for?

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Reflect on Pastor Tom’s teaching:

*“Sacrifice means to give up something because of the possibility it will lead to something better.”*

*“When we sacrifice, we gain a greater inheritance. When we sacrifice, we help others gain a greater inheritance, too.”*

*“Martin Luther King Jr.: Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. . . Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.”*

*“We must determine if the goal we are pursuing is worth the sacrifice needed to attain it.”*

From what you understand of the Scriptures (The Bible):  
Describe the sacrificial character of God Himself.

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What sacrifices does God expect of us who are followers of Jesus?

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# SACRIFICE Luke 8:1-3

What sacrifices do you suppose are expected of us as Asbury UMC to fulfill God's purpose, particularly in *Helping Others Follow Jesus*?

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### Focused Prayer:

Thank God for showing us that sacrifice is a reflection of His own character.

Thank Jesus for sacrificing Himself in order to gain our salvation.

Ask God to strip away our tendency toward indulgence and replace it with a willingness to sacrifice what is necessary to further His kingdom "on earth as it is in heaven."

Ask the Lord to bring within each Asbury household a spirit of generous and sacrificial participation in the **Better Together** vision, initiative and financial campaign.





Mark your calendar!

*Sunday, October 13*

As our church family turns in our commitment cards and gifts together.

Then we will take the next step as we put our faith in action and watch God fulfill His vision for His church.

**Better Together** COMMITMENT CARD

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I plan to give my 3-Year commitment ...

\$ _____	<b>Weekly</b> x 156 weeks (3 years)
\$ _____	<b>Monthly</b> x 36 months (3 years)
\$ _____	<b>Annually</b> for 3 years
\$ _____	<b>One time gift</b>
\$ _____	<b>Other</b>

Or, as follows: \_\_\_\_\_ Total 3-year commitment  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

For asset gifts contact Pastor Guy Ames at 918.492.1771 or [games@ashurynuttsa.org](mailto:games@ashurynuttsa.org)

# COMMITMENT GUIDE



Giving, like everything else in the Christian life, is rooted in God's **grace**.

In fact, the Apostle Paul said that we should see to it that we “excel in the grace of giving.” Just as we aspire to grow in our prayer life and our character, we are called to grow in the grace of giving.

We, as a church and as individuals, are called to be good stewards of all He has entrusted to us. As believers we know that God owns it all and we are simply stewards of His resources. And since He owns it all, what He wants from you isn't your money, but your heart. To faithfully surrender and trust that He will provide. To realize and embrace the truth that we have been blessed, not for our own gain, but to be a blessing to others.

*Better Together* is an invitation for you to go deeper into this grace from God.

Helping Others Follow Jesus is a God-size vision, there is no doubt. It will require significant commitment from each of us over the next three years to succeed. However, the life change that will come as a result of our faithfulness now will have eternal impact for many students and adults in our community.

May *Better Together* help you break through to new levels of intimacy with **Christ**.

# SO, WHAT'S YOUR PART?

We are asking that you prayerfully consider making a three-year commitment for *Better Together*, over and above your regular tithe. Every person must pray during the course of this campaign and seek God's prompting.

## It's not about equal gifts, but equal sacrifice.

### THREE IMPORTANT STEPS – BEFORE YOU MAKE A COMMITMENT



#### **GO SLOW.**

Don't rush your decision. Allow God to speak to you during this five-week journey.



#### **PRAY DAILY.**

Pray each day that God will guide you toward your part of *Better Together*.



#### **GATHER YOUR FAMILY.**

Gather as a family (involve even young children in the conversation) to talk about your participation.

We encourage you to also use the Small Group discussion questions we've included around the dinner table, with your Adult Discipleship Community, friends or family.

# WHAT WILL IT TAKE FOR GOD TO PROVIDE \$12 MILLION FOR THIS VISION?

Because we all have unique giving capabilities, we can't simply divide the total needed by the number of families in our church to determine an average gift. The following is a model of the distribution of gifts it will take for us to be successful. This also underscores the biblical principle of giving in proportion to what we have - and that's going to be different for all of us.



No. of Gifts at Level	Gift Level	Total at Level	Cumulative Total
2	1,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
2	500,000	1,000,000	3,000,000
4	250,000	1,000,000	4,000,000
5	150,000	750,000	4,750,000
5	75,000	375,000	5,125,000
7	60,000	420,000	5,545,000

**25 Commitments = \$5,545,000 or 46.2% of Goal**

No. of Gifts at Level	Gift Level	Total at Level	Cumulative Total
20	36,000 <sup>Monthly</sup> 1,000	720,000	6,265,000
25	28,800 800	720,000	6,985,000
30	21,600 600	648,000	7,633,000
40	18,000 500	720,000	8,353,000
60	14,400 400	864,000	9,217,000
			9,217,000

**175 Commitments = \$3,672,000 or 30.6% of Goal**

**200 Commitments = \$9,217,000 or 76.8% of Goal**

No. of Gifts at Level	Gift Level	Total at Level	Cumulative Total
80	10,800 300	864,000	10,081,000
100	7,200 200	720,000	10,801,000
120	3,600 100	432,000	11,233,000
140	1,800 50	252,000	11,485,000
160	900 25	144,000	11,629,000
200	720 20	144,000	11,773,000
			11,773,000
Remainder	720	227,000	12,000,000

**800 Commitments = \$2,783,000 or 23.2% of Goal**

**1,000 Commitments = \$12,000,000 or 100.0% of Goal**



# COMMITMENT CARD

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I plan to give my 3-Year commitment ...

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Weekly** x 156 weeks (3 years)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Monthly** x 36 months (3 years)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Annually** for 3 years

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **One time gift**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Other**

Or, as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total 3-year commitment

For asset gifts contact Pastor Guy Ames at 918.492.1771 or [games@asburytulsa.org](mailto:games@asburytulsa.org)





*Better Together* is a three-year commitment that begins on Commitment Sunday, October 13. On this day, we will ask our church family to turn in their commitment card found in this Journal, that represents our gifts to the *Better Together* campaign.

However, we will be collecting cards until **November 6** and we will announce the committed grand total on November 10.

## ONLINE

If you would prefer to use a debit card or e-check automatic withdrawal, simply visit [myasburytulsa.org](http://myasburytulsa.org) to securely give. If you plan to give electronically, please still fill out a commitment card and bring it with you on October 13, so you can participate in our special offering time.

## BILL PAY

Through your bank's online pay system you can set up a one-time or automatic recurring gift, directly from your bank account. Please list Asbury, 6767 S. Mingo Road, Tulsa, OK 74133 and include a designation to "Better Together" in the memo line. If you plan to give via your bank's bill pay, please still fill out a commitment card and bring it with you on October 13, so you can participate in our special offering time.

## DIRECT MAIL

If you choose to mail your gifts, please write "**Better Together**" in the memo line and mail them to the following address:

Asbury United Methodist Church  
6767 S. Mingo Road  
Tulsa, OK 74133

## STOCK

Please contact Dean Hatch, CFO, at 918.392.1136. with the name of your stock and the number of shares you are contributing. We will provide broker information at that time.



## QUESTIONS?

We are here to help answer any questions you may have. You can call our offices any time 918.492.1771, and talk with Daniel Dennison or email him at [ddennison@asburytulsa.org](mailto:ddennison@asburytulsa.org).







