

FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS ^

A Spiritual Journey of Faith & Sacrifice
Stewardship Campaign Information 2022-23

Learn More at gracegathering.com/ftsoo



A JOURNEY WITH GOD

All throughout the Bible we see God taking his people on various types of faith journeys. We have many examples like moving into the promised land, defeating enemies like Goliath, providing funds for the tabernacle and temple, following in the footsteps of Jesus, learning how to

be filled with the Holy Spirit, and so much more. God takes specific churches through faith journeys as well. God has done this in all kinds of ways over the years at Grace Gathering, and all of them have been meaningful times of blessing and growth.

LOCAL + GLOBAL

We know that part of our calling here on earth to follow God is not only for our own sake, but also so that God can bless others through us. The very last thing Jesus said to his followers is this:

ACTS 1:8

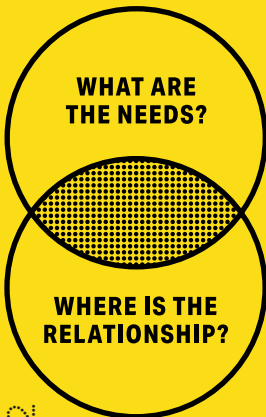
“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

This means God has a plan for us to bless others both **locally** and **globally**.

EXISTING NEED + EXISTING RELATIONSHIP

When meeting the needs of others, it's helpful to consider where the needs

are the greatest *and* where existing relationship is already established. This intersection of need and relationship is why we have chosen a church plant in Haiti and a Family Training community center in southeast Fort Wayne.



Southeast FW is the most under-resourced community in our city and county, and Haiti is the most under-resourced country in the western Hemisphere. And we happen to have existing relationships in *both* of these areas. We own land in Haiti and have been preparing to plant a church there for many years, and three years ago we planted a site in the Oxford neighborhood in Southeast Fort Wayne with Steve Terry and New Life Church of God.

THE VISION

FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS >

Church Plant in Haiti

We own land in the northern city of Haiti called Cap Haitian. This is in a community where there is currently no church. The first phase of this church building and house for Pastor Patrice will cost \$350,000.



Cap Haitian, Haiti



50/50



Family Training Center

Grace Gathering Central meets in the building with New Life Church of God in the Oxford neighborhood of the 06 zip code. This community center will be a multipurpose gym holding after school programs, tutoring, mentoring, and parent university. The cost of the first phase of this center is \$750,000. We know this amount will only be a start to the cost of a multipurpose facility, and that is why we are currently applying for grants in addition to our campaign.



Southeast Fort Wayne

MAY 2022

18 MONTHS

END OF CAMPAIGN

AN 18-MONTH JOURNEY OF FAITH & SACRIFICE

God is launching us into an 18-month journey that we are calling, "For the Sake of Others." We will spend four weeks as a congregation casting vision, praying, and asking the Lord to take our sacrifice and faith and bless others both locally and globally in these two initiatives. At the end of this series, we will ask everyone to consider making an 18-month financial pledge that will go to the cost of the Haiti plant and the training center. We believe both of these initiatives will bless others in places of great need both locally and globally.





Why is this called, "For the Sake of Others"?

Just imagine what life would look like if you were growing deeper in your walk with God, you shared life with other believers who felt like family, and you were making an impact in the lives of people around you who need Jesus?

This is what God desires for all of us. One of the tangible ways we want to pursue our relationship with God as a church family is to pursue God-sized assignments that will do all three of those things just described. As we think about the way God wants to bless people through the impact of Grace Gathering, we know he will call us to do things that go beyond our human means of accomplishing them. While the last couple of years have had a lot of focus on our own spiritual health through difficult circumstances, we believe God is bringing us into a season of focusing on others. Spend a moment and consider the power of a church family coming together to bless those in need both locally and globally.

What is the vision for the Haiti church plant?

Grace purchased property in the northern part of Haiti called Cap Haitian a few years ago. It is property right next to the non-profit Scott Jester leads called Empowered International (see below for an explanation of EI). We have sent teams to Haiti over the last five years, have established many relationships, and desire to plant a church there that would not only bless the local community but be a training center for other pastors in Haiti. God has raised up Pastor Patrice who lives there and will lead the plant. The cost for the first phase of the church facility and for a house on the land is around \$350,000.

Here are a few facts about Haiti:

- The most impoverished country in the western hemisphere
- Cap Haitian is the second largest city in Haiti
- There's no church in the village where Grace Gathering owns land
- Voodoo is the official religion, established in 2003

What is the vision for the Family Training Center in the southeast side of Fort Wayne?

Grace Gathering has had a long relationship with pastors and churches in the southeast side of Fort Wayne. This dates back to the late 80's and early 90's when Gordon Smith was leading the church. Since then, Grace has continued these relationships, and today the tie is the strongest it has ever been now that we have planted one of our sites there with Steve and Stephanie Terry. The

building on Mckee Street where Grace Gathering Central and New Life Church of God meet was built by Emmanuel Baptist back in 1925. This is the congregation that planted 13 churches in the region including Grace Gathering in 1959. The story and clear hand of God in this are astounding. The vision is to build the first phase of a multipurpose building on the land that will serve the Oxford neighborhood, eventually including a multipurpose gym, after school programs, tutoring, mentoring, and a parenting university. This would be transformative for the families

in this community. Leaders from New Life and elders from Grace are currently forming a non-profit that will own and oversee the center as both churches lead together. The cost for the first phase of this facility is around \$750,000.

Here are some stats of the 5,000 residents living in the Oxford neighborhood:

- 33% married couple households
- 57% home ownership
- 41% households under poverty line
- 3rd highest infant mortality rate in state of Indiana

What is Empowered International?

This is a non-profit Scott and Stacy Jester started 8 years ago that trains young adults in both spiritual formation and entrepreneurial business. It is a two-year residency program. They have 15 young adults currently in this training program living in Haiti on land right next to the land Grace Gathering owns for the church plant. These Haitian young adults will be instrumental in the Haiti plant. Also, Empowered is starting a Fort Wayne program this fall with a group of male and female young adults that are highly motivated but who don't have the financial resource to leverage opportunities. Empowered has purchased property right across the street from the church building at Grace Gathering Central where these young adults will live, be discipled as followers of Jesus, and learn key entrepreneurial skills for running local businesses and restaurants. These young adults will also be instrumental in the community center vision there in the Oxford neighborhood where 5,000 residents live.

What's a stewardship journey?

A stewardship journey is a recognition by the congregation that the vision God has given is beyond the resources of the people leading it. In other words, it is a God-sized assignment that cannot be accomplished by human means. This means the congregation goes on a journey of seeking God, makes tangible sacrifices and steps of faith, and then asks God to multiply and miraculously provide in ways no one thought possible. At the end of this four-week process of seeking God, a dollar amount is pledged (above one's regular giving) over an 18-month time frame. This means that while the tangible expression is about the finances needed for the vision, the journey is ultimately not about money at all. All throughout Scripture we see God calling his people to follow his vision by taking steps of faith and sacrifice and trusting him in all areas of provision. (2 Cor. 9:6-11)

What happened in past stewardship journeys at Grace?

Over the last 20 years, Grace has gone through three of these faith journeys. This has translated into an average congregation building a \$4 million dollar facility, all above regular giving, as God provided in miraculous ways. What was even more significant than the dollar amounts God provided was the spiritual growth that took place among everyone who participated. There were countless stories of amazement, surprise, and inspiration as God grew everyone's faith in him. This impacted people in so many ways beyond financial.

What are the sight and faith portions for the 18-month pledge made on May 15th?

For the Sake of Others begins on April 24 and ends May 15 when people will make their 18-month pledge. The pledge will consist of both a sight and faith portion. **The sight portion** is an amount you feel prompted to sacrifice from what you have or will have during that 18 month time-frame. This is based on an amount you can plan. Examples could be a portion from your income, savings account, items you can sell, cutting expenses, donating stock, purchases you postpone, etc. In past campaigns families postponed kitchen renovations, sold cars, gave away their savings, donated stock, and made all kinds of sacrifices. Many of the testimonies afterward were about how God replenished what they gave and beyond. **The faith portion** is an amount you feel prompted to give that you cannot see but believe God will somehow provide. This could be unexpected income that comes in, unexpected gifts, unexpected jobs, unexpected raises, etc. This isn't being presumptuous because the agreement with the Lord is that if that money doesn't come in, then it cannot be given. In the past, people and families pledged thousands in faith portions, and we saw 90% of those provided.

Does this campaign have a financial goal?

The difference between a fundraiser and a stewardship journey is that fundraisers have specific financial goals, while faith journeys have spiritual goals of growth. If we combine the first phase of both Haiti and the community center that total would be \$1.1 million. The chances of an 18-month campaign totaling that much are extremely unlikely. Whatever money comes in, we will give 50% equally to both entities unless the total amount exceeds the full amount needed for the Haiti plant. However, if the total pledged is only half of the overall need, or even less, we will rejoice and celebrate what God has done. If the total amount pledged is significantly less, the elders will pray and decide how to best allocate the funds to both projects. This is truly more about our spiritual growth than our money.

What is the current financial shape of Grace Gathering?

We have a long history of God providing financially for Grace Gathering and us trying to respond with good stewardship. We also have good checks and balances in place and have never had an incident of financial indiscretion or loss of integrity. We currently have assets totaling around \$5 million, a reserve account of around \$250,000, and no debt.

If we sold some of our land in New Haven, couldn't we use that money for this vision?

We own 83 acres of land, and we are currently in discussion with the city of New Haven about building a sports complex. Those conversations are still occurring. We hope and pray it happens, but we have had 2-3 of these kinds of discussions in the last 20 years that never ended up working out for various reasons. If it does, we don't know what options we might have to lease or to sell. We also know we have some major expenses totaling well over \$100,000 coming up like a new roof, new HVAC units, etc. We trust God will lead those discussions and the timetable of those



discussions, but we don't want to postpone the vision yet another time waiting to find where all of that eventually ends up. There is still too much uncertainty to know whether a possible sale or lease could impact any of this current vision or not.

What if I have to choose between regular giving (tithing) and giving to this campaign? Which should I choose?

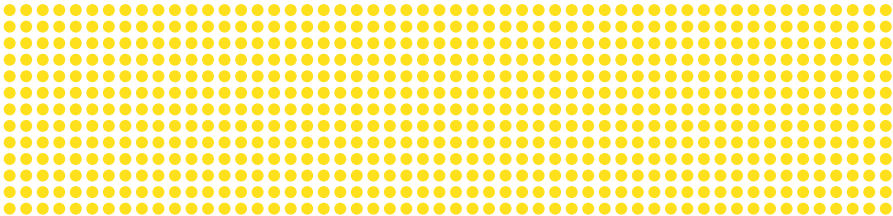
There are two types of giving in the Bible. Structured giving or tithing, which is giving God the first portion of our income to his church (10% as a guideline). This is about obedience and trust and is part of our spiritual discipline of following Jesus in everyday life. Spontaneous giving or free-will giving is about being prompted to give to special needs and opportunities, and this is about generosity. It is a different spiritual muscle. It is possible to grow in one of these two areas, or both of them simultaneously, if needed. This spiritual journey is about pledges that are above and beyond regular tithing and giving. This was the model given when God asked his people to give spontaneously from their hearts above their tithe to build the tabernacle and Temple, for example: "From what you have, take an offering for the LORD. Everyone who is willing is to bring to the LORD an offering." (Exodus 35:5)

On paper, I can't see any financial room to make a pledge—I just don't have the financial margin. What should I do?

Most people begin the stewardship journey somewhat skeptical, a little uncomfortable, and pretty certain that if they will be able to pledge anything, it will be small. This is why we say it cannot be about dollars and fundraisers. Fundraisers are about trying to dig deep to give for a worthy cause. A spiritual journey is about seeking God and allowing him to perform miracles in our hearts and lives that allow us to do things we could never imagine doing on our own. Don't begin the journey trying to figure out how much you might or might not be able to pledge. God will reveal those issues later. Begin by devoting your heart and your life to God, allowing him to lead you one step at a time. And if you are married, you will eventually have meaningful and important discussions together, but resist the urge to decide amounts right away. Go on a journey with God.

What if my circumstances change? Can I change my pledge midway through the 18 months?

Like in our other stewardship journeys, pledge amounts are not guarantees—they are intentions. A faith portion cannot be guaranteed by definition. While we hope everyone is able to fulfill their pledge (and most have in the past), we recognize circumstances do change. Changing circumstances could lead to a different amount given than was pledged (decreased or increased).



NEXT STEPS

MAY 15, 2022

Commitment Sunday

Everyone who desires to participate in this unifying and encouraging endeavor will make their pledges on Sunday, May 15, including sight and faith portions. Digital and printed pledge cards will be available.

MAY 22, 2022

First Fruits Sunday

We encourage everyone to give as much of their pledge as possible on Sunday, May 22. This will be a one-time offering that will serve as a catalyst for our journey. The rest will be given over the course of the 18-month period.

FUTURE DATES

What if I'm new and these dates have passed?

No problem! Everyone can participate at any time. The most up-to-date information will be on our website.

HOW CAN I GIVE?

All of our processes for tithing apply to this campaign. As such, most people will likely give online using the Fund "For the Sake of Others." If you prefer to give a physical gift, you can give it on Sundays or by mail.

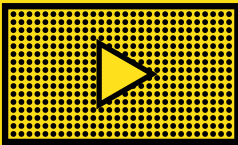


Schedule Recurring Gifts



Give Manually Anytime

gracegathering.com/give



To watch videos, see project renderings, and get up-to-date information, visit our website.

gracegathering.com/ftsoo

Have a specific question not listed above?

Please feel free to contact your site leader, one of the elders, or send your questions to Jennifer Neff who oversees our operations and finances.

jennifer.neff@gracegathering.com