



"A series of studies was conducted regarding the age at which people accept Christ as their Savior; there was a 32% probability of someone embracing Jesus as his or her Savior between the ages of 5 and 12; 6% for people 19 or older. In other words, if people do not embrace Jesus Christ as Savior before they reach teenage years, the chance of this is slim."

George Barna,
"Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions"

"Jesus said, 'Go and make disciples . . . teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded'"
(Matt. 28:19-20).

BLESSED TO BLESS OTHERS

"I will bless you . . . and you will be a blessing."
Genesis 12:2 (NIV)

As we take the journey to discover what God would have us do, we should keep in mind the "Three laws of God's Blessing":

- 1. Our blessings should flow to others.** The Bible teaches us that we are blessed, not just so that we can feel good, not just so we can be happy and comfortable, but so that we will bless others. God told Abraham in Genesis 12: "I will bless you and you will be a blessing to others." This is the first law of blessing — it must flow outwardly.
- 2. Our blessings to others will come back on us.** The more you bless other people and the more you help others, the more God blesses your life. Luke 6:38 tells us: "Give your life away and you'll find your life given back with blessing." You cannot out-give God."
- 3. The more we're blessed by God, the more He expects us to help others.** Jesus said it this way in Luke 12: "Much is required from those to whom much is given. For their responsibility is greater."

Based on the blessings of your life, what would you say God expects from you?

(adapted from *Purpose Driven Life*, Rick Warren)

"Over the course of our lives, we have been stuck with the feeling of overwhelming helplessness. Only the compassion of others, kind gestures, and God's presence eased our troubles. Combined with our experiences and faith, we realize the Lord calls us to give as much as we can, when we can, however we can. Whether what we possess at the time is money, time and skills, a smile and kind word, or all blessings mentioned, God empowers our souls with joy and positively impacts His children when we answer needs with undaunted, steadfast giving. We have been blessed to be a part of First Farragut United Methodist Church as the compassion of its members and ministries take root and grow in this way."

- Tyler and Tara Mallison

First Farragut United Methodist Church



FORWARD TO FREEDOM

TRANSFORMING LIVES

Our church is alive in Christ and envisioning the future God has for us. Since we built our church home, we have become a beacon of God's presence and love in our community. We are known for our outreach to feed the hungry and shelter those who have no home of their own. We are an extension of God's love and grace and our ministries touch hearts and strengthen lives. While we celebrate many milestones along our spiritual journey, we are mindful God has placed us here in this strategic location for a purpose. As we connect, grow, and serve, we are alive in Christ and responsive to opportunities God sends our way.

"FORWARD TO FREEDOM" IS ABOUT THE FUTURE — CHANGING LIVES

We have the blessing of wonderful facilities for ministries of all types. Thousands of people drive by our front door each day. We are committed to fulfilling our mission to make disciples and to reach people for Christ. This spring, we will take steps to strengthen our ministries by reducing the capital debt on our facilities. This will further position our church for greater growth and better equip us for effective ministries as we reach out to others with God's forgiveness, grace, and love.

Our "Forward to Freedom" campaign allows us to unite together in prayer and giving to fulfill the work God has prepared for us to do. God does some of the best work in our lives when we are called upon to trust God without reservation. The real story of "Forward to Freedom" will be the change in our own hearts as we draw nearer to Christ, offering ourselves first to God in devoted prayer and then with our gifts, which will transform lives through empowered, bold ministry.



ENCOURAGEMENT FROM SCRIPTURE AS WE ENVISION GOD'S PLAN FOR US

"And here is my advice about what is best for you in this matter. Last year you were the first not only to give, but also to have the desire to do so. Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have."

(2 Corinthians 8:10-12)



"What do you want me to do for you?", Jesus asked.

(Mark 10:51)

CELEBRATING GOD'S AWESOME PROVISION

WHILE LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

When our congregation stepped out in faith in 2003 to put needed facilities in place for ministry, our heart's desire was to honor God in all. That desire continues today as we celebrate God's blessings and look forward, in great faith, to the future God has for us. God's plan for us is clear. We are to reach out and make new disciples for the transformation of our families, homes, neighborhoods, communities, and world. We have visions and dreams for ministry beyond today which will enable us to reach our community in more effective ways.

VISIONS AND DREAMS ARE NOT ENOUGH

If we fall short of fulfilling our God-given mission, become complacent, or fail to be good stewards of the financial and non-financial resources God has entrusted to us, we will impede our ability to achieve God's plan and purpose for our lives and church.

OUR CURRENT FACILITY DEBT

Our church facilities are an extraordinary tool for ministry, **valued at \$8,148,105.15.**

- Total loan balance as of December 2014: **\$2,546,991.82.**
- Lender: **Home Federal Bank.**
- Current interest rate: **4%** (set to change April 23, 2017, based on the weekly average yield on U. S. Treasury securities plus a margin of 3%; will not be less than 4% when renegotiated per agreement.)
- Average Monthly interest: **\$8,976.46.**
- Average Monthly principal: **\$7,947.54.**
- Date of final debt payment: Under present terms — **October 23, 2032.**

"First Farragut made the decision to build a new church because we were out of space for ministries. We found land in Farragut and prayerfully began the building process.

So many hopes, dreams, and prayers went into this building. God has certainly been present as we've encountered and overcome some obstacles. I am confident He has great plans for First Farragut and will continue to bless this congregation."

- Ondie Reese

THREE REASONS WHY "FORWARD TO FREEDOM" IS CRUCIAL

1 KEEPS MINISTRY STRONG AND FOCUSED

Capital campaign gifts for paying down building debt assures the right proportion of our tithes and offering remains available for daily ministry. Our daily ministries "make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors and each other." Reducing our debt obligation will allow our ministries to grow.

2 FREES US TO TALK ABOUT THE FUTURE

When our debt is reduced to a more manageable level, we can begin serious conversation about other ministry opportunities God has prepared for us. We can once again dream God's dream for the future.

3 HONORS OUR INTENT

Our intent has always been to pay for our building with special gifts — above and beyond our tithes and offerings — rather than from our daily operational budget. Not only does this give us an opportunity to grow in the grace of giving, it also helps assure a healthy ministry environment.

God desires First Farragut UMC to be an intentional, vibrant, growing faith community transformed through prayer, scripture, worship, and study.

God wants us to make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors and each other as we invite, accept, connect, serve, and share the love of Christ.

PERSPECTIVE: IT'S ABOUT BEING THE CHURCH GOD IS EXPECTING US TO BE

Our past gifts toward the building have provided the primary funding source for our building obligations. The pledge period from our most recent campaign has ended. That is why it is so important for us to focus on our special gifts through "Forward to Freedom" this spring.

If it became necessary to pay our average principal (\$7,947.54 per month) strictly from our church's daily operating expenses, 40% of our church's daily ministry budget (\$286,111.44) would be redirected from operations to building payments over the next three years, crippling our daily ministry. Simply stated, our church could not be the church God is expecting us to be, nor the church we are today.

Life-changing ministries attract people and retain the families we have. God's blessings are evidenced in all we have accomplished. We are faithful, so let's come together in this important task of moving "forward to freedom" and honoring God every step of the way!

Because the average monthly interest of \$8,458 on our building loan is funded through our church budget, every dollar you give in the "Forward to Freedom" initiative is applied to the principal.

No one knows what the future holds, but for the sake of illustration, if we apply current interest rates and reduce our debt by \$1,000,000 with special gifts paid over the next three years, we would save more than \$425,000 in interest (resources which could be used for other ministry purposes), and our loan balance would be reduced to approximately \$1,600,000.



**A Note from Rev. Amy R. Probst,
Lead Pastor — First Farragut UMC:**

It might seem that a church capital campaign has little to do with you and your day-to-day life. However, this past year we, as a congregation, worked long and hard -- praying, listening, and coming together to understand God's calling for First Farragut. We spent much of 2014 embracing our newly articulated vision statement; and I believe that if we listen now, we can hear God calling us to this next goal.

Moving "**Forward to Freedom**" is exactly what First Farragut needs. In order to live up to the vision that God has for us, we need to continue the good work of utilizing our financial resources and address freedom from the burden of debt.

What might it look like, and what might we be free to do, if we weren't concerned about budgeting the more than \$100,000 that we pay for interest on our existing loan? What dreams might we begin to dream again? What "transformation" might we see? What "real differences" might we be a part of?

I'm asking you to prayerfully consider being a part of this movement in whatever way you are able.

"Forward to Freedom"

confirms our commitment to be faithful in sharing God's love and grace to our community and world. It is a sign of:

- **Hope** ~ We believe in the future of our church and the work God has for us to do.
- **Vitality** ~ We know important, life-changing things are happening here at First Farragut UMC.
- **Investment** ~ We believe strongly in what our church has to offer to our community and we are willing to give to enable more people to find and experience Christ through our outreach programs and discipleship ministries.
- **Vision** ~ we have a vision that our mission can be better fulfilled by taking steps to reduce current building debt as we continue to be available for what God has in store.