

# Here We Are, Lord

— Loving - Worshiping - Serving —



Dear Church Family,

We hope this letter finds you well and filled with the joy that comes from serving the Lord. We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your generous support of Faith Church last year through your pledges. Your dedication and commitment have made a significant impact on our mission, and we are truly grateful for your continued partnership.

As we embark on a new year, we are excited to share with you our stewardship campaign theme: "Here we are, Lord". This theme reflects our desire to wholeheartedly devote ourselves to following the example as set by Jesus Christ through loving, worshiping, and serving. We believe that by aligning our actions with His teachings, we can bring about positive change in the lives of people around us.

With this in mind, our church has developed ambitious plans and a carefully considered budget that, with the support of our congregation, will allow us to build upon our momentum of last year. We are confident that, by working together, we will accomplish even greater things for the glory of God in 2024.

**Our stewardship campaign goal is to increase giving by 8% among those families who have previously given and have been blessed with abundance.** For example, for every \$100 that you previously gave to Faith Church, we humbly request that you prayerfully consider giving \$108 this year. Your annual pledge will not only help us plan and budget more effectively, but it will also enable us to expand our reach and make an even greater impact on our community.

To help you understand how your contribution will be utilized in 2024, we have enclosed an illustration that outlines our plans and key initiatives. We invite you to take a moment to review it and see firsthand the difference your support can make.

We kindly ask that you prayerfully consider again making a pledge for this year's campaign. Enclosed, you will find a 2024 Pledge card for you to use. We encourage you to fill out the pledge card and bring it with you to our Commitment Sunday on Sunday, February 11th. This will be an opportunity for us to collect the pledge cards and gain a clear understanding of the amount of giving we can expect to support our efforts this year.

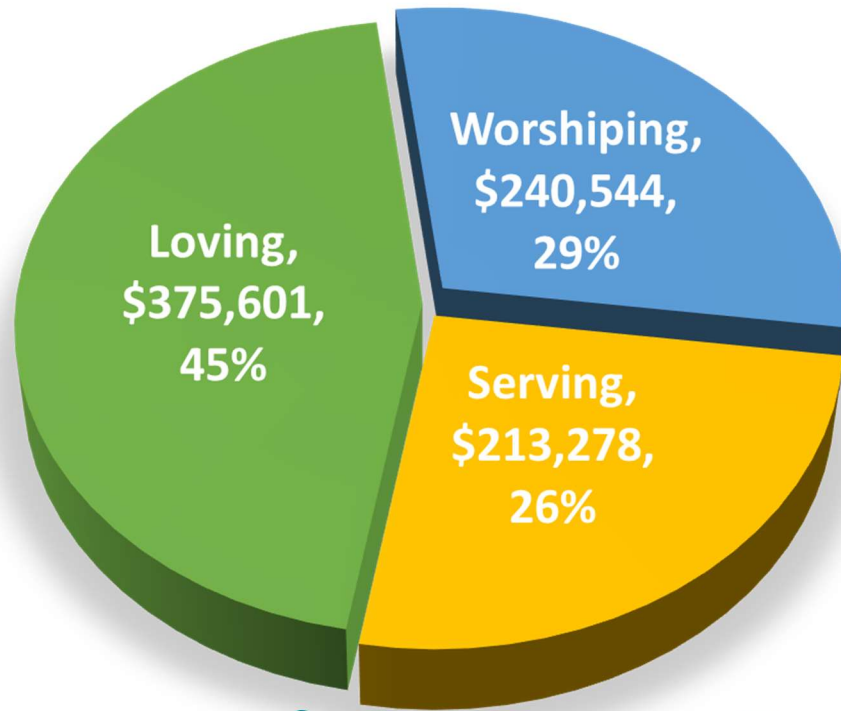
Together, let us commit to serving the Lord and our community with renewed dedication and enthusiasm. Your support plays a vital role in enabling us to do more with more in 2024. Through your generosity, we can accomplish great things and touch the lives of many.

Thank you once again for your unwavering commitment to Faith Church. Please find your pledge card enclosed as well as information regarding a tax saving strategy called "QCD" that you may find helpful.

Here we are, Lord! Are you ready to commit and serve?

In Christ,  
Pastor Dennis

## Please Support these 2024 Planned Ministries



### Loving

- Children's & Youth Ministry
- Summer Camps
- Bus Ministry
- Generations of Love
- Grief Care
- Stephen's Ministry
- Small Groups
- School/Teacher Supplies
- Benevolence Assistance
- Christian Education
- Congregational Care
- Church Nurse/Visitations
- Hospitality Events
- Healing Service
- Weddings, Funerals, & Memorials

### Worshiping

- Sunday Services
- Special Holiday Services
- Choir/Praise Teams
- Worship Team Leaders
- Musicians
- Technical Support
- Web Streaming
- Sound and Lighting
- Nights of Worship
- Concert Series

### Serving

- Missions
- Zoe Empowers
- A.C.T. Women's Support
- One Way Out Women's Support
- Gladiolus Food Pantry
- Blankets & Blessings
- Zambia Missionaries
- FLUMC Children's Home
- Sister Church in Cuba
- Medical Mission Trip
- Turkey Drive
- Supporting Disaster Relief
- Web Services Outreach

## Frequently Asked Questions

➤ ***What is this about?***

The "Here We Are, Lord" campaign is Faith United Methodist Church's 2024 program to communicate our ministry plans for the year and seek your financial support through giving and pledges. Held at the beginning of each year when most members and guests are present, our annual campaign leads the way for us all to express gratitude for the blessings received from God. Our stewardship, a manifestation of love and thankfulness, involves sharing and reciprocating God's love. We invite you to contribute to Faith's mission of Loving, Worshiping, and Serving, allowing us to Love God and Love People. *To achieve our ministry plans, if you are able, we are requesting an 8% increase in giving for 2024.*

➤ ***Why is it important to return the Commitment Card and pledge?***

Annual pledges and gifts sustain all aspects of Faith UMC, covering staff salaries, supporting outreach ministries, and maintaining our beautiful worship spaces. Your financial commitments are crucial for the effective execution of our ministry plans. The attached pie chart shows where your gifts are put to work.

➤ ***What if I'm not a member of Faith UMC?***

If you're not full time here, and a member of another Church, please honor your commitment there but consider supporting Faith UMC, as your Florida Church home, with a gift as well. All attendees at Faith UMC are invited to share their blessings by completing the Commitment Card to support our ministries. We also encourage you to consider elevating your commitment by becoming a Member or Associate Member.

➤ ***What do I do if I already gave my gift at the beginning of the year?***

Please join us in our Commitment and Celebration Sundays by submitting a Commitment Card. Please also consider making a supplemental gift during the year to support our targeted increase in giving.

➤ ***What do I need to do if I give either electronically or automatically from my financial institution?***

Contact your financial institution to change or confirm the amount you wish to send to Faith UMC and at what frequency. If you give via our web site, please log on to make any changes to your gift. Contact the office for web help.

➤ ***What if I want to give stocks or other assets?***

We can accept stocks and some other financial instruments as gifts. Please contact the office for specifics.

➤ ***What if my financial situation changes during the year?***

We know that life happens. If circumstances change you can notify the church to change your pledge. If you're blessed with unexpected income, you're always welcome to increase your pledge too!

➤ ***How does this fit with the Faith and Future campaign to retire the mortgage?***

The Faith and Future campaign is an on-going three-year initiative aimed at retiring our Sanctuary mortgage, and we are on track thanks to your contributions. We encourage you to maintain your giving plan for that program. However, we kindly request that those gifts are separate and not reduce your annual giving and pledge to the 2024 Here We Are, Lord campaign.

➤ ***What do I do with the Commitment Card once I have filled it in?***

The card can be returned to Faith UMC during Worship Service on Commitment Sunday on February 11, dropped in any collection basket on any other Sunday, dropped off at the office during office hours, or mailed to Faith UMC at 15690 McGregor Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33908.

➤ ***What if I have more questions?***

Call the church office at 239-482-2030 or email [Treasurer@faithum.com](mailto:Treasurer@faithum.com)



## **WANT TO GIVE MORE WITHOUT COSTING YOU MORE?**

Dear Faith Church Family,

As your Treasurer, it is my desire to ensure that our valued members and guests are informed about opportunities to support Faith Church while also securing tax advantages for themselves during retirement. One often-overlooked strategy is the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD).

A QCD allows individuals aged 70½ or older with most IRAs to contribute directly from their accounts to a qualified charity, such as Faith Church, excluding that withdrawal from their taxable income.

Notably, for those facing Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from their IRAs at age 72, utilizing QCDs satisfies the RMD requirement while providing tax savings simultaneously.

**So, as an example, if you are in a 12% tax bracket, you can give your designated charities up to 12% more without costing you anything. Higher tax brackets increase the opportunity proportionally.**

By extracting money from the IRA without adding it to your income, you can avoid ordinary income taxes on that withdrawal. Moreover, since it fulfills your RMD, you avoid taxes on income that would otherwise be reportable. This creates a win-win scenario! Additionally, if you pay income-related monthly adjustment amounts (IRMAA) to Medicare, reducing your income through QCDs will also decrease those payments – a triple win!

Initiating a QCD is straightforward – simply inform your IRA custodian of the donation amount and its intended recipient (e.g., Faith Church) to arrange for the direct transfer. It is recommended to consult your own tax or financial advisor to assess how a QCD or any other strategy aligns with your unique financial situation.

**If you need help in understanding or setting up such a donation, while we are not tax experts, we can provide you with some guidance and further explanation.**

I trust this information proves valuable as you think about ways to support the vital ministries of Faith Church while optimizing the available tax benefits in retirement. If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at the Church office.

Thank you for your enduring faith and generosity.

For questions or more information, contact:

George Boyer, Faith Church Treasurer, (239) 482-2030

*Loving God & Loving People*