



Strengthening Foundations for Greater Impact

Note: links to more details and the pledge form are located at the bottom of this page.

WHAT IS THE STRENGTHENING FOUNDATIONS CAPITAL CAMPAIGN?

As we face new challenges for Gospel proclamation, College Church seeks special support, beyond regular tithes, to strengthen our foundations so we can be poised for ministry and outreach growth in the 2020s and beyond. In this first phase we are seeking support for:

WHAT IS THE GOAL, AND WHAT WILL THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUND?

The goal of the initiative is \$2.35M, to fund the following two priorities:

1. Strengthening Financial Position:
 - . The purchase of two Kinnaman properties
 - a. Debt retirement on three properties
2. Improving Accessibility
 - . Razing three-four houses on Seminary Ave.
 - a. Inviting and visible parking on Seminary Ave. for visitors, senior citizens and people with disabilities.

WHAT IS BEING ASKED OF COLLEGE CHURCH MEMBERS AND ATTENDERS?

The leadership of College Church invites participation through:

1. Fervent prayer for our church, our leaders, and God's provision to expand our Gospel impact; and
2. Prayerful consideration of a capital campaign pledge, explained further at the bottom of this page.

What follows below is the comprehensive narrative of the Case for this campaign, with links for participation through pledging.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN CASE & PRIORITIES

THE GOSPEL MISSION

The mission of College Church is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, and live out the story of how God rescues sinful people through the work of the cross. The four traditional values we hold, based on Acts 2:42-47—Worship, Outreach, Relationship, Discipleship—are at the heart of this mission, as we seek to live in the light of this gospel, and be transformed, all for the glory of God.

THE NEED

We live in a time when there is increasing need for churches to reach the next generations. There is a sense of growing darkness around us, culturally and spiritually. At the same time, God in his goodness has blessed **College Church** with committed believers, a heritage of faithfulness to the gospel, many dynamic ministries locally and globally—and in the last few years, opportunities to be a beacon of light in an even greater way through the properties that have been made available adjacent to our campus. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the plans of many churches, and College Church is no exception; however, after an extended exploration of the most pressing needs of our church, there remains an opportunity for targeted, prioritized progress, within a modest and achievable scope, for God's glory.

THE VISION

Post Tenebras Lux.

Dating back to the 16th century, *Post Tenebras Lux* was a motto coined at the outset by Bible-believing Christians during the Reformation and became the rallying cry for decades to come. Translated as "After Darkness—Light," the motto referenced the role of the church in being a light for God's truth and a beacon of God's Word in an ever-darkening world. Understanding that this motto is as relevant, if not more so, today as it was in the 16th century, **College Church** aims to continue to be a light in a dark world, focusing on objectives that only strengthen its intensity. The efforts of the Reformation, and the role of the church today in continuing its work, can be distilled into three core priorities:

1. Defending and articulating the gospel in the context of living and loving communities of Jesus
2. Winning the battle of the mind in culture
3. Equipping all believers for their God-given ministries as well as training and sending pastors and missionaries to spread the light of the gospel

All of **College Church's** activities, past and present, can be aligned with this aim to honor Christ by being a beacon of God's light, and it is through this lens that we outline a path for the future as we seek to pave the way for the next generations.

BACKGROUND

For more than 150 years, College Church has been committed to ministering to those in Wheaton and beyond, and to the preaching of the Word. First established by Jonathan Blanchard in 1861, the original mission of the church was to be a light in a corrupt and darkening culture—a mission that has remained true to this day. Over the years, College Church has maintained a rich history of leaders who have faithfully preached God's message of hope and salvation. Many of these long-tenured leaders include:

- Jonathan Blanchard (1860–1862)
- Charles Blanchard (1878–1883)
- Evan Welsh (1933–1946)
- Robert Rayburn (1947–50)
- Carl Armerding (1951–1955)
- L. P. McClenny (1958–1972)
- Nathan Goff (1973–1977)
- R. Kent Hughes (1979–2006)
- Josh Moody (2009–present)

In addition to faithful Bible preaching, College Church has developed a wide range of programs and ministries that serve all factions of the church body. Beginning with the youngest in the church, the Kids' Harbor program serves children from infants to elementary age, providing nursery care and biblical age-appropriate teaching during Sunday worship services and weekly programs for elementary age children.. Dedicated junior high, senior high and college groups, with gifted pastoral leadership for each, provide students with a setting to engage socially, integrate into the life of the church, and sit under the preaching of the Word.

Certainly, one of the church's most impactful programs is the STARS (Seeking to Always Reflect the Savior) ministry, which provides worship, ministry and fellowship for children and adults with special needs. Finally, the music ministry has developed into a vibrant component of worship that blends genres, voices and instruments on Sunday mornings and beyond.

College Church has focused as much externally as within its walls, having built a comprehensive missions program that incorporates long-term targeted support as well as short-term programs. Currently, nearly 75 full-time missionaries are supported by College Church across the globe, and each year, numerous groups of all ages travel from College Church around the world on short-term trips to serve and share the Gospel message to those who need it. Locally, the church has also been blessed by members with a heart for multiplication, and our community has been blessed by four different College Church plants that include suburban entities, as well as a Chicago-based church that has since evolved into four thriving congregations.

As College Church reflects on nearly 160 years of blessings from the Lord, we also look forward with great anticipation. There is a unique opportunity ahead, in the midst of one of the most trying times in our country's recent history, to even more brightly shine a light of hope into our community, and the world. But the path must be thoughtful, sensible and prayerful.

Because of the foundation laid by so many faithful leaders over so many years, College Church is uniquely positioned to accomplish this goal.

UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES

College Church is not immune to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. As with virtually all churches, it has necessitated long, difficult conversations about streamlined and online activities and structures, budget changes and ministry outlook. Many have seen friends and family suffer from health challenges or economic struggles or job loss.

There are two general responses to this scenario. The first is to freeze in place, limit activity to a minimum and wait for normalcy to return in its time. The second is to push forward toward fulfilling the mission of the church, and to do so strategically, prayerfully and appropriately.

College Church is committed to continuing its ministry. Throughout history, some of the most exciting Gospel growth has taken place during times of great struggle. College Church has maintained its aim toward gospel growth through such times, and its mission is perhaps more important now than ever before.

TRANSPARENT CONTEXT

As a top priority in all next steps, College Church's leaders are aiming for complete transparency regarding church activities and strategy. To this end, the path that has led to the initiative shared in the following section is of utmost relevance.

Beginning in the Fall of 2019, the Elders and the newly-formed, congregationally approved Capital Campaign Committee began formulating a framework for a broad stewardship drive that would provide funding for numerous activities over the next three-five years. These included:

- Comprehensive debt retirement
- Renovations and build-out of the new Crossings building
- Updates of ministry and office space campus-wide
- Significant infrastructure and technology updates

The overall financial marker for this comprehensive initiative was projected to be well in excess of \$10 million, to be laid out and secured over a period of two-three years.

Then, the COVID-19 pandemic struck early in 2020, and necessitated a new conversation. The Elders, Campaign Committee, Staff leadership and others spent

countless hours in prayer and discussion regarding how best to move forward, and how best to steward the church's resources.

Ultimately, in light of the current situation, and the church's unrelenting commitment to its gospel mission, we are pursuing a limited, targeted initiative that will allow for the most pressing and strategic needs to be met.

CAMPAIGN PILLARS

The targeted scope of the campaign will encompass two primary objectives: 1) strengthening financial stability, and 2) strategic parking improvements to increase accessibility for those who need accommodation.

I. Strengthening the Financial Position

From the very beginning of leadership discussions dating back to last year, alleviating debt has been a foremost priority in strategic planning. Originally, there were plans to retire most or all debt of the properties that the church owns and will utilize in the future. While this new campaign scope adjusts this goal, it does not remove debt reduction as a primary focus in the coming years. There are two specific objectives that will be accomplished through the campaign:

1. The purchase of the two Kinnaman properties located at 319 and 323 Seminary Ave. College Church has committed to purchase these two properties through an existing option, approved by the congregation in March of 2015. These are located strategically, as their acquisition will mean that the church owns all houses on the north side of Seminary Ave. between Scott St. and the church sanctuary building. This is a prime area for much-needed parking improvements.

Cost: \$1,000,000

2. The retirement of the debt owed on the houses located at 311, 315, and 325 E Seminary Ave. The church owns these three properties, and currently owes \$750,000 in mortgage debt. Before these properties can be utilized and repurposed, it is vital that the debt be paid.

Cost: \$750,000

II. Improving Accessibility

For a number of years, there has been significant feedback and discussion regarding the need for greater parking accessibility for senior citizens, persons with disabilities and visitors. The acquisition and debt-free ownership of the full complement of properties on Seminary Ave. will provide an ideal opportunity to meet this need. Funding will be dedicated to:

1. The razing of three or four houses on Seminary Ave., depending on parking layout.
2. The ensuing installation of inviting and visible parking on Seminary Ave. for senior citizens, people with disabilities and visitors.

This project will vastly improve the extent to which College Church is able to welcome people of all demographics into the church and community.

Cost: \$600,000

CAMPAIGN OUTLOOK

In order to fund these targeted initiatives, College Church plans to move forward with a campaign that is appropriately limited in scope and duration, **with a goal of securing \$2.35 million**. While this represents a drastically reduced figure relative to initial plans, there has been a prayerful and thoughtful determination by the Elders that takes the current landscape into account, while meeting priority needs which will enable mission progress.

Though we have just a couple short months until the end of the 2020 calendar year, this project has been underway for some time. Since early this year, we have been in an organizational phase, during which we've been sharing this message with church leaders and other individuals and families, inviting input and adjusting goals based on ongoing feedback and new information.

In addition, over the course of the past few months, volunteers in the church – elders, deacons and deaconesses, committee members and other committed leaders – have been challenged to lead the way by making their own commitments to this campaign before it was brought before the full congregation. The progress from these leadership commitments is humbling!

Of our \$2.35M goal, we have more than \$1.8 million in pledges or gifts!

We give thanks for the generosity of those who have contributed to this progress, and trust it will be an inspiration

Now, after much prayer and discussion, and following personal commitments from the Elders and other leaders in the church, we bring this initiative to the full congregation, and invite your prayerful participation in this next step for College Church, in order to work toward our goal of \$2.35M.

PLEDGE FAQs

What does a Strengthening Foundations pledge constitute?

A pledge to the campaign constitutes a commitment to give to this project, over and above regular tithe.

What are the time frame and logistical options for making a pledge?

All are invited to make pledges of one-two years to the campaign. It could be a one-time commitment fully paid in the 2021 calendar year, or it could be split between 2021 and 2022. The goal of church leadership is that each member is able to make a pledge that work for his or her situation and timetable.

How do we make a pledge?

Here, you can access the campaign pledge form that allows you to document your commitment. [CLICK HERE](#) to fill out and submit your form online. Or, if you prefer, [CLICK HERE](#) to download the form to mail or email to the church office.