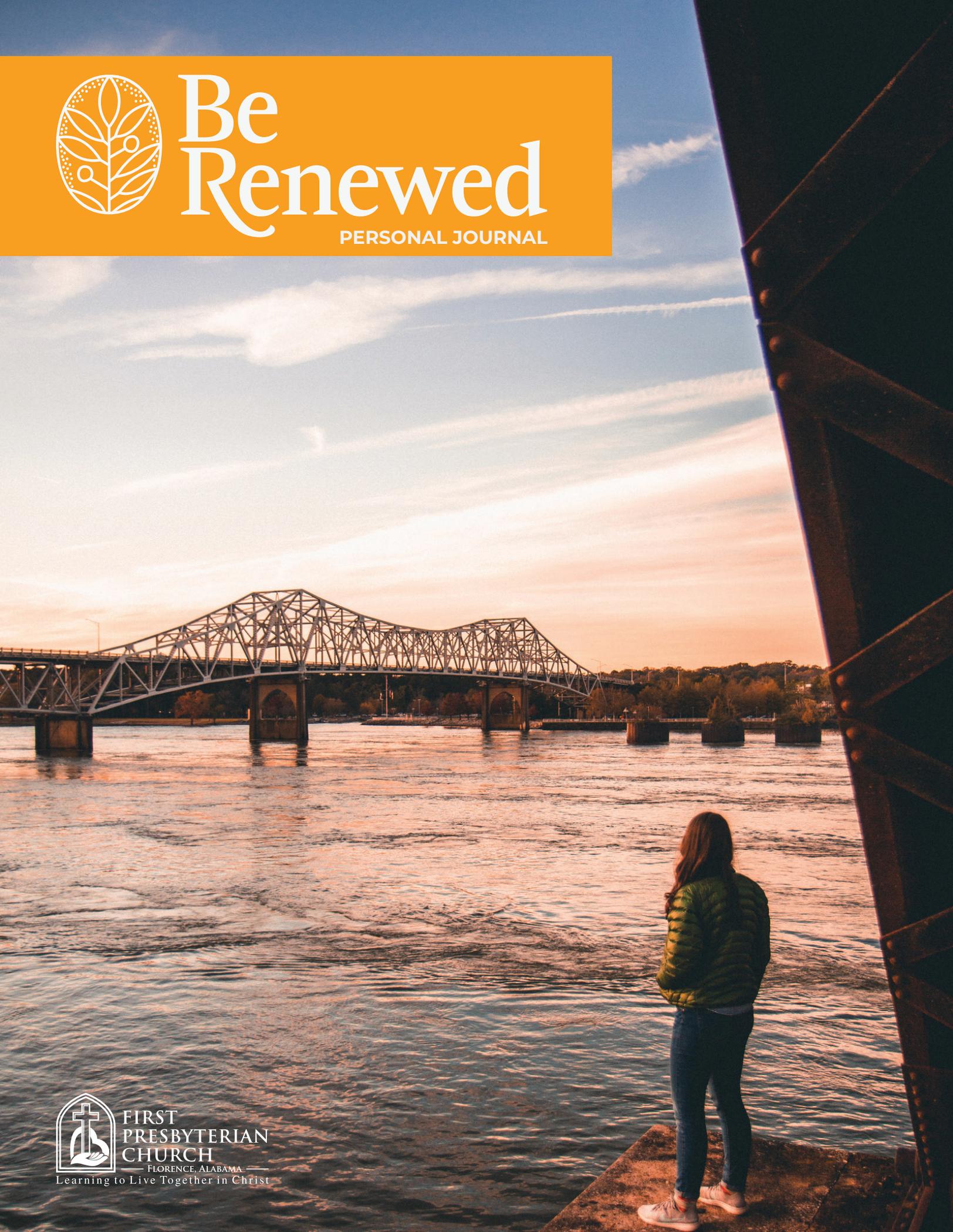




# Be Renewed

PERSONAL JOURNAL



FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

FLORENCE, ALABAMA

Learning to Live Together in Christ

# Be Renewed

## ...AND TAKE HEART

Being renewed is a choice. Sometimes when we're dealing with the chaos, fatigue, and frustration it is easy for those feelings to take root inside of us. But 2 Corinthians 4:16 gives us hope: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. You have a choice to be renewed and take heart!" We have a choice to take heart in our vision as a church and how God is calling each of us to give generously to make that vision a reality.

## ...IN YOUR THINKING

We cannot allow the challenges that we face right now or think we might face in the future to corrupt our thinking. Ephesians 4:23 tells us to, "allow the Holy Spirit to renew our thoughts and our attitudes." We can throw off the negative thoughts and be renewed in our thinking. As we each do this together it renews our thinking about our giving and generosity.

## ...WITH A STEADFAST SPIRIT

Psalms 51 talks about being, "renewed with a steadfast spirit". Being steadfast means to be unwavering. The idea of renewal is to be reinvigorated. These transitional times can put strain on our relationship with God and our resolve to be faithful in many of the spiritual disciplines, especially giving. We need to be renewed with a steadfast spirit in our relationship with God, the Church, and our giving.

## ...IN YOUR STRENGTH BY HOPE

Isaiah 40:31 says this: "...but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength." When we hope in the Lord our strength is renewed. Be Renewed is about each of us listening to the Lord and allowing our hope in God to give us the strength to be faithful in every aspect of our walk with the Lord... including our giving. That may mean giving for the first time or taking a step of faith and grow in your giving. But if we will all respond to Be Renewed, just imagine the vision we can bring to reality through First Presbyterian Church.





## A Letter From Our Pastor

As we come to a new time in our church, we need to approach our planning for ministry in a new way...in a renewed way. Where these last few years of growth and transitions have caused challenges for us, they also have presented new exciting opportunities of ministry to be renewed in our mission.

In order to achieve the ministry plans we have for the future of our church it will require each of us to self-examine ourselves and see how God is calling us to greater levels of faith, commitment, and generosity even in midst of uncertainty.

After years of prayerful discernment on what our ministry plans will be and how we will resource those plans, we want to introduce to you a generosity emphasis entitled, "Be Renewed". Our desire is that 100% of the people who call First Presbyterian Church their home would respond to Be Renewed.

Through this Be Renewed emphasis, you are invited to...

- ask and yield to God's will in your life
- be open to how God will challenge you during this time
- consider honestly your willingness to live out your faith
- have open conversation in your household and pray about your generosity
- be present in worship on May 22, 2022, ready to respond

Over the next several weeks let's contemplate the instrumental Bible verses included, encouraging us to trust in the Lord and to honor the Lord with the resources God has provided us. I'm excited to see what God will do in each of us individually and as a body collectively if we will all be open to Be Renewed! Thank you, in advance, for being part of this faithful journey in growing together in Christ.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Brandon Miles



# 1 WHAT ARE WE DOING?

First Presbyterian is a church living out its mission: *Thinking with Christ's Mind, Loving with Christ's Heart, Serving with Christ's Hands*. Living our mission and reaching our community through service has created energy and excitement among our growing congregation. To continue in our faith development we must plan to meet the future needs of the congregation and the community. The **Be Renewed** campaign will enable us to fulfill the work God is calling us to do by:

- Demolishing the Elting wing and rebuilding a smaller section to meet the needs of the congregation and community organizations
- Reconfiguring and updating all 3 floors of the education building to utilize the entire space to maximize our ministry growth and community engagement
- Freeing up capital for ministry by paying off HVAC debt
- Supporting our growing ministry by entering a covenant agreement with Memphis seminary providing us a youth director for 3 years while they receive their master's degree

# 2 WHY ARE WE DOING IT?

We are having fun living out our vision and need to continue growing in our calling. Serving God is a joy, and our capital campaign will enable us to better share this joy with others.

A full plan for the use of our building is the culmination of both our vision and mission. How we decide to allocate space for members, community organizations, and missions is the reality of who we say we are as a church. A full church plan forces us to recognize all of who we are and how we might best come together to grow in Christ.

Unfortunately, the Elting Wing is collapsing upon itself and is beyond repair. Our plan is to demolish the Elting Wing and rebuild it to meet the needs of the church and the community. We will add a choir room and ADA bathroom on the top floor near the sanctuary. The bottom floor will be family style restrooms and storage. We hope to have a nice green space, outdoor pavilion, and a welcoming courtyard around our columbarium.

This campaign will also enable us to reconfigure and update all three floors of the education building to optimize our use of the space. It will provide dedicated rooms for children and youth, as well as space for adult education, meeting rooms, and receptions.

Today, the HVAC loan costs the church \$25,000 per year that could be used for ministry and community outreach. Paying off this debt will free up capital to meet the demands of growing ministries. In addition to planning for the future use of our facilities, we must also plan for future personnel needs. The largest growth in our congregation has been in elementary children. With the money available from paying off our debt we can hire a youth director to continue our ministry in growing disciples in all ages.

# 3 WHY ARE WE DOING IT NOW?

Our congregation is one of the few in the Shoals area that invites anyone into a journey of faith to discover the unfolding Kingdom of God around us and how God is calling us to live in this new reality. This campaign will multiply our outreach potential in how we can share this good news with the community and enable our own members to grow in their journey of discovering God's Kingdom.

This campaign can **renew** our momentum and further our mission. More than that, this campaign is an opportunity for the whole congregation to better understand our identity as a church, and in knowing who we are, be better prepared to share our vision with the community.



# Week One

## Sunday, April 24

### Be Renewed and Take HEART

#### Key Passage: 2 Corinthians 4:16 (NIV)

<sup>16</sup>Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

#### Notes:

#### Group Discussion:

1. What does “losing heart” look like? How do we know it when we see it?
2. What causes us to give up when we lose heart?
3. Why does acting badly *seem* as a good response for losing heart?
4. How is being renewed daily the antidote for losing heart?
5. How can you Be Renewed in prayer, Bible Study, and especially generosity, during this season?

#### Personal Reflection:

1. Think about times in your life that have caused you to lose heart? What feelings does that raise?
2. How do you prevent your circumstances from dictating your responses?
3. Is it okay for believers to lose heart and act badly? Think about this.
4. How has the Gospel renewed you today?
5. Read the Giving Discipleship Journey. Which of the givers identifies where you might be on the Giving Discipleship Journey?

#### Getting Ready For The Week:

##### Monday

Think about your day today and list the ways you can avoid losing heart.

##### Tuesday:

Did you find yourself acting badly at all yesterday? How can your renewed-self avoid that today?

##### Wednesday:

Now that you’ve identified where you are on the Giving Discipleship Journey, write down some ways that being that kind of giver keeps you from “losing heart.”

##### Thursday:

Pray for your Pastor and church leaders not to lose heart today.

##### Friday:

Pray for your Pastor and church leaders to Be Renewed today.

# Week Two

## Sunday, May 1

### Be Renewed in My THINKING

#### Key Passage: Ephesians 4:21-24 (NLT)

<sup>21</sup>Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, <sup>22</sup>throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. <sup>23</sup>Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. <sup>24</sup>Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

#### Notes:

#### Group Discussion:

1. What reason or reasons does Paul give that makes renewing one's thoughts and attitudes possible?
2. Describe ways that knowing Jesus and the implications of the Gospel have changed the way believers think and act.
3. The Giving Discipleship Journey is designed to help you think through the change of heart that must occur for a full transformation. How does renewed thinking aid that generosity transformation?
4. How does acting generously imitate God's relationship to us?
5. What are ways that we can aid the Spirit with renewing our thoughts and attitudes?

#### Personal Reflection:

1. Reflect on the *Since this, now this* formula. What are some of your now this items you would list since you have come to know Christ?
2. Again, thinking about the *Since this, now this* formula, examine where you are on the Giving Discipleship Journey. How could *Since this* of knowing Christ help you Be Renewed to take the next step of the Giving Discipleship Journey?
3. What might be some areas of rightful thinking and attitudes that you want to allow the Spirit to grow in you?
4. What obstacles seem to be in the way of you taking the next step in the Giving Discipleship Journey?

#### Getting Ready For The Week:

##### Monday

Think about your day today and list the ways you can be renewed in your thinking and attitudes as a disciple.

##### Tuesday:

Think today how knowing Christ has renewed your thinking and attitudes, and has enabled you to imitate God in your dealing with people.

##### Wednesday:

Knowing which step you are on in the Giving Discipleship Journey, write down some ways that being that kind of giver helps to be renewed in your thinking.

##### Thursday:

Pray for your Pastor and church leaders to be renewed in their thinking today.

##### Friday:

Pray for your Pastor and church leaders to Be Renewed today.

# Week Three

## Sunday, May 8

### Be Renewed with a STEADFAST SPIRIT

#### Key Passage: Psalm 51:10-12 (NIV)

<sup>10</sup>Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. <sup>11</sup>Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. <sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.”

#### Notes:

#### Group Discussion:

1. Discuss the characteristics of a “pure heart.”
2. Discuss David’s request to have God “Renew a steadfast spirit” within him. First, what is a “steadfast” spirit? Second, describe one’s life that is motivated by a “steadfast” spirit.
3. Discuss how having a “steadfast” spirit will help you along the Giving Discipleship Journey.
4. Describe what “restored joy” looks and feels like.

#### Personal Reflection:

1. List some attitudes that will change with you when God creates a pure heart in you.
2. What emotions might you feel if God removed His presence from you?
3. Likewise, describe the emotions that you might experience if God overwhelmed you with his presence.
4. How will a “pure” heart and “renewed joy” help you in making your decision in the Be Renewed initiative?
5. I pray that God will sustain me to: \_\_\_\_\_. Fill in the blank.

#### Getting Ready For The Week:

##### Monday

It’s a new week. How will you approach this week with a “pure heart”?

##### Tuesday:

Think about ways God has recently restored the joy of His salvation to you?

##### Wednesday:

Think about how taking a step forward on the Giving Discipleship Journey can help to restore the joy of salvation in you?

##### Thursday:

Pray for your Pastor and church leaders to be restored in the joy of salvation today.

##### Friday:

Pray for your Pastor and church leaders to Be Renewed today.

# Week Four

## Sunday, May 15

### Be Renewed in my STRENGTH... powered by HOPE

#### Key Passage: Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)

“<sup>31</sup>...but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

#### Notes:

#### Group Discussion:

1. How does hope in the Lord enable “renewed strength”?
2. In a practical way, describe how faith today might be reflected as soaring on eagles’ wings. In other words, what does soaring look like today?
3. Describe some moments of your faith journey in which you ran and were not found weary.
4. At times, life comes at us, and the best we can do is just walk and not faint. Talk about that as a group.
5. How will “renewed strength,” facilitated by hope, empower you to take the next step in the Giving Discipleship Journey?

#### Personal Reflection:

1. Can you name a time where hope in the Lord renewed your strength?
2. Remember a moment in your life where renewed strength had you soar like an eagle.
3. Think about a time when walking and not fainting was an absolute feat of strength itself.
4. You and your church are getting ready to make some generosity decisions that will impact your future and your church’s future. Pray that hope in the Lord will renew your strength to make that decision faithfully.

#### Getting Ready For The Week:

##### Monday

Open yourself up to the hope in the Lord today.

##### Tuesday:

Help someone you know soar, or run, or even just walk in the Lord today.

##### Wednesday:

Knowing which step you are on in the Giving Discipleship Journey, think about soaring to the next level. What will that take to make that happen?

##### Thursday:

Pray for your Pastor and church leaders that they will be renewed in strength today.

##### Friday:

Pray for your Pastor and church leaders to Be Renewed today.

# FAQ

## **What exactly are we doing?**

- Demolishing the Elting wing and rebuilding a smaller section to meet the needs of the congregation and community organizations
- Reconfiguring and updating all 3 floors of the education building to utilize the entire space to maximize our ministry growth and community engagement
- Freeing up capital for ministry by paying off HVAC debt
- Supporting our growing ministry by entering a covenant agreement with Memphis seminary providing us a youth director for 3 years while they receive their master's degree

## **What is the true motivation of why we are doing a campaign?**

- We are having fun living out our vision and need to continue growing in our calling. Serving God is a joy, and our capital campaign will enable us to better share this joy with others. A full plan for the use of our building is the culmination of both our vision and mission. How we decide to allocate space for members, community organizations, and missions is the reality of who we say we are as a church. A full church plan forces us to recognize all of who we are and how we might best come together to grow in Christ.

## **Why are we doing it?**

- The Elting Wing is collapsing upon itself and creating additional annual cost for unusable space. We also need adequate bathrooms for social gatherings and ministries hosting those in need of food and shelter (Room in the Inn and Soup Kitchen)
- Our church is a growing church, and we need a plan for use of space in our building so that we can optimize our resources and better serve our members, visitors, and community. This starts by having presentable and functional bathrooms that meet ADA standards, children and youth rooms designated for that purpose, and adult education/meeting rooms easily accessible.
- The HVAC loan is costing the church \$25,000 a year and \$19,000 of that is interest. This money could be better used towards ministries of the church.

## **How do each of these components of the campaign connect to First Presbyterian's vision/mission statement?**

- The Elting wing must be demolished and a new building built so that we can continue our commitment to being a church that serves the community in the name of God. Currently, we have severely limited the amount of community organizations able to use our facilities because we do not have usable restrooms. And asking our food and shelter insecure guests to use those very same restrooms sends the message that we don't value them as true brothers and sisters in Christ. We might be serving the hands of Christ, but asking them to use unclean and unsafe facilities is not loving them with the heart of Christ. And it certainly is not us uniting as one people under God with a vision of always moving closer to Christ together.
- The HVAC debt is prohibiting our congregation from expanding our ministries because of financial restrictions. As we expand our VBS, Trunk or Treat, Soup Kitchen, and nonprofit partnerships, it is essential that we have the capital and personnel to faithfully engage each of these expanding ministries. For us to live into our mission of Thinking with the Mind of Christ we must think sacrificially and share our gratitude of God's blessings by being good stewards of our resources.
- A full plan for the use of our building is the culmination of both our vision and mission. How we decide to allocate the space that we have and use it for members, community organizations, and mission is the reality of who we say we are as a church. Having a plan for our footprint and how each room will provide for different needs of the church allows us to be prepared for education, congregational care, stewardship, worship, and mission. Developing and implementing a full church plan forces us to recognize all of who we are and how we might best come together to grow in Christ.

## **What and how much is riding on the results of this campaign?**

- First Presbyterian is a church living out its mission: Thinking with Christ's Mind, Loving with Christ's Heart, Serving with Christ's Hands. Living our mission and reaching our community through service has created energy and excitement among our growing congregation. To continue in our faith development, we must plan to meet the future needs of the congregation and the community. The Be Renewed campaign will enable us to fulfill the work God is calling us to do by fully utilizing our building and equipping our members to grow in their journey of discovering God's Kingdom.

## **Why are we doing it now?**

- Our congregation is one of the few in the Shoals area that invites anyone into a journey of faith to discover the unfolding Kingdom of God around us and how God is calling us to live in this new reality. This campaign will multiply our outreach potential in how we can share this good news with the community and enable our own members to grow in their journey of discovering God's Kingdom.
- This campaign can renew our momentum and further our mission. More than that, this campaign is an opportunity for the whole congregation to better understand our identity as a church, and in knowing who we are, be better prepared to share our vision with the community.

**What are the financial goals of this campaign?**

- Our goal is to raise 1 million dollars over three years to address:

**1. Elting Wing**

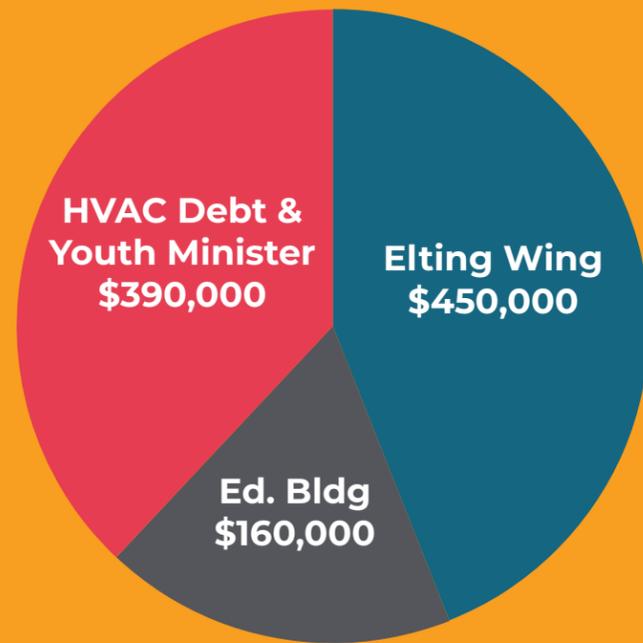
Demolishing and rebuilding the Elting Wing

**2. Education Building**

Reconfiguring and updating all 3 floors of the education building

**3. HVAC Debt & Youth Minister**

Freeing up capital for ministry by paying off HVAC debt



**Be Renewed Total Budget: \$1 Million**

**When will I make a commitment?**

- We will gather together for worship on May 22nd for commitment Sunday.

**What does my commitment involve?**

- We are asking members to make a faithful pledge that will be paid over the course of three years above and beyond your yearly giving.

**What is the urgency? What will happen if we do not do this campaign now?**

- We are about to outgrow our own ministry capabilities. We have so much energy and excitement because members see us moving forward as a congregation in a meaningful way. If we do not continue this transformative restoration we run the risk of stalling our ministries and hindering our faith development.

*What do we need each individual in the church to do during this campaign?*



**PRAY**

for our Church and this Be Renewed Campaign



**PARTICIPATE**

in Be Renewed events and Church worship services



**READ and ENGAGE**

Be Renewed material



**DISCUSS**

your commitment with your family members



**CONSIDER**

sacrificial giving



**Generosity Toolbox**

## Generosity Toolbox: Practical Ideas for Living & Giving Generously

Nearly every day, we make financial decisions. Some are small – should you get a cup of coffee at McDonald's or splurge for the Pumpkin Spice Latte at Starbucks? Some are big – which house, which car, which college? Some concern the future – how much should you spend on Christmas, which retirement funds should you choose?

Probably the most challenging decision we make with money is the decision to give. Giving creates tension. We wonder, "If I give this away, how will the gap be filled?"

That's why giving is such a big deal. Nothing invites God into our lives like giving. Giving is a tangible way we declare our trust in and commitment to God. Giving often paves the way for God to show up in our lives in a powerful way.

### Giving is not just a financial decision - it's a deeply spiritual decision.

We have put this Generosity Toolbox together to help you consider how God has blessed you and how the Spirit might invite you to trust the Lord during the Be Renewed campaign. You'll find ideas that will help you pray and consider how God will have you participate. Our prayer is that you would experience the power of God in your life through generous giving and living.

Yours In Christ,  
Rev. Brandon Miles



The most effective path to generosity is a spiritual path where you set your heart on things above. Then, your financial priorities will naturally flow out of your spiritual priorities.

People often describe this as "living a generous lifestyle." It is always a temptation to give to God in such a way that it makes little impact on how you live. The challenge of living a generous lifestyle is to intentionally and prayerfully find ways to do just that – to let your giving touch your living!

**King David declared,  
"I will not give to God that which costs me nothing."  
(2 Samuel 24:24)**

He understood that the value of the gift presented to God is determined by its value to the giver.

A gift that would touch the heart of God must first touch the life of the giver! This is the spirit of lifestyle generosity — "If it is for my God, my gift must have meaning and value to me."

Lifestyle generosity is a level of giving that affects you – your plans, your activities, your attitude and your approach to life. It means giving up something in one area so that you can give more of yourself in another.





During worship on May 22, 2022, our First Presbyterian Church family will have the opportunity to celebrate God's grace and generosity as we complete our Estimate of Giving cards to the Be Renewed campaign.

You will receive your card prior to Commitment Sunday to be completed and returned. Below is an example of the Estimate of Giving card.

## Be Renewed

We are invited to commit our hearts in faith to share the love of Jesus Christ in our growing community. Imagine the work we can achieve with God's help. Through the Be Renewed Initiative, I/We will endeavor to give over and above my/our regular offerings to God.

Over the next three years I/We plan to give accordingly:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly for 156 weeks

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly for 36 months

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

I/We wish to give to the Be Renewed Initiative by a means other than cash:

Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Value of asset given: \_\_\_\_\_

for example: Stocks, Bonds, IRA Distributions, Securities, Personal Property, Appreciated Real Estate, Paid-Up Insurance Policies, Charitable Trusts

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Your commitment is an indication of your intention to give if you are able.

### Personal Information

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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



Following are creative ways to give that perhaps you haven't thought of before or may not be aware of.

#### 1. PRIORITY BUDGETING

You may choose to rearrange your priorities and give up something in your current budget in order to grow in your giving. Priority budgeting may mean postponing a planned expenditure such as a new car, vacation, remodeling, or other major purchase.

#### 2. APPRECIATED ASSETS

Many people own assets that have achieved tremendous unrealized gains in value over the years. That is good news. The bad news is that if these assets were sold, a significant portion of the gain could be lost to taxation. Gifts of appreciated assets – typically investment securities or real estate – can be advantageous to both the giver and the church.

#### 3. IRA CONTRIBUTIONS

If you are 72 in age or older and have an IRA there are certain advantageous rules for you. Please contact your financial planner or accountant to learn more about how to give in this manner.

#### 4. GIVING FROM STORED RESOURCES

Automobiles, motorcycles, art, jewelry, coin collections, and other valuable assets could be sold to offer more creative ways for people to give over and above their normal giving to the Be Renewed initiative.



Dear Church Family,

The challenge before us is a large one. This gift profile shows how it will be possible for us to secure our goal for this initiative. The chart reveals that even with the large task God has given us, it is possible to move forward. It also shows that every commitment — no matter the size — makes a difference.

As you look at the guide, your eyes will likely settle first on the level you have been considering for our campaign. You can see how that gift will strengthen our faith family and enable us to press forward with our vision. However, before you make a commitment on Commitment Sunday, I would ask you to pray about moving up one step on the chart. Only you know if that step is possible, but I encourage you to open your heart in the coming days to that possibility and let God shape your response.

Yours in Christ,  
Rev. Brandon Miles



## GIFT PROFILE GUIDE

### THREE YEAR COMMITMENTS

NUMBER OF COMMITMENTS	AMOUNT OF EACH COMMITMENT
1	\$100,000
1	\$75,000
3	\$50,000
4	\$36,000
5	\$24,000
10	\$15,000
10	\$10,000
15	\$7,200
15	\$3,600
Other Commitments	Under \$2,400

**Be Renewed Goal:**  
**\$1,000,000**

*"I will not sacrifice to God that which costs me nothing."  
- 2 Samuel 24:24*



**FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**

— FLORENCE, ALABAMA —

Learning to Live Together in Christ

