

LIBERTY BIBLE CHURCH

OH YES, MY HOUSE OF WORSHIP WILL BE KNOWN AS A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLE. THE DECREE OF THE MASTER, GOD HIMSELF, WHO GATHERS IN THE EXILES OF ISRAEL: "I WILL **GATHER** OTHERS ALSO, GATHER THEM IN WITH THOSE ALREADY GATHERED..."

Isaiah 56:7-8 MSG

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Thank you to Indiana Dunes Tourism for providing photos of the Indiana Dunes.



Imost 100 years ago, a group of leaders from Chesterton and Valparaiso gathered. To dream. To hope. To imagine reaching the kids of Liberty Township with the Gospel. In 1927, a Sunday School was born, taking root and thriving, even in the midst of the Great Depression. In 1941, that Sunday School became a church that grew in Porter County as the world went to war. Those early pioneers laid the foundation for who we are today – three different campuses throughout Northwest Indiana – reaching our region with the Gospel.

When I think about the history of our church, I am filled with hope. God can do anything! Start a school during the Great Depression? Launch a church as the world goes to war? Yes, and Yes! Nothing limits what God can do in our world. The women and men who launched Liberty Bible Church were guided by values that were close to the heart of God. A love for the Gospel. A desire to take the Gospel to the next generation. A willingness to give sacrificially of their time, their gifts, their finances — to partner with God in His Word in the world. A desire to plant churches for people to come to know Jesus.

When God's people believe Him, and live a life expecting Him to keep His promises, nothing is impossible.

One of my favorite promises in the Scriptures is in Isaiah 56, words first spoken by the Prophet and then repeated by Jesus:

#### Oh yes, my house of worship will be known as a house of prayer for all people." The Decree of the Master, God himself, who gathers in the exiles of Israel: "I will gather others also, gather them in with those already gathered."

God promises to make His house, His people — a house of prayer for all people. He promises to gather His people to Himself, to bring in those not yet gathered. What a beautiful vision from our God.

We are at another defining moment as a church. With national church attendance declining significantly, and so many people walking away from faith, it is time we remind ourselves of God's promises, and live in light of the promise that He will gather us to Himself...and gather others, also.

As we go into this next season of ministry together, I know God will continue to be faithful to His promises. I am filled with anticipation. I am ready to commit myself to joining God's work, of keeping His promise to make His house a house of prayer for all people.

I am even more excited we get to do this together.

Grace & peace,

Tim Spanburg, Lead Pastor

# **OUR HISTORY**

Timeline of Liberty Bible Church



## 1927

Fred and Hanna Johnson, members from First Baptist Church of Valparaiso, gather to dream and launch a Sunday School to reach the kids of Liberty Township.



### 1927 — 1941

Volunteers lead the way to launch Cole's Corner Union Sunday School; then later Liberty Township Sunday School was established to teach kids about Jesus. As the school grew, preachers from Moody Bible Institute and Northern Baptist Seminary began preaching to the adults as Liberty grew from a Sunday School to a church.



### 1959

Dr. Thomas McDill oversaw both the building of the new worship center, now called South Peak, and a new educational wing for children and students. Liberty joined the Evangelical Free Church of America and began to grow significantly as these new buildings opened the space to reach even more kids with the Gospel.



### 1970s ┥

Pastor Wes Johnson was known for serving in a way that deeply connected people into the church. Liberty Bible Church was becoming more than a place to learn. It was growing into a place with a real community of believers. Liberty became a welcoming church that felt like family.

### 1980s



As the congregation continued to grow, Pastor Gale Newman looked to the future, dreaming of a new worship center to hold the growing congregation. Liberty's plans began and in a few short years, on a Sunday morning, the church began one service in the older worship center and sang their way into our current worship center.



### 1990s —

With the creation of the new worship center, the congregation continued to grow significantly under Pastor Bill Jones leadership. Excitedly, Liberty Bible Church looked to the future. We expanded the building, creating the gym that now hosts up to 1,000 for our Saturday soccer ministry.

### 2010s

With our Chesterton Campus out of space for growth, rather than looking to continue to expand our Chesterton Campus, we looked east — to LaPorte! Liberty planted a new campus in the City of LaPorte, to reach the people of LaPorte County. With a desire to deepen our commitment to church planting, we became aware of a church building available close to Valparaiso University! Because of the incredible generosity of our church, we were able to immediately purchase the building, and our Valpo Campus was born.

## 2022

Tim and Misty Spanburg and their family joined Liberty as Lead Pastor. Tim, along with the Long Range Planning Team, are asking the church — what might God have for us in the next 30 years together? Our desire is for Liberty Bible Church to be a welcoming place that once again feels like a family.

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MY PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS .....

All of LBC will become better disciples berouse of sur ficus on the future generations



My PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS..... That We will draw others to Christ.

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MY PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS..... We have a spiritual revibed. That God wald Sion up and we will follow - whenever whenever and to whomeved. We do become a howeved. praye ammunder of prayer a church of unity

### MY PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS...... MAT OUT ENTIRE CRUCK booy would meet with the Eather AND with our Whole heart MIND to STRUGTE LOVE Him & More Aromio US. May our Commonity Stano in AWE of What our LOD CAN DO.

MY PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS.....

that it would spark prayer with our whole congregation that liberty would truly be a house of Prayer

## **PRIMARY GOAL** 100% PARTICIPATION & PERSONAL ENGAGEMENT

### If you consider Liberty Bible Church your church home, will you take a personal journey with us as we gather before God?

Our vision for the next season of Liberty Bible Church is not primarily about our buildings, but about the mission God has given His church. That mission is for us to know God and His love, and to spend our lives seeking to **GATHER** others before Him. God is challenging us to enter into a fresh season of multiplying disciples, leaders, groups and churches.

### LIFESTYLE

Is the whole of my life gathered before God? Am I sold out to the calling and vision God has for my life? Is my life spent in intentional pursuit of the Kingdom of God?

### **GENEROSITY**

How is God inviting me to grow in generosity as an expression of trust, gratitude, and gathering my life before Him?

### LEGACY

What is my legacy? What would others say and what would God say about the time and gifts He gave to me in my life? Where has my life pointed — toward Christ or toward myself? And every fear I lay at Your feet I'll sing through the night O God the battle belongs to You





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LaPorte Campus



Chesterton Campus

Valparaiso Campus



## SECONDARY GOAL \$12 MILLION OVER 2 YEARS

As we implement the GATHER vision over the next two years, everything will be under one budget and our ministry investments will be as follows:

If we pursue gathering ourselves before God, we are confident that the Father will provide the resources for laying the foundation for the next 100 years of LBC.

### GATHER...TOGETHER AS ONE CHURCH ONGOING MINISTRY \$7.2 MILLION

To fund the ongoing ministries that we believe so deeply in – New Hope Counseling, Missions & Global Engagement, Sports Ministries, Women's and Men's Ministries, Children and Students, and much more!

### GATHER...THOSE NOT YET GATHERED RE-DESIGNING OUR BUILDINGS AROUND OUR MISSION \$4.5 MILLION \*

To re-design our buildings to expand worship capacity in LaPorte, update our worship center in Chesterton, create a safe and welcoming Children's Ministry at each of our campuses, to make it easier for guests and members to navigate our Chesterton building, and to create more accessible buildings in all of our campuses.

### GATHER...THE NEXT GENERATION NEW INITIATIVES \$300 THOUSAND

To fund a new residency program for college students, Church-planting, Community Engagement and Global Missions.

> \* We will fund the remainder of our building needs with up to \$6.5mil in financing.

## THE JOURNEY OF A GIVER

The Journey of a Giver focuses on behaviors and attitudes of our hearts rather than on amounts or percentages, further transforming us into the likeness of Christ. Each step of the journey represents growth in a lifestyle of generosity and sacrifice.

## AN INITIAL GIVER

decides to give for the first time, out of a response to God's Word. This is someone who decides to give something and trust God and the leaders of the church with this gift.

## A CONSISTENT GIVER

decides to give something consistently to exercise the discipline of giving regularly. To learn the behavior of consistency, it can be helpful for a gift to be made as an on-line recurring gift. Regardless of whether a gift is given on-line or in person, being consistent requires discipline.

### **AN INTENTIONAL GIVER**

begins to think about their giving in relation to other things on which they spend their money. For example, this type of giver begins asking the question, "Why am I giving more to AT&T than I am giving to God? Should I be giving to God more than I give for my mortgage each month?" This giver starts to make their giving an intentional choice that reflects how they prioritize and spend their money. This may be the point of intentionality when someone begins to tithe, reflecting intentionality about a certain amount/percentage they want to give to God.

### A SURRENDERED GIVER

recognizes the cost Christ paid on the cross for us and is surrendered to honoring God with 100% of their resources as a result. They give in a way that changes them. Their giving determines their spending/saving rather than their spending/saving determining their giving. A Surrendered Giver isn't concerned with what they ARE giving but more concerned with what they're NOT giving and why. They seek to honor God with 100% of what He has given them, whether direct monetary giving or a God-honoring use of an existing resource like a home or a vehicle.

## A LIFETIME GIVER

thinks about the long-term effects of generosity rather than month-to-month generosity or even year-to-year. They make short-term decisions which may have long term effects as it relates to their generosity capacity. A Lifetime Giver might be someone who has a giving goal which governs their larger-ticket decisions. They make lifetime or longer-term giving commitments that govern his/her larger-item purchases like homes, cars, investments, etc...

These are not steps you ascend to get to God, but simply a way to evaluate your growth in generosity. Scripture encourages us to grow in every facet of our walk with Christ, including the grace of giving. (2 Corinthians 8:1-7)



# **NEXT STEPS**

We ask for you to pray, to gather, to give...

## PRAY

We desire to be a 'house of prayer for all people'. We believe that when God's people pray and seek Him, He accomplishes His promises through His people. He has promised to gather those who do not yet know Him, to Himself, so everything in our church starts with prayer. Pray that God would draw more people to Himself. Pray that God would make known to you how you can serve and give in this season. Pray that He would make clear the next step He is asking each of us to take in our discipleship journey.

# GATHER

We want all of our church gathered together in this season. Commit fully to the goal of 100% engagement. Commit all that God asks of you in this season.

# GIVE

God works powerfully through generous people. Give in a way that stretches you to a deeper level of generosity, a deeper level of trust for God to provide for you. Give expecting God to work in power through you as you become more like Him.

# ONE MISSION. ONE FUND.

A traditional capital campaign focuses mostly on people who are already giving. These people are asked to continue giving what they currently are, as well as to start giving toward something else...like a building or special project. That isn't what the Gather Initiative is about.

## GATHER is an initiative about DISCIPLESHIP and THE MISSION OF GOD through Liberty Bible Church.

Gather will be a 'one fund' initiative, meaning ALL of our giving goes toward carrying out the mission and expansion of the ministry space over the next two years. It's all one mission, so it's all one budget.

### Why does this distinction matter?

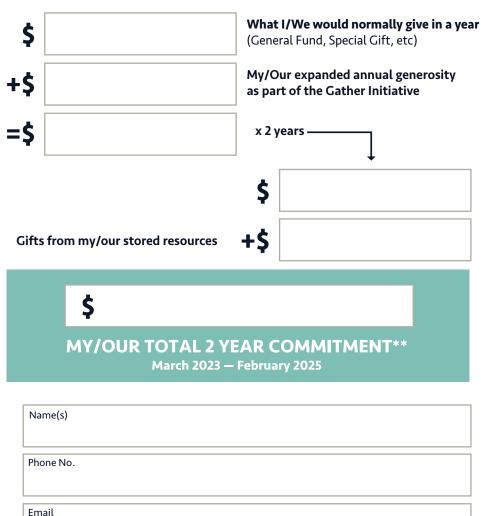
We want everyone at Liberty to be transformed through the Gather Initiative. Through a 'one fund' initiative, we will more successfully invite everyone to take steps into uncharted territory with their generosity, regardless of how much they give. For those not yet on the giving journey, they too will have the opportunity to take their first step.

Also, God has given Liberty one mission. Our general operating budget is a huge part of this mission, and our facility improvements are a huge part of that mission. A traditional capital campaign can easily divide our focus in two ways: 1) mission and 2) the building. But we do not believe our buildings are separate from our mission. It's all one mission, so it's all one budget.

The Gather Initiative will be for two years. In those two years, every dollar\* that is given to Liberty Bible Church will go to the Gather Initiative as we seek to launch Liberty Bible Church into our next season together.

\*The one element of our budget that will remain separate is our Benevolent Fund. We will continue to take offering for Benevolence that is separate from our Gather Initiative.

# **My Generosity:**



\*\*This commitment card is a statement of intent and is not a legally binding agreement.

# **TWO YEAR GIFT CHART**

As you pray and discern how God would ask you to give during this time, allow this gift chart to be a discipleship tool for you. Allow it to be something that inspires and challenges you towards greater generosity for Christ's Kingdom as we all do our part to **GATHER**.

GIFTS NEEDED	TOTAL GIVING FOR 2 YEARS	ANNUAL GIFT OF	MONTHLY GIFT OF	GIFT LEVEL TOTAL
1	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$41,667	\$1,000,000
2	\$750,000	\$375,000	\$31,250	\$1,500,000
3	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$1,500,000
4	\$250,000	\$125,000	\$10,417	\$1,000,000
6	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$600,000
10	\$75,000	\$37,500	\$3,125	\$750,000
15	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$750,000
25	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$1,667	\$1,000,000
35	\$30,000	\$15,000	\$1,250	\$1,050,000
50	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$833	\$1,000,000
100	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$417	\$1,000,000
125	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$200	\$625,000
Many	Up to \$5,000	Up to \$2,400	Up to \$200	\$225,000
TOTAL TW	O-YEAR GENER	ROSITY GOAL		\$ 12,000,000



Week 1: January 15 FOLLOW

Week 2: January 22 PRIORITIZE

Week 3: January 29 TRUST

Week 4: February 5 SURRENDER

Week 5: February 12 BELIEVE

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### Week 1: FOLLOW

Think about a time in your life when you had to follow someone where you did not want to go. What was that like? Is your preference to be the person leading or following?

#### READ ISAIAH 6:1-13

Describe in your words what Isaiah felt when He saw the Lord in the Temple. What do you think you would have felt experiencing the same thing as Isaiah?

God has the seraphim touch Isaiah's lips with the coal — a sign of forgiveness and cleansing. How have you had that experience with God in your life? How have you experienced God's forgiveness? His cleansing?

God invites Isaiah into a calling — to go. Isaiah is immediately ready, and says, *"Here I am. Send me!"* How would you describe your own willingness to follow God wherever He leads?

Spend some time reflecting on your willingness to follow God in each of these areas of your life. Next to each category write "Red", "Yellow" or "Green" to signal how willing you are to follow God.

**RED:** Not yet, God I need to stop here. **YELLOW:** You are willing, but cautiously. **GREEN:** Let's go!

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Your use of Time \_\_\_\_\_

Serving Others	
Financial Generosity	
Obeying Hard Commands	

After some consideration, what areas of your life do you need to lay down to truly follow God? (i.e. your plans and your purposes)

What can you begin to do today that will help you be more like Jesus, as his follower?

### Week 2: PRIORITIZE

List out your top five priorities in life. Why are these a priority to you? What makes them a priority? Would people in your life create that same list about you?

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

The best way to determine your priorities is to look in three areas - what you think about the most, what you spend your time doing, and how you spend your resources. Think about each category and reflect:

What has dominated your thoughts the most this past week? Why?

What have you spent the majority of your time doing this week?

What would your spending patterns over the last week or month say about what you prioritize?

Ahaz had a lot to worry about in his life. While we might not have an impending invasion to worry about as king, we have real things that worry us and cause anxiety in us. What would you say are the top stressors in your life? Why do you think they give you the most stress or anxiety?

#### READ ISAIAH 7:10-17

Despite Ahaz's continued disobedience, God is ready to give him a sign, to prove His commitment to Israel. Why do you think we lose of sight of God's deep commitment to us in the midst of what causes us worry?

God is inviting Ahaz NOT to build his own kingdom, but seek first God and God's Kingdom (an invitation Jesus makes to us as well in Matthew 6:31-34). Based upon how you spend your time and money, whose kingdom are you seeking the most? Why?

#### READ MATTHEW 6:31-34

God truly wants what is best for you and knows that seeking His Kingdom is best. How can you start seeking His Kingdom? What does it look like to seek His Kingdom?

This coming week, what is one practical step you can do to orient your thoughts, your time, and your generosity around the Kingdom of God?

Thoughts:

Time:

Generosity:

### Week 3: TRUST

Are you someone who is more likely to maintain control or just 'go with the flow'? Why do you think you are that way?

Prayer is an incredible gift God has given to us, but it can also bring great confusion, disappointment, or be taken for granted. Do you find it difficult to pray? Is it easy for you? What challenges do you have when you pray?

Wh	at are the most common times o	r expe	riences you have in prayer?
	Meals & Bedtime		Gratitude/Thanking God
	Asking for Help		Listening
	Asking for help for others		Confession and Repentance
	Adoration — spending time just praising God for who He is		

#### **READ ISAIAH 37:14-20**

What stands out to you about Hezekiah's prayer to the Lord? Why do you think you connect with that part of Hezekiah's prayer?

Hezekiah must trust God though war is staring him in the face. While we might not have a foreign invader on our front lawn, what area or areas of your life do you feel like God wants to help you grow your trust in Him? Why do you think God wants to grow your trust in that area?

What can/will you do to allow God more control in your life? What do you think you need to do to grow your trust in Him?

### Week 4: SURRENDER

When you think of the word "surrender"? What is the first thing that comes to your mind?

#### **READ ISAIAH 39**

Hezekiah has been delivered from Assyria, and God has blessed him and the kingdom of Israel, the temple is full of gold and wealth again. Yet, Hezekiah shows off this wealth, both in pride and also to show Babylon that *you can form an alliance with me. I'm a powerful king!* Why do you think Hezekiah went so quickly from radical trust in God (in Isaiah 37) to trusting in his power and wealth in Isaiah 39?

Why is our wealth often a quick replacement for surrendering to God? What is it about money that turns our hearts and minds away from trust in God and also towards confidence in ourselves?

Why are our finances so difficult to surrender to God?

When God asks us to surrender to Him, it requires faith. Have you ever surrendered something to God that took a big step of faith? How did God see you through that?

What is something with which you struggle to surrender to God, and what do you think God might be asking you to do about it?

### Week 5: BELIEVE

What is one thing in your life where you were convinced that "it" would never happen, and it happened?

#### READ ISAIAH 56:6-8

Imagine you are sitting in Babylon, hearing these words read as the Temple was destroyed. How would these words strike you? What would you think about?

Look back in history since these words were written and repeated by Jesus. How has God fulfilled this promise of Isaiah 56?

What is one thing you can do; one change you could make in your life, so that your life is a house of prayer?

What is one thing we can do; one change we could make at Liberty Bible Church, so that our church is a house of prayer?

What is one thing you can do so that Liberty Bible Church can be a place that is more welcoming to all people?

Recognizing that God has fulfilled His promise, and is fulfilling His promise in Isaiah 56, how can you increase your belief and your expectations that God can move in Northwest Indiana, Chicagoland, and the world in a powerful way?

MY PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS.....

Father I pray that Your Holy Spirit Stirs the hearts of your people at Liberty to follow as you lead them. As you describe in. the book of Exodus, happmal with the people of Israe

MY PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS.....

THE VENDE OF LISC WOULD ENCOUNTER JESUS DULING OUR GATUEL INITIATIVE & BE TRANSFORMED ....

AND THOSE THAT DO NOT KNOW JESUS WOULD MEET HIM BECAUSE OF WHAT GOD IS DOING THE PEOPLE OF LEC.



MY PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS .....

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MY PRAYER FOR THE GATHER INITIATIVE IS.....

That any age person welking into one of our church canquises

accepted as they are. No matter

what. Not their race, their age

their different ability, appearance

hat bod we love would of load through

thank you Father God,

and thank you church lendersh

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would feel welcomed and

of unity for the goals

that were set before

45 tonight.

God is calling my family to

to secrifice for this Project.

That I would respond to what

Blessed Heavenly Father, Shepherd us as your people to Come to Your house to pray and to exalt You above all things. Prepare our hearts to welcome with great warmth and grace those people who are yet to be Your people. May they see You in us, in our gathenings, and in Yours and our temple. Amen

# FAQs

#### How long is my commitment?

We are asking that everyone make a two-year commitment to the Gather Initiative. The fulfillment period for your commitment will begin March 2023 and culminate at the end of February 2025.

#### What are you asking me to do?

**Pray! First and foremost, pray.** We desire to be a house of prayer for all people, so it all starts with us seeking God. We believe each person is made by God, loved by God, and God desires to lead us into a fruitful and flourishing life. Start with prayer.

Join a group this season if you aren't already a part of one.

**Give.** We ask that you spend a committed time — praying and seeking how God might call you to make a sacrificial financial commitment to further God's mission through Liberty Bible Church.

#### Come to Commitment Sunday.

We ask that you join us on February 12 for Commitment Sunday and prepare for a life-changing worship service that will be remembered as a defining moment for our church and your faith.

# Are there additional ways besides finances that I can give more toward the Gather Initiative?

Be creative as you explore ways you and your family can give. You might have stock, property, or a stored resource that God has blessed you with in the past that He might call you to give during this time. Please let us know if you need assistance with facilitating gifts of property or stock. We would be happy to help you with that.

#### What if I am in debt? Am I supposed to give?

If you are currently seeking to pay off debt, that is awesome! We celebrate that with you! We would be happy to help you on that journey and recommend resources and possible classes that might help you. However, we believe that being in debt does not prevent us from generosity. Giving isn't about what God wants from you; it's about what God wants for you. So it can be our joy and privilege to give at all times. Please contact Darrell Crots at <u>darrellc@lbchurch.org</u> if you need assistance with a plan to get out of debt. We would be honored to help!

#### What if I have never given to Liberty Bible Church before?

The Gather Initiative was explicitly designed with you in mind. Gather is a 'one fund' generosity initiative. It is different from a traditional campaign where you are called to not only regularly give to the church's general fund but also asked to give to a special project or building fund — creating TWO steps for people who aren't yet giving. By doing a 'one fund' Gather Initiative, we're saying that every dollar given to Liberty Bible Church over the next two years goes to Gather. You don't need to be a regular giver to participate. Gather is a call to sacrificial, gospel-centered generosity for everyone at Liberty. If you have never given, this is your chance to join us and commit to God's mission through our church. We hope you will.

#### What if I am new to Liberty?

Gather is about the vision of our church. We believe that the local church is the most compelling mission to give toward, it is God's Plan A to bring His salvation into the world. We would love it if you made Liberty your church home, and if you are ready, this is the perfect time to join us!

## Notes

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# **IMPORTANT DATES**

as we look ahead to gather in the future

### GATHER LAUNCH WEEKEND Sunday, January 15, 2023

Advanced Commitment Night Sunday, February 5, 2023

> **COMMITMENT WEEKEND** Sunday, February 12, 2023

### **REVEAL WEEKEND &**

FIRST AND BEST GIFT WEEKEND Sunday, March 5, 2023



findliberty.net/gather