

Media and Graphics Notes

Sermon Starter Video?	Yes
Sermon Notes?	There is one scripture passage to show during the sermon. The sermon will end with a transition to a five minute “Share your Gratitude video. I will introduce the video and invite the congregation complete a “Gratitude Card” during the video. After the video, I will close with a prayer as usual.
Other Notes	After the attendance notebooks, there will be a presentation with slides which show 3D renderings of the renovation. I will talk through these with the script below.

Key Questions

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about gratitude to God and for those that have come before us at First United Methodist Church of El Dorado.

Why is this sermon important?

It is important because gratitude is an important part of life with God. Also, it is the grounding for the launch of our capital campaign.

What is the context of this sermon?

This is the first sermon in a five week capital campaign series seeking to raise \$800,000 for electrical infrastructure and sanctuary renovation.

What are the next action steps?

Take a moment to ground yourself in gratitude and complete a gratitude card during worship.

What is the good news (bottom line)?

The good news is that God has been at work among us. God is at work among us.



5th Sunday of Easter
Growing Forward - Grounded in Gratitude
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado
Text Online at <http://j.mp/1TRPLLd>

April 24, 2016
Deuteronomy 26:1-11
Preaching Target Word Count: 1,977
1,150 for sermon
Audio Online at <http://j.mp/1NJzdOY>

God will continue to be at work here for generations to come.

Metadata

Topic(s)

1. Give

Sermon Books of the Bible

1. Deuteronomy

Tags

sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, Eldorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, giving, generosity, stewardship, gratitude

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Invitation to Distribute Gratitude Cards

Instructions for Gratitude Cards

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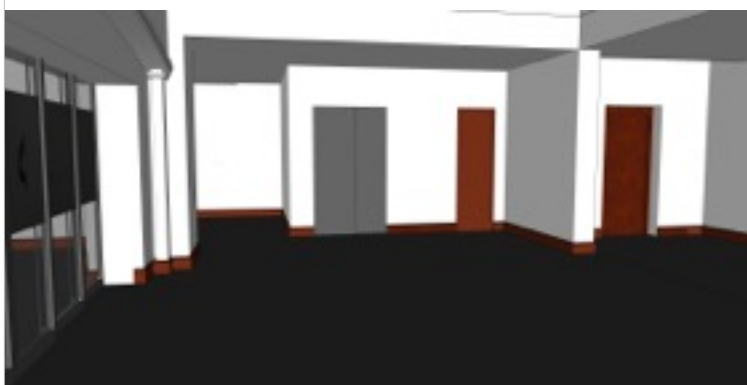
Growing Forward - Sharing and Testimony



We begin with what you know as the Hospitality or Overflow Room. This is a view of that room as you walk up the stairs from the main entrance. You see our existing sliding glass doors the door that you see here goes to the south stairwell. This will allow **easy access to our Children's Church room** at the top of the stairs.



This next view is facing back toward the office with the elevator just off to the left, closet and stairwell door here on the left. The wall where the bulletin boards are now has been removed, which will allow **first time guests** who come to the top of the stair to **immediately see the worship space**.



This view shows the elevator entrance door with this wall removed as well. This will significantly **relieve congestion around the elevator** on Sunday morning to create a better experience for both long time members and first time guests.



You can see how this creates a **more welcoming and open space** as you come closer to the sanctuary.



The door to the sanctuary will be widened to allow **easier entry and exit**.



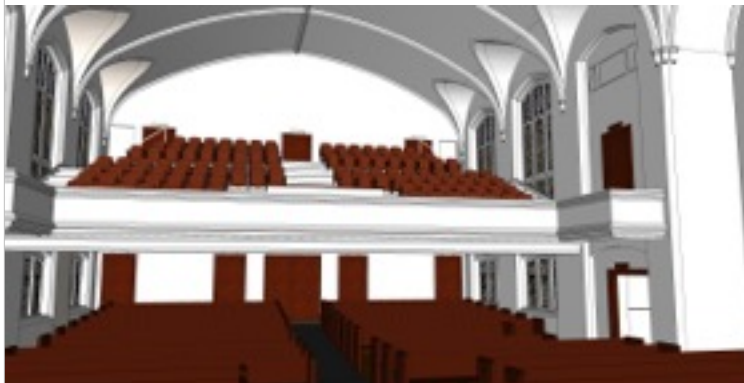
Higher ceilings, a pocket to conceal our existing glass doors when opened, and an arch that mirrors the interior of the sanctuary will create a **more worshipful environment for overflow seating** situations like Christmas Eve and large funerals from both the back...



and the front of this room...



Now, we move to the sanctuary with a view from the main level, just under the edge of the balcony. You will notice that the back of the chancel area has been designed to **reveal stained glass that is currently hidden and maintain the traditional look and feel of the worship space**. While these renderings do not show any audio visual equipment, I anticipate that we would leave two screens one on either side of the sanctuary, as they are today.



You can see from this view that the sound board and graphics computer has been moved from the side of the balcony to the center. This will ensure that **every seat in the balcony has an unobstructed view**.



With a higher view, you can see that the front row of seats has been removed and the flooring lowered to the original height.

This will **increase safety entering and exiting the balcony**. You also see a center row of seats removed to improve circulation in the balcony. While this drawing shows the original balcony seats, we have the opportunity to install **wider balcony seats for increased comfort**.

On the main level, our current pews are reconfigured to to create **more legroom in each row, move handicap seating forward and relieve congestion at entry and exit**.



Here you see the front of the sanctuary from the balcony. **Everything is on one level** with a handicap accessible ramp concealed behind the back to allow for **handicap access on the chancel**. The communion rails would be removable and nearly everything on the chancel would be movable to allow for **maximum flexibility for worship and community events**, like the Butler holiday choir concert.

This work will **preserve a sacred and traditional worship space** which will be ready to welcome people for generations to come.

Deuteronomy 26:1-11, CEB

Once you have entered the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you take possession of it and are settled there, take some of the early produce of the fertile ground that you have harvested from the land the Lord your God is giving you, and put it in a basket. Then go to the location the Lord your God selects for his name to reside. Go to the priest who is in office at that time and say to him: "I am declaring right now before the Lord my God that I have indeed arrived in the land the Lord swore to our ancestors to give us."

The priest will then take the basket from you and place it before the Lord your God's altar. Then you should solemnly state before the Lord your God:

"My father was a starving Aramean. He went down to Egypt, living as an immigrant there with few family members, but that is where he became a great nation, mighty and numerous. The Egyptians treated us terribly, oppressing us and forcing hard labor on us. So we cried out for help to the Lord, our ancestors' God. The Lord heard our call. God saw our misery, our trouble, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, with awesome power, and with signs and wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this land—a land full of milk and honey. So now I am bringing the early produce of the fertile ground that you, Lord, have given me."

Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

Introduction

Sermon Starter Video

[Play sermon starter video.](#)

Series Review

We are a growing church, growing family, moving forward. Our story began in December 1869 as the church first church organized in Butler County. In the first sixty years of our church's existence, we worshiped in seven different locations and built three brand new buildings. Today, we have the opportunity to build on the legacy of generosity and sacrifice of those who have come before us.

We invite you to join us for worship from April 24 to May 22 as we consider the ways that our gratitude, prayer, ministry, generosity and sacrifice make it possible for First United Methodist Church to continue to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ for generations to come.

Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

Take Notes - Bulletin

I invite you to take notes during the message today. You can find a place in your bulletin or if you have a mobile device you can take notes and save them in the Bible App. Just open the Bible App, click on “More” and then “Events” You’ll find us on the map.

God Speaking

I pray that you will hear God speaking to you sometime during the service today. Listen for God’s word for you – something that helps you live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Whenever you hear it, write it down.

Tool for Spiritual Growth

Then, take this bulletin home with you so that you can grow in your faith outside of worship by reflecting on what you heard today, praying for others connected with our community and reading scripture.

Prayer

Will you pray with me? O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Washington DC Honor Flight

Last week, I was on a quick recruiting trip to Washington, DC to visit Wesley Seminary, where Nicole and I graduated and invite current students to consider serving in the Great Plains after graduation.

While I was waiting for my flight back towards Kansas, I noticed that there were a large number of people wearing matching shirts. When I read the front, I saw that it was an Honor Flight of veterans from Missouri who were headed home from visiting Washington, DC.

On the flight back, the pilot read some of the stories of the veterans who were on the flight and whole cabin applauded the service of the men and women of the armed forces who were flying with us.

I am so grateful for those who serve in the armed forces. It was pretty cool to be on the same flight as this group.

Feeling of Gratitude

The feeling of gratitude is something special. Someone has done something for you that you don’t deserve, weren’t expecting or is just really great. I am grateful for so many people who have been part of my life during my 35 years. I know that I don’t

pause enough to recognize God's blessings, experience gratitude and share it with others.

Transition

Do you ever pause to be thankful?
How often do you take a moment to experience gratitude? for God's work? for others? for the immensely significant moments of life? for day-to-day blessings?
Moses is taking one of these moments in the scripture for us today.

Moses and the People of Israel

Context of Scripture Passage

The scripture for today from Deuteronomy records Moses' words to the people of Israel before they enter the promised land. They have been journeying through the wilderness for 40 years. Moses takes a moment to ground the people in gratitude for where they have been and the way that God has been at work among them.

Key Scripture - Deuteronomy 26:5-11

"Then you should solemnly state before the Lord your God: "My father was a starving Aramean. He went down to Egypt, living as an immigrant there with few family members, but that is where he became a great nation, mighty and numerous. The Egyptians treated us terribly, oppressing us and forcing hard labor on us. So we cried out for help to the Lord, our ancestors' God. The Lord heard our call. God saw our misery, our trouble, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, with awesome power, and with signs and wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this land—a land full of milk and honey. So now I am bringing the early produce of the fertile ground that you, Lord, have given me."¹

The people of Israel are grounded in gratitude to God. God has brought them to this place and given them this land. They express their gratitude to God.

Transition

Today, we have a similar opportunity. We are beginning a capital campaign with the approach that our stewardship of the resources that God has given us is grounded in gratitude, revealed in prayer and lived in faith.

In a few minutes, we will have the opportunity to reflect on all the reasons we have to be grateful. We can express our gratitude to God for the way that God has been at work in our life, among our family and friends, our church and community. But first, I want to remind you of some of our story as a congregation.

¹ Deuteronomy 26:5-11

Our Church History

Our story begins in December 1869 when the First Methodist Episcopal Church of El Dorado was organized by Rev. L. S. Friend. There were twelve original members. It was the first church of any denomination within the bounds of Butler County.

Our First 60 Years of Church Construction

In the first sixty years of our church's existence, we worshiped in seven different locations and built three brand new buildings.

1873 - First Building

In 1873, we gathered for worship in the old courthouse, moved to a stone school house and soon saw the need to raise funds to for our building. Our first building was dedicated at First and Gordy in 1873.

1887 - Second Building

Fourteen years later, we saw the need to raise funds for our building. We purchased property at Central and Taylor, our present location, and dedicated a new building in 1887.

1911 - Extensive Remodel - "Third" Building

Twenty four years later, we saw the need to raise funds for our building. We worshipped in the high school auditorium during extensive remodeling. The building was dedicated in 1911.

1927 - Current Sanctuary

In 1921, we saw the need to raise funds for our building. We completely demolished the structure that had been renovated 10 years before so that a new building could be built. The basement was excavated and we began to worship in today's Fellowship Hall while our current sanctuary was built. This building was dedicated in 1927.

Today's Opportunity

In the first sixty years of our church's existence, we worshiped in seven different locations and built three brand new buildings. Today, it has been almost sixty years since there was significant renovation to our sanctuary.

In 2013, we saw the need to raise funds for our building. We worked with an architect to develop a master plan for our building and grounds. This January, our Church Council voted unanimously to move forward with a capital campaign to raise \$800,000 for Phase 1, which will modernize our electrical infrastructure and renovate the sanctuary, balcony and hospitality room.

Before we turn 150 as a congregation in 2019, we will rededicate this sanctuary to the worship of God. We are building on the legacy of those who have come before us so that our congregation will continue to welcome people for generations to come.

Transition

I am so grateful for the people of First United Methodist Church.
This congregation has enriched the lives of the people of El Dorado for many years. The faith of the people of this congregation has shaped the way we live together, the way we treat one another and has influenced our community for good.

Conclusion

Good News

The good news is that God has been at work among us.
God is at work among us.
God will continue to be at work here for generations to come.

Call to Action

Today, in worship, we are going to take time to ground ourselves in gratitude.

Invitation to Distribute Gratitude Cards

At this time, I would like to invite the ushers and our Gratitude and Ministry team to distribute gratitude cards to the congregation.

Instructions for Gratitude Cards

On your way in today, you may have noticed that there is a vine depicted on the windows of the church office – just outside the sanctuary. Right now, there are leaves on the tree that capture some of the things for which our youth and children are grateful. We are inviting you to write down some of the things for which you are grateful:

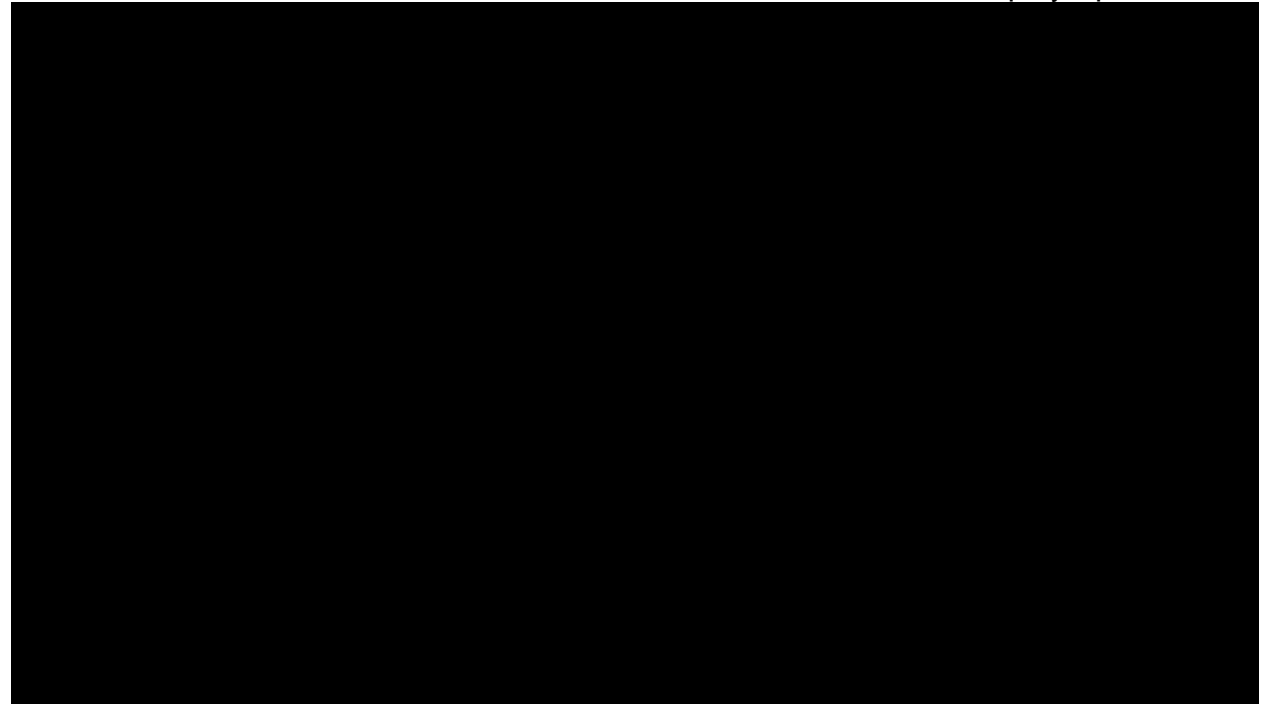
- For family...
- For friends...
- For our church...
- For our community...
- For the way that God has been at work in your life...

In just a minute, we have a video that will play and give you a few minutes to write down those things for which you are grateful. As you finish writing, pass your gratitude card to the center aisle, our ushers will pick them up and they will be added to the vine.

Video Introduction

Our stewardship is grounded in gratitude, revealed in prayer and lived in faith.
Take a moment to ground yourself in gratitude.
During this video, write down those things for which you are grateful.
Let's take a look...

[Play Video](#)



Invitation

If you haven't already, will you please pass your gratitude cards to the center aisle?

Will you pray with me?

Closing Prayer - Adapted from The UM Book of Worship #418

Most gracious God, we praise your goodness and love.

We bless you for the order and constant presence of creation, for the beauty of earth and sky and sea, and for your provision that year by year supplies our needs.

We thank you for your blessing on the work of those who plow the soil, sow the seed and gather in the fruits of the earth

With our thanksgiving for these blessings, accept our praise, O God, for the eternal riches of your grace in Christ our Lord.

All glory and honor and worship is yours, almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

Amen.