

Media and Graphics Notes

Sermon Starter Video?	Yes
Sermon Notes?	There are several scriptures and notes near the beginning of the sermon.
Other Notes	There will be a few slides before Joys and Concerns during which I will share some logistics for the capital campaign.

Key Questions

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about living in faith.

Why is this sermon important?

It is important because we need to remember the power of the Holy Spirit and the invitation to give as part of our discipleship pathway.

What is the context of this sermon?

This is the fourth 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?

As you complete your commitment card in the days ahead, ask yourself, does my commitment represent a faithful response to God? Are my finances a place where I am living in faith?

What is the good news (bottom line)?

The good news is that the Holy Spirit who founded the church and the power of God at work in the widow of Sidon are available to us today.

What are other key takeaways? (140 characters or less)

- Just as seeking to worship, grow, serve and share is part of a life lived in faith, so is the call to give. God desires that we be generous people.
- As Christians, we are called to give out of our need to express generosity as we seek to live a faith-filled life. Our need to give is far greater than the church's



- The story of the coming of the Holy Spirit is our story. Those first followers of Jesus lived in faith and we have the same opportunity to live in faith.

Metadata

Topic(s)

1. Give
2. Make Disciples

Sermon Books of the Bible

1. 1 Kings
2. Acts

Tags

sermon, worship, church, Methodist, UnitedMethodist, UnitedMethodistChurch, FirstUnitedMethodistChurch, Eldorado, Kansas, GreatPlains, AnnualConference, GreatPlainsAnnualConference, giving, generosity, stewardship, capitalcampaign, give, Pentecost, HolySpirit,

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Capital Campaign Giving Commitment Logistics

Next week, is Commitment Sunday for our Growing Forward capital campaign. So, today I want to answer some of common questions you may have about giving.

How will I receive a commitment card?

This week, the active members of the congregation will receive a letter which will include a commitment card, return envelope and a brochure which shares some creative strategies for giving which you might consider as you make your commitment. If you don't receive a card in the mail or if you forget to bring it next Sunday, there will be commitment cards and return envelopes available in the office, as well as in each of the bulletins next Sunday.

How will my capital campaign commitment impact my annual giving commitment to the operating budget?

We are asking people to make a second mile gift, over and above their giving to the operating budget. It is important that you do not decrease your operating giving so that you can give to the capital campaign, as this would have a negative impact on our day to day ministry.

How do I complete my commitment card?

The commitment card is a bit different from our annual giving commitment card, primarily because the giving period is three years – from June 2016 to May 2019. We want to make sure that we understand your intent when you complete your commitment card, so I want to share it with you.

The first section is contact information, which we trust that you will understand.

Giving Commitment

Let's take a look at the next section, which is where you will indicate your giving commitment:

Yes! I/we commit to give:

\$_____ Weekly for 156 weeks

\$_____ Monthly for 36 months

\$_____ Annually for 3 years

\$_____ ***TOTAL giving for 3 Years***

You can give weekly, monthly, annually or make a one-time gift.

- If you would like to make a commitment of \$1,560 and give weekly, you would put \$10 next to Weekly and \$1,560 next to TOTAL giving for 3 Years.
- If you would like to make a commitment of \$3,600 and give monthly, you would put \$100 next to Monthly and \$3,600 next to TOTAL giving for 3 Years.
- If you would like to make a commitment of \$3,000 and give annually, you would put \$1,000 next to Annually and \$3,000 next to TOTAL giving for 3 Years.
- If you would like to make a commitment, but are uncertain of the timeline, place a total next to TOTAL giving for 3 Years.

Giving Options

As we take a look at the next section, you can choose how you want to give:

Giving Options:

Cash or Check

Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

Choose a withdrawal option:

Weekly (on Thursdays)

Monthly (first Thursday of each month)

For Gifts other than cash:

Description: _____

Approximate Value: _____

- You can give by cash or check in worship or by mail.
- One of the best ways to give to the church is with Electronic Funds Transfer.
- You can also give appreciated stocks, securities or gifts other than cash, which some find beneficial for tax purposes.

When do I return my commitment card?

We invite you to return your commitment card in worship on May 22. We will present our commitment cards during the final song at each of our worship services. If you will not be present for worship on May 22, you can return your card in the mail or complete the

What if I can't make a commitment to give?

Some people find themselves in the position of being unable to make a commitment for a variety of reasons. That's okay. We invite you to return a card, even if your commitment is zero.

Day of Pentecost
Growing Forward - Lived in Faith
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado
Text Online at <http://j.mp/260MXQJ>

May 15, 2016
1 Kings 17:8-16
Preaching Target Word Count: 1,785
Audio Online at <http://j.mp/1ZUjFhO>

If we have not received a commitment card from one of our active members by the end of the month, there is a team ready to contact you to see if they can offer any assistance in making a decision.

Connection Team Contacts

Throughout our campaign we have stressed that persons should pray about what God's will is for them in light of this campaign. The expectation of our leaders is that each member enter into a conversation with God through the prayer "Lord, what do You want to do through me?" If God leads you not to participate, writing zero under the commitment amount is a faithful response and one we will gladly accept. Just let us know.

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1 Kings 17:8-16, CEB

The Lord's word came to Elijah: Get up and go to Zarephath near Sidon and stay there. I have ordered a widow there to take care of you. Elijah left and went to Zarephath. As he came to the town gate, he saw a widow collecting sticks. He called out to her, "Please get a little water for me in this cup so I can drink." She went to get some water. He then said to her, "Please get me a piece of bread."

"As surely as the Lord your God lives," she replied, "I don't have any food; only a handful of flour in a jar and a bit of oil in a bottle. Look at me. I'm collecting two sticks so that I can make some food for myself and my son. We'll eat the last of the food and then die."

Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid! Go and do what you said. Only make a little loaf of bread for me first. Then bring it to me. You can make something for yourself and your son after that. This is what Israel's God, the Lord, says: The jar of flour won't decrease and the bottle of oil won't run out until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth." The widow went and did what Elijah said. So the widow, Elijah, and the widow's household ate for many days. The jar of flour didn't decrease nor did the bottle of oil run out, just as the Lord spoke through Elijah.

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. We have the opportunity to build on the legacy of generosity and sacrifice of those who have come before us. Today, we focus on living in faith.

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.

Lived in Faith

Happy Birthday, Church!

We have the opportunity to live faithfully today because the church was born over 2,000 years ago in Jerusalem.

Today, is the church's birthday.

We celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit in power to the very first disciples.

The Story of Pentecost

We find the story in Acts 2:1-4.

“When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind filled the entire house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak.”¹

Everyone who was in Jerusalem heard the disciples preaching in their own language and telling about the good news of Jesus Christ.

Some, thought they were drunk.

Someone needed to explain what was going on.

Peter got up to preach.

He shares with the crowd the promise of God's spirit being poured out on all people. He shares from the scripture to share about the resurrection of Jesus' Christ. Then we find in Acts 2:37-39:

¹ Acts 2:1-4, CEB.

“When the crowd heard this, they were deeply troubled. They said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?”

Peter replied, “Change your hearts and lives. Each of you must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

This promise is for you, your children, and for all who are far away—as many as the Lord our God invites.”²

The story of the coming of the Holy Spirit is our story. Those first followers of Jesus lived in faith and we have the same opportunity to live in faith.

Discipleship Pathway

The way that we talk about living in faith here at First United Methodist Church is our discipleship pathway.

We live as disciples of Jesus Christ as we worship, grow, give, serve and share.

Worship

We worship every Sunday at 9 and 11 a.m. by gathering to sing, pray, listen for God’s word in scripture and consider what it means for us today.

Grow

We grow in love of God and neighbor by connecting with others in small groups and engaging in daily spiritual practices on our own.

Give

We give financially to invest in God’s ministry and mission and create an opportunity for God to work through us and our church.

Serve

We serve others in our congregation, Butler County and beyond as part of God’s transformation of the world.

Share

We share our faith by inviting others to connect with God and sharing our experience of life as a follower of Jesus Christ.

This is what it means to live in faith.

This is the life that is possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Elijah is Fed by a Sidonian Widow

In the story of scripture for today, the prophet Elijah is fed by a widow of Sidon. Theologians tell us that she is

² Acts 2:37-39, CEB.

“presumably a worshiper of Baal. ... Not only that, but she is a widow, which in the ancient Near Eastern cultures means that she is probably destitute. In the Old Testament, widows are typically associated with the neediest elements of society, the orphans and the poor. Yet, it is this widow in a land devastated by drought who is to feed Elijah. ... She who has such scarce means is instrumental in God’s plan to provide for others.”³

She gave what she had and was living a faithful life, even though she may not have recognized it.

Conclusion

Good News

The good news is that the Holy Spirit who founded the church and the power of God at work in the widow of Sidon are available to us today.

Call to Action

Just as seeking to worship, grow, serve and share is part of a life lived in faith, so is the call to give. God desires that we be generous people. As Christians, we are called to give out of our need to express generosity as we seek to live a faith-filled life. Our need to give is far greater than the church’s need to receive.

As you complete your commitment card in the days ahead, ask yourself, does my commitment represent a faithful response to God? Are my finances a place where I am living in faith?

Personal Example: Our Story of Living in Faith

Invitation to Pray

I remember sitting down in my office in January to meet with Craig Miller, our consultant, after we had signed the contract to move forward with the capital campaign. One of the first things that he invited me to do was to begin praying about what our financial commitment to the campaign would be as a family. The prayer, “Lord, what do you want to do through me?” became part of my daily prayer life.

I talked with Nicole about the next steps in this process and asked if she would pray as well. We prayed on our own for a few days.

³ Leander E. Keck, ed., *1 Kings*, vol. III of *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002, 128.

Reflections

During this time, I thought about the next three years and what changes would be coming in our life. What expenses do we have now that will not be there in years ahead? What is God's calling for our children and family?

John will be starting Kindergarten this fall at Skelly and before this campaign is complete, Anne will be there as well. Our lives will look much different. I began to feel God's guidance toward a particular dollar amount.

Conversation with Nicole

I shared this number with Nicole and she said, you have got to be kidding. There is no way that makes sense for us. Okay, well, let's keep praying about it.

I looked at the giving pyramid, continued to pray and began to sense that God was calling us to give one level up the pyramid.

A few days later, I hesitantly shared with Nicole this new number.

To my surprise, she said, "I'm okay with that. It is a stretch for us and gives plenty of room for God to work."

We are All In

Nicole and I are all in.

We have been here for almost four years. First United Methodist Church is the spiritual home for our family and has shaped our lives in significant ways.

Our Family's Faith Story

This sanctuary is the place where Anne was baptized, just a few months after we arrived. It is a place for John and Anne to learn to worship and grow in their faith. It will always be part of our faith story as a family.

The Future

When our kids come back to visit El Dorado 30 years from now and come into this sanctuary, I want them to know that this is a place where their parents invested their time, energy, lives, leadership and their finances.

Our Commitment

We are making a three year giving commitment of \$15,000 to this campaign for our children and all the children in the years ahead who will come to know God and grow in their faith with First United Methodist Church.

Invitation

I invite you to join us in making a financial commitment to this capital campaign
... as a way to live your faith.
... for our children and grandchildren.
... for those in our community who don't yet know Jesus.
... for gratitude for the ways which God has blessed us, even to this day.

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This campaign is not the end, but a means by which our congregation can invite people to faith in Christ and seek make a positive impact in our community.

Closing Prayer

Will you pray with me?

O God, we praise your presence, power and work among us. We confess the ways that we stray from your path and thank you for your love that invites us back. We pray for clarity and inspiration, as we pray, "Lord, what do you want to do through me?" Pour out your Holy Spirit on our congregation that we might faithfully follow the mission which you have set before us. In your holy name, Amen.