



HERE **TO SERVE** →

Update

MAY 2021



Friends,

It's hard to believe that nearly a year and a half ago we began a new journey together. A journey, building on the legacy and example of our rich 180+ year history, to cast and fulfill a vision to be a church *Here to Serve*. Now, as the pandemic pause begins to recede, we wanted to share our progress to date, as well as adjustments we are making in light of COVID-related changes in projected giving.

Here to Serve. It's a simple phrase but one rich with meaning. It conveys what FPC has already accomplished in its mission to bring the Gospel to Houston and beyond, but it also declares our acceptance of what God has called us to in the future. It encompasses the understanding that we have each been placed **HERE**—in our homes, neighborhoods, and places of work—to show God's love to those around us. It encompasses the idea that God has placed First Presbyterian Church **HERE**, in this neighborhood, in this city, at this moment in time, to have a profound impact for the sake of the Gospel. And, it encompasses our responsibility to steward our extraordinary legacy so that we might lay the foundation for future generations to share in the joy of our redemption.

And so, sixteen months ago we set out on this journey to strengthen our ability to proclaim the Gospel, committing to be *Here to Serve* through sacrificial giving. We also identified three initiatives, with specific goals attached, that would provide the foundation needed to fulfill our call to be **HERE**:



1 **HERE.** For Our Future

- Reimagine Children and Family Ministry Spaces
- Create Dynamic Discipleship Pathways
- Invest in Our Staff
- Expand & Improve Technology



2 **HERE.** For Our Neighborhood

- Improve Guest Experience
- Create Community Spaces
- Make Necessary Facility Updates



3 **HERE.** For Our City

- Plant New Churches
- Expand Evangelism Efforts
- Invest in Redemptive Entrepreneurship

In December of 2019, we concluded our pledge period with commitments to collectively give more than \$28M toward *Here to Serve* with the anticipation of this rising another \$2M to \$3M before the end of the campaign. We began 2020 strong with some of you choosing to start fulfilling your pledge before the new year even started. But much like everything else in 2020, COVID left its imprint on both giving and on progress toward our goals. And though the leadership of FPC is still assessing how COVID will ultimately impact the overall plan, **we are pleased to share that, through your faithful generosity, much has still been accomplished!**

In response to the financial challenges of the last year, on both our economy as a whole and among the individual households that comprise FPC, we have adjusted our *Here to Serve* campaign giving projection from \$28M to \$24.3M. This means that some of the larger projects we dreamed of, such as redoing the North parking lot and reimagining the Main Street entrance to the church have had to be postponed to another time. In addition, your Session has been able to reduce our annual operating budget from \$8M to \$7.4M—while still being able to increase our investment in staff for ministries to children and families, youth, and young adults.

With a revised financial plan in place, we are pleased to report that we are currently on track toward our adjusted number and to share the following update on projects outlined in our first *Here to Serve* campaign guide.



Completed or In-Progress Projects

HERE. For Our Future

Expand Live Stream Capabilities

- Add Grand Hall live stream system, including dedicated control room, cameras, and the hardware, software, and sound equipment necessary for broadcast. **[Complete]**
- Upgrade cameras and live stream system for Sanctuary. This project is split into two phases:
 - » **Phase 1:** Installation of new cameras and build-out of temporary Control Room **[In-progress. Expected Completion June 2021]**
 - » **Phase 2:** Build-out of new control room **[In-progress. Expected Completion Sept 2021]**

Invest in Digital Content

- Website redesign, including an “online campus” area for easy access to all live streams, recordings, digital discipleship material, and online classes. **[In-progress. Expected Completion June 2021]**
- Build in-house video studio **[In-progress. Expected Completion Sept 2021]**



Control Room for Grand Hall Live Stream



HERE. For Our Neighborhood

Make Necessary Facility Updates

- Demolition of Oakdale building and relocation of Communications print room
[Complete]
- Refreshing paint, repair of the ceiling, and refinishing the pews in the Sanctuary [Complete]
- Refreshing paint/wood trim repair on exterior doors and windows [In-progress.
Expected Completion June 2021]



Communications Print Room



Communications Office Space

HERE. For Our City

Invest in Redemptive Entrepreneurship

→ Funding for second Project Flourish competition, awarding 6 organizations a combined total of 250k [Complete]

To view the 2020 award recipient presentations, visit projectflourish.org/news.



Projects Approved to Resume

Due to the financial uncertainty that COVID created, you may remember that your Session decided to pause several projects described in the *Here to Serve* campaign. The following items have been approved to proceed.

HERE. For Our Future

Reimagine Children & Family Ministry Spaces

Approved to Restart April 2021

- Basement renovation for 4th and 5th-grade ministry activities, including new classroom/meeting space, ADA compliant restrooms, and an elevator running between the basement and second floors.
- First-floor renovation for Kindergarten through 3rd grades and outdoor play area improvements
- Second-floor renovation to accommodate an elevator, including a redesign of the Worship Ministry offices



Children's Sunday School

HERE. For Our Neighborhood

Make Necessary Facility Updates

Approved/Ongoing

Our ongoing building renewal and renovation needs have been organized into three categories: Short Term (Immediate), Mid Term (2-5 years), and Long Term (5+ years). Giving from our *Here To Serve* campaign will be directed toward repairs and upgrades in the Mid Term category. To aid in this process, our Facilities committee has completed a Facilities Condition Report, which will be used to guide prioritization and completion of these campus updates.



Here to Serve 2.0: Recognizing New Priorities

In addition to the initiative updates above, your Session has also identified and approved some additional priorities, the need for which became more apparent as our leadership evaluated the return to in-person worship and discipleship in a post-pandemic culture.

Developing a *Before-the-Door Culture*

As people return to campus or visit for the first time, it is critical that they experience the warmth of the FPC community and the presence of God long before they reach the doors of the building. In addition to a reimagining of how pastors, leaders, and staff connect with members and guests on Sunday mornings, we will invest in the following efforts:

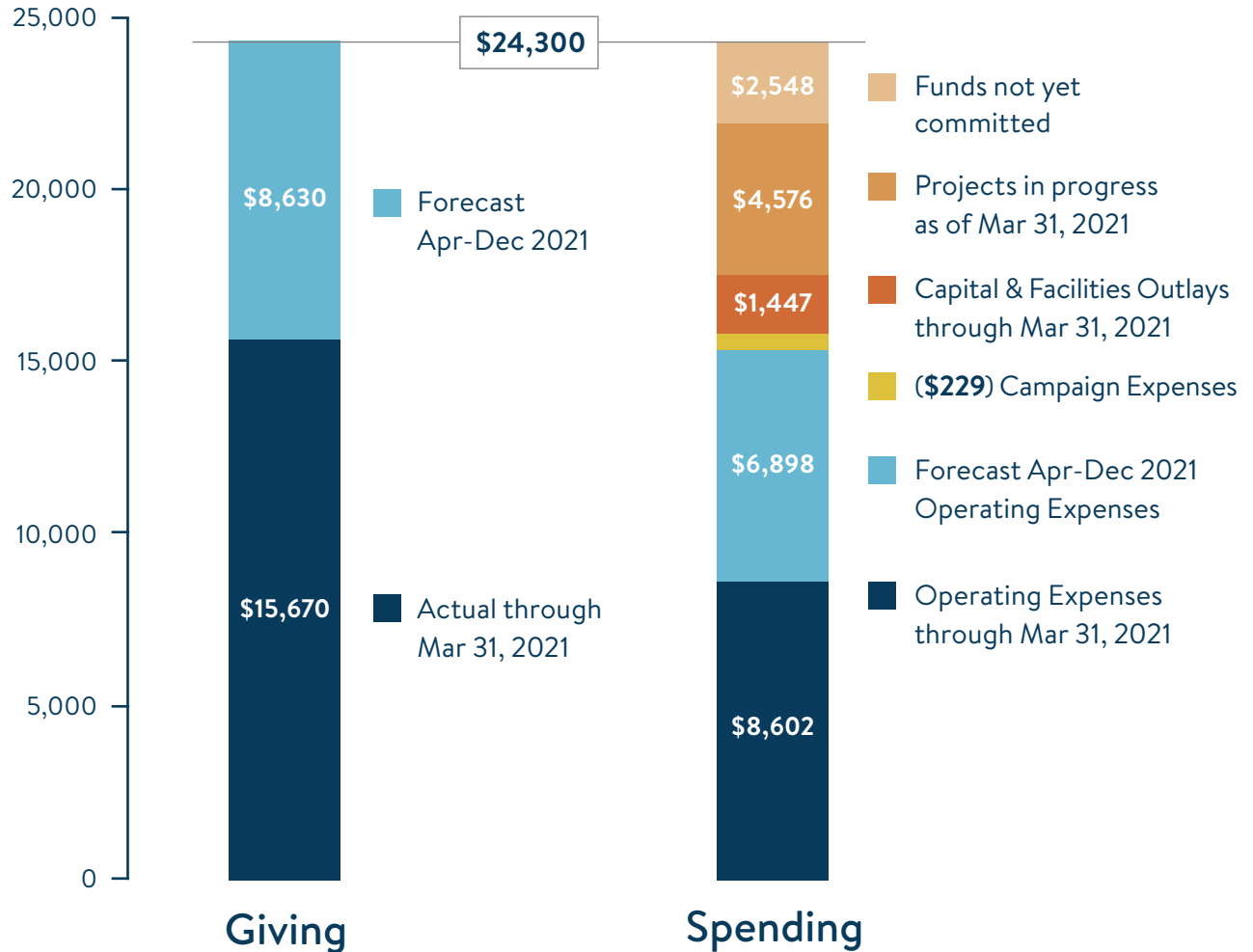
- **Improved Wayfinding Signage:** Clearly mark and/or refresh paths to worship and Sunday morning discipleship classes from the parking lot to these critical destinations.
- **Use of MFAH “Shared” Spaces to Enhance the Experience:** Install wayfinding signage and messages about the FPC community to MFAH garages and walkways leading to the FPC campus, including a new wall between the Glassel Building and the west side of the building, which was committed to by FPC and the MFAH as part of the museum expansion project.
- **Refreshed and Reassigned Entrances:** Improve entrance options from key parking locations, ensuring each entry point is clearly marked, has protection from varying weather conditions, is identified for ease of access to critical areas (e.g., childcare or limited mobility parking), and allows both members and guests to be welcomed into God’s presence.
- **Expanded and Improved Welcoming Spaces:** *Here to Serve* always included a plan to expand the existing Sanctuary Narthex to better accommodate fellowship before and after worship. As the plan for this is approved to resume, Session has also added a priority to revisit the layout of Palm Court to ensure members and guests experience a welcoming space as soon as they enter the building.



Finally, we want to assure you that every effort is being made to spend wisely and to manage our new campaign total. As of March 31, 2021, our spending to date for completed projects, in-progress projects, and operating expenses is \$10.3M. Based on the planned expenses to complete in-progress projects and those kicking off now, we estimate the total spend for all projects will be \$21.8M, including operating expenses, leaving \$2.5M to fund the projects listed on the previous page.

Here to Serve Giving/Spending

(in 000's)



Here to Serve has moved from vision to reality. And we are thankful to all who have committed to being faithful servants in the call to sacrificial giving. If you have not had a chance to give or would like to increase your pledge to our *Here to Serve* vision campaign, Pastor Jim would love to speak with you (pastoroffice@fpchouston.org).

Thank you for being HERE. To Serve.



FPC HOUSTON