

# 2021 Celebration of Generosity Sharing God's Faithfulness



*"The jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry."*

1 Kings 17:16



# God is faithful through God's people!

During a season of scarcity, a hungry traveler knocked on the door of a widow asking for bread. Knowing she only had a few drops of oil, the woman hesitated. God prompted her to respond not with fear, but with faith. Using what she had, she baked and shared the bread; bellies were filled and community was formed. God was faithful to refill her oil jug & flour jar each day so that they could eat, gain strength, and serve. In time, the woman's son became ill and it was the traveler, Elijah the prophet, who restored the child to health.



God's faithfulness is most often experienced through the faithfulness of God's people. (Read the story in 1 Kings 17)

This year we have been weary travelers. In the midst of a pandemic, we have experienced uncertainty and fear, disconnect and worry. Through it all God has proven to be faithful.

God has provided for us, and through us God is extending His provision and healing into our community and world.

Because of God's provision, your faithful giving, and the extraordinary adaptivity of our people we have been a source of spiritual support, emotional healing, and physical provision to thousands this pandemic year.

You could have hesitated, but you proved yourself brave and resilient and gave of your resources even when you couldn't physically eat the bread.

## We say "Thank You For Giving" on behalf of:

- Youth who are pouring into the renovated Freedom Youth Center to reconnect with faith and friends.
- Neighbors who are back inside for three hot lunches every week with Feed My Sheep.
- Children who were welcomed to VBS this summer and now are being nurtured in faith through Sunday School and our new "Wesley Wednesday Kids."
- 999 families who received groceries during the first decade of the South Carroll Food Pantry.
- Worshipers who are once again feasting on Holy Communion and being washed in baptismal waters.
- 65 adults who are being nourished in their faith through Disciple Bible Study.
- Individuals receiving counseling services through Hope Rising during times of grief or struggle.



## 2022: A Season to Thrive, A Season to Give

We believe that a season of remarkable healing and abundant outreach lies ahead. This is a time for applying the adaptability we learned during the pandemic to build a community which is relevant and ready to nourish the neighbors whom God will bring our way.

In the year ahead, we hope to be a community that celebrates and extends God's faithfulness by:

- Helping our people establish a firm foundation of faith.
- Helping our community heal and find abundant health.
- Continuing to offer life-giving support to our neighbors.
- Expanding our impact through regional and global missions.

***In order to extend spiritual and physical bread to our neighbors, we must have "oil in the jar." Today, we the leaders of your church family invite you to join us in making a bold commitment to faithfully give in 2022.***

Our commitment to give allows our leadership to invest in people, ministries, and spaces with confidence. Our regular weekly and monthly offerings provide the well of resources which sustains God's work every day of the year. We also invite you to consider giving a special one-time Thanksgiving offering as an expression of gratitude for God's provision.

Grateful,

Rev. Dr. Jennifer Smith, Rev. Ian Collier, and Your Generosity Team



***As we each respond to God's faithfulness with faithfulness, we can be certain, "the jar of oil will not run dry!"***

### Jackson's Story



On January 8, 2020, Jackson's heart stopped beating and he collapsed on the high school floor. Using an AED machine, his teacher shocked his heart 6 times. As he was enroute to the hospital, the call for prayer went far and wide. Doctors provided life saving aid and the community prayed. Jackson's heart was restored to rhythm and from that day forward he would live by a different beat. During the pandemic year Jackson was mentored by Dan E., and this fall he is living into his call by mentoring a middle school band and leading teens in worship. God is faithful through God's people.

**Communications & Administration**

Our church administrator & treasurer facilitate multifaceted communications to keep us connected and carefully steward every dollar.

10.4%

**Worship**

Under the leadership of our worship director, organist, and pastors, we empower our community to worship online, outside, and in the sanctuary. Bells, brass, bands, choirs, and orchestras will all make a joyful noise this Christmas.

14.7%

**Missions**

Your giving provides staff support, facility availability, and direct funds for local, regional, and global missions. This budget includes our Mission Shares which supports regional and global mission initiatives through the UMC.

14.3%

**Children & Youth**

Our Children and Youth Directors are excited to be leading their dedicated teams in efforts to welcome children & youth into relationship with God and each other.

14.6%

**Every Dollar is an investment in people!**

**Adult Discipleship & Care**

Under the leadership of Pastor Ian, our teachers and Stephen Ministers provide adult classes, devotional resources, online content, and pastoral visits and counseling.

12.9%

**Pastoral Leadership**

Pastor Jenny, together with our staff and lay leaders guide the overall vision for our community.

7.4%

**Mortgage & Building Care**

Our building & grounds space provide for ministry and community missions such as South Carroll Food Pantry, Feed My Sheep, Scouting, MOPS, and Early Years Learning Center!

25.7%



**Budgeted Finances - 1/1/2021-9/30/2021**

Weekly Contributions	\$631,702.10
EYLC Contributions & Interest	\$56,473.00
<b>Total General Fund Income</b>	<b>\$688,175.10</b>
<b>Total Budgeted Expenses</b>	<b>\$748,688.00</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>\$(60,512.90)</b>

**Thanks to your generosity, Wesley Freedom continues to be in good financial health. Your weekly giving has continued to grow each month. When combined with the Paycheck Protection Program grant from earlier this year (\$100,000), we have been able to cover all salaries and budgeted expenses this year. In addition to the weekly contributions, the money that you have given to designated funds both this year (\$77,000) and in previous years has allowed for additional mission and ministry (\$130,525), such as Hope Rising & Agape Gospel Ministry as well as many needed repairs to our campus and youth center.**

## Sharing God's Faithfulness:

Funding the vital ministries we are called to share will take all of us. In 2022, we anticipate offering full in-person ministries without grants to fill budget gaps.

In order to fully serve our community and reach far with the love of Christ, we need to close a \$100,000 gap between our current giving levels and our need to fund ministry.

This is an audacious but attainable goal. God has provided all that will be necessary to live out the vision He has given. As we have celebrated, God provides through God's people. We are the ones entrusted with keeping the jar full!



## So, what is your faithful response?

- "I'M IN" - Join the giving team for the first time by committing to give \$20 per week to fund ministry.
- "I'M GROWING" - Increase your current giving level by adding \$20 per week to fund ministry.
- "TIME TO TITHE" - Is this your year to go for it? Align your life and your finances to God's priorities and rhythm by investing 10% of your income in God's work. God promises to provide!
- "I'LL STRETCH" - Is God providing? If you are already tithing or giving a percentage of your income, how is God calling you to stretch?

**Our goal - 100 households respond with increased giving averaging \$1,000 = \$100,000**

## MAXIMIZING YOUR GIFT:

Would giving through stocks, IRAs, insurance policies, or other financial instruments maximize your giving potential and your tax advantage? Could you make a lasting impact through a legacy gift to our Endowment Fund? More information on these giving options is available on our giving webpage [wesleyfreedom.org/give](https://wesleyfreedom.org/give).



# Your Faithful Response



## PRAY

Prayerfully and bravely consider your financial blessings and the portion God is calling you to return to Him in the year ahead. We set before you the Biblical goal of a tithe - giving the first 10% of your income.



## PLEDGE

As God reveals what you are called to give, make a commitment to God to give that amount every month in 2022. Your giving promise is a tangible way that you make the work of the Lord a priority. Share your confidential pledge with the church using the card provided or through the e-card at [www.wesleyfreedom.org/give](http://www.wesleyfreedom.org/give).

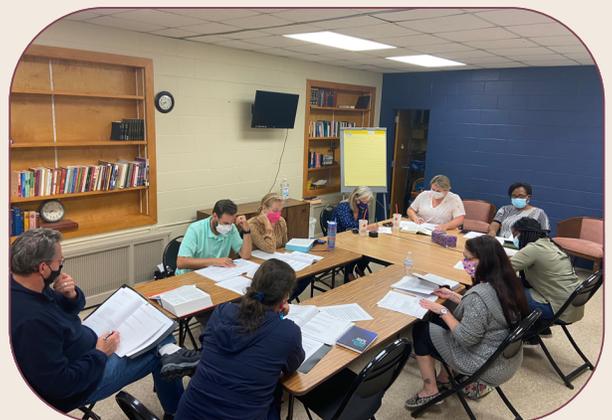


## GIVE

Once you determine the amount you are called to give, make a plan for how you will keep your promise. Convenient and secure giving options are outlined on the back cover.

Welcome to the family, Robert & Gina! Robert and Gina's relationship with Wesley Freedom grew as Pastor Ian met with them to prepare for their marriage. As newlyweds, they participated in Disciple Bible Study. This fall the couple is helping others grow in relationship with God and community by teaching a Disciple break out group!

Who from their class will be teaching next year?



# Special Thanksgiving Offering

*"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever." Psalm 118:1*

As an act of gratitude for the ways the Lord has nourished and sustained you this year, we invite you to make a special Thanksgiving offering this November.

This year our full focus is on caring for the people God places before us. Thus, our Thanksgiving offerings will be dedicated to replenishing ministry funds so that mission and ministry can flourish.

Your offering will help:

- Fully fund children, youth, and adult ministry so that all ages can connect with God and community.
- Upgrade technology for online worship & teaching.
- Support our staff with retirement and health benefits.
- Invest in healing and compassion work with our neighbors and around the world.

Consider the resources available to you from which you could make a significant impact. As this one-time gift is above and beyond your regular giving commitment, it may come from a source beyond your checkbook, such as savings, IRAs, stocks, mature insurance policies, or capital income.

## 2020 THANKSGIVING OFFERING UPDATE:

We celebrate that our community responded to last year's Thanksgiving appeal by giving \$60,000 above our normal giving levels. As promised, these gifts were utilized to repair and renovate our physical spaces. While the buildings were empty we transformed areas with major water issues into indoor and outdoor ministry spaces! Check out our new Sunday School pad, Freedom Youth Center upgrades, and more at [wesleyfreedom.org/give](https://wesleyfreedom.org/give).



**LUANNE RUSK**  
A Story of Confirmation

In the summer of 2021, Luanne responded to the call to serve and committed to joining the Confirmation Team. A few weeks later, she had surgery leaving her in a boot for months. She seriously considered stepping down but felt God calling her to persist. Every Sunday Luanne ventures up the ramp of Freedom Youth Center and demonstrates to our confirmands what commitment to community looks like. At the beginning of October Luanne accompanied our 50 teens on a retreat at Camp Manidokan. Luanne experienced the blessing of being supported by community all while inspiring the faith of a new generation and the leaders beside her.

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**Inspiring the faith of a new generation**



HOWEVER YOU CHOOSE TO GIVE,

## Thank you for giving!

If putting your gift in the offering plate each Sunday or mailing your gift to the church works for you, stick with that plan!

If you have gone digital with your finances, we encourage you to establish a recurring electronic gift. These are safe and convenient ways to stay faithful.



To establish your recurring electronic gift or to give online, visit [www.wesleyfreedom.org/give](http://www.wesleyfreedom.org/give)

## ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER (EFT)

The website will provide you a form for authorizing the church to schedule recurring (weekly or monthly) electronic funds transfers straight from your bank account. You can return this form with your Generosity Pledge in the envelope provided. Forms are also available at the Generosity Table. This is a secure, no-fee option.

## ONLINE GIVING THROUGH SUBSPLASH

You can give anywhere, anytime through our website. Click on 'Give' and select if you want to make a one-time gift or set up a recurring offering. Follow the simple steps to set up your account and donate securely through your checking account or credit card.



### How can we help?

Our Finance Team is here to help! Stop by the Generosity Table any Sunday in November with your questions. To ask specific questions or arrange a conversation to discuss how to maximize your gift, impact, or tax advantage email our Treasurer, Cindy Hinson, at [chinson@wesleyfreedom.org](mailto:chinson@wesleyfreedom.org).

Please return your Generosity Pledge Card and your Thanksgiving Offering in the envelope provided during worship in November, through the mail, or visit [www.wesleyfreedom.org/give](http://www.wesleyfreedom.org/give) to make your online pledge and/or offering.