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September 9, 2018

Dear First Baptist Church Family,

On August 19 I sent a letter to all members and regular attendees of First Baptist Church discussing how we are going to Finish Strong in our 2020 Vision Initiative. I am excited about our next 2 years as we plan and prepare for our Year of Celebration, remembering that 2020 is First Baptist Church's 110-year celebration of gospel ministry. We will formally celebrate this on July 11, 2020, so please save the date now.

### **Finish Strong with our 2020 Vision Initiative**

**We defeated a giant together!** Like King David overcame a seemingly impossible opponent in Goliath, FBC is in the final stretch of overcoming a 30-year debt in less than half the time. Praise God! Last year (November 2017), I shared Phase 1 of the Finish Strong Campaign; our church rose to the occasion. So much that our over million-dollar mortgage debt (including the \$500,000 lump sum due on October 2019) will be paid off ahead of schedule. **Praise God, and thank you to everyone who is helping us successfully complete Phase 1 of our Finish Strong Campaign. This victory gives us the courage to keep going and face our next giants with faith and not fear!**

Today I introduce you to Phase 2, a 2-year effort to Finish Strong together! Your elected officers have been working hard to discern the needs of our church. There are 2 distinct financial needs that are targeted in 2 simultaneous focuses. **Keep reading to learn more and please plan to attend a special congregational meeting after service on Sunday, September 23 to discuss together.**

### **Phase 2a of Finish Strong: Future Sustainability of Mission & Ministries**

Phase 2a recognizes that we cannot complete the 2020 Vision Initiative and move into our next season of ministry at our current level of financial support from the congregation. Currently, we have 65 families providing 80% of the financial resources. This is not sufficient because it is causing us to have to supplement from our reserves each month to keep up with the current congregational expectations of ministries and missions. The Bible teaches us the principle of reaping and sowing. We can only reap as a congregation what we sow as a congregation. As Paul states, "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary" (Galatians 6:9). **Tithing is the seed money of the Kingdom of God through the local church.**

Phase 2a is an invitation to know God better. I am calling the congregation to make the commitment to make a biblical tithe to FBC. **A biblical tithe is when you give the first 10% of your income to your local church for God's work.** If you attend FBC (or can't for some reason but consider us your local church) this is for you; this is for all of us! We need *everyone* sowing into God's ministry at FBC. This will allow God to multiply His work within this congregation and outside of these walls to see communities thriving in Jesus.

## **Phase 2b of Finish Strong: Above & Beyond Maintenance Fund**

Phase 2b recognizes our church's substantial need to financially invest in the immediate and ongoing needs of our building. Your elected officers have identified 4 major maintenance issues (see below) of our building that must be taken care of over the next 2 years. We should not go back into debt for another 15 years to do what we can do together. **We invested an initial \$4.2 million to get into this building and now we need to raise \$865,395 over the next 22 months to be good stewards of the building God has entrusted to us and use it for ministry for years to come.**

We have worked hard and invested faithfully to first transform and then keep up with what was originally an old Walmart building. We have many to thank for your sacrificial offerings and generous efforts! But to keep our building in shape for the foreseeable future, we must immediately tackle the following top-4 prioritized needs: 1) replacement of all HVAC units (to include an updated control system) at \$293,994; 2) fixing of flat roof at \$221,866; 3) painting of all four exterior walls at \$32,000; and 4) parking lot resurfacing at \$317,535. Beyond these prioritized needs, there are additional facility issues that need to be addressed as the Lord provides, such as a new street sign (\$31,757), unfinished office space (\$16,900), inside décor, and ongoing needs. **Let's be good stewards and get our house in order for our 110-year celebration on July 11, 2020!**

## **Marking Your Commitment Card to Join FBC in Finishing Strong**

As your pastor, I ask you to hear Paul's words, "Each one must give as he has decided in His heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). **Each of us must respond and decide today.** Ignoring the need is a decision to not meet the need. We reap what we sow. Everything we have belongs to the LORD, and it is to Him we give and for His glory.

First, prayerfully consider how you can help with Phase 2a by marking one of options that are included in this commitment card and turn in by November 4: 1) I am going beyond a full tithe to FBC and will increase to 10% + \_\_\_%; 2) I will continue to give a full tithe to FBC; or 3) I will work towards giving my full tithe to FBC by \_\_\_\_ (November 11, 2018; May 31, 2019; or November 24, 2020.) **This is a matter of the heart as we trust God with the future of FBC.**

Second, prayerfully consider how you can help with Phase 2b by turning in your financial gift or pledge card to invest in this new "Above & Beyond Maintenance Fund" by November 4. This way we can celebrate the initial amount given or pledged at our November 11, 2018 Awesome Autumn Celebration. **Feeling called to do ministry in this building, we must take care of these top-four prioritized needs and desire to build a long-term fund to take care of what we all know are the ongoing costs of owning such a large house for the gospel ministries of FBC.**

Brothers and sisters, fellow members of the Body of Christ, there is only one way forward for FBC to have a viable gospel ministry into the future: all the generations coming together over the next 2 years to fulfill the 2020 Vision Initiative. I believe that our best days are ahead of us. I am firmly committed to being with you every step of the way as we face our future together. **Let us remember that Jesus' promise for His Church is not one of survival, but of living the John 10:10 abundant life, which is a life that lives and gives for eternity today!**

Together for the Glory of God,

Pastor Jerry Ingalls