

ELEVATE

THE HALFWAY MARK





**“...He will ELEVATE you
to be a people for Him.”**
Deuteronomy 29:13

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO // _____

COMMUNITY CHURCH

As a church, we've reached halftime in our two year mission called **ELEVATE**: To expand the message and reach of the Gospel, and to make disciples. To shift our focus from the things of Earth to the work of the everlasting. To move our gaze upward as we position our relationship with Christ at the forefront of our everyday lives.

Community Church - we can't wait to continue watching God do incredible work in and through this body of believers. You are invited to join this new season of **ELEVATING** Jesus Christ and His Gospel in Central Michigan and beyond.

ELEVATE THE GOSPEL



ELEVATE THE GOSPEL | \$4,838,500

- **We have championed and supported** all programming, staffing, and ministry that targets adults in all campuses for the past year, along with this upcoming year **while emphasizing our vision to lead** people into a focused life with Jesus Christ though:
 - Continuation and expansion of missions ministry
 - Celebrate Recovery weekly gatherings
 - Weekly Sunday services
 - Online broadcast through streaming & on-demand viewing
- **We have introduced** a concerted and proactive discipleship initiative that equips and releases 200 new disciple-makers.
- **We are taking** the Gospel to unreached people groups in Mid-Russia through one of our global partnerships.

2

EXPANDING OUR REACH | \$3,199,000 IN CENTRAL MICHIGAN

- We are **continuing** the upgrades and restorations at the St. Johns Campus.
- We are preparing to celebrate the **one-year anniversary** of the St. Johns Campus.
- **We have fully funded** the first two years of ministry for the St. Johns Campus.
- We are near the completion of the **permanent** home of the Alma Campus!
- We have **set the groundwork** for the opportunity to launch new campuses in Central Michigan.
- **We are continuing** to support local community needs in Clinton, Gratiot, and Isabella counties

EXPANDING OUR REACH





* Alma Campus renovations underway!





EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION



EMPOWERING THE | \$1,262,500 NEXT GENERATION

- **We will be updating** portions of the Mount Pleasant campus to maximize attraction and use for children and youth of all ages.
- **We adopted** schools in our local communities to help them in their stated area of need - **helping qualify** more substitute teachers to ease their burden.
- **We began our partnership with World Vision** - seeing hundreds of Community Church families make commitments to help impoverished children and families in Quito Sur, Ecuador.
- **We will provide** a tangible support system for those in our communities who are pursuing the adoption and/or fostering process.
- **We will continue** funding staffing and ministry focused on kids, students, and young adults at all campuses.
- **We established a relationship with Footprints Missions** in Sierra Leone, Africa. We are partnering with their ministry to orphans, thus increasing their ability to sponsor more children.



* Mount Pleasant Campus - Community Kids design concept



* Mount Pleasant Campus - Community Kids design concept



* Mount Pleasant Campus - Community Kids design concept



* Mount Pleasant Campus - Community Kids design concept



* Mount Pleasant Campus - Chapel design concept



* Mount Pleasant Campus - Chapel design concept



* Mount Pleasant Campus - Chapel design concept



ELEVATE
THE GOSPEL

EXPANDING
OUR REACH

EMPOWERING
THE NEXT
GENERATION

MEASURING SUCCESS

We have two goals as our measure of success with **ELEVATE**:

Goal #1: 100% Congregation Engagement

Goal #2: Commitments to raise \$8,000,000

Elevate began in November 2022. Through September 2023 we have received **\$3,275,022** given to **ELEVATE**.

When we launched **ELEVATE** our estimated total cost of the full initiative was \$9,300,000, we are trusting the Lord for all the resources needed for these two years of ministry.

Since Fall of 2022, the state of the economy, particularly the cost of building materials and the accelerated pace of inflation, along with an increase in anticipated scope, has affected the total cost of the major projects in St. Johns, Alma. These are expected to play a part in the updates to the Mt. Pleasant campus. In light of these factors, an updated estimate of the costs for the total Elevate initiative now stand around \$9,800,000.

We firmly believe that Community Church can support reaching the goal amount of \$8 million over two years. Simultaneously, our financial team has discussed with Elders and Trustees and received support for a plan to take on a portion of responsible debt to bridge the gap to complete elements of the initiative while maintaining a stable financial position.

NEXT STEPS

What can I do? Pray, Prepare & Participate

Pray

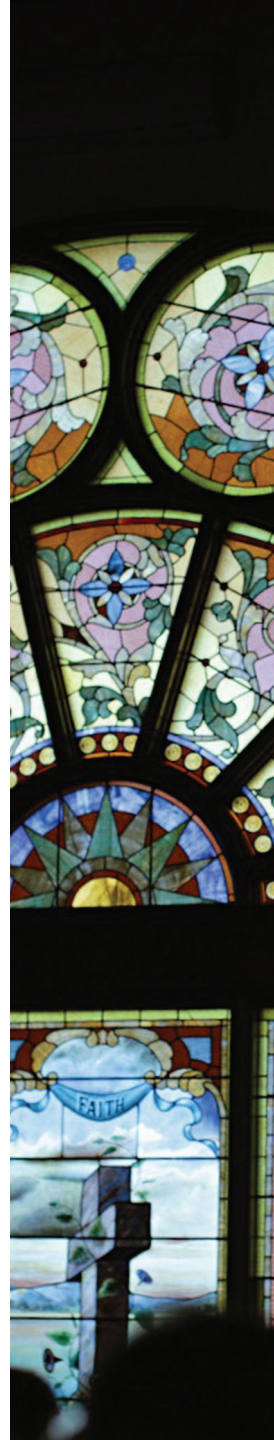
The early church was marked by how they lived out their faith. **Faith that moves the Gospel forward doesn't come from our personalities or even our emotions, but by seeking God through prayer.** This faith spreads the Gospel in every aspect of life. *Ask God what He wants you to give to the **ELEVATE Initiative**.* Surrender all you are and all you have to Him. Be BOLD as you pray!

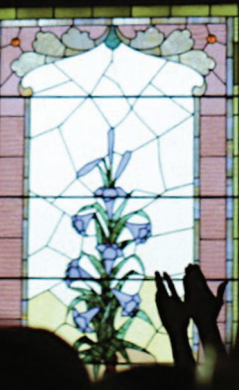
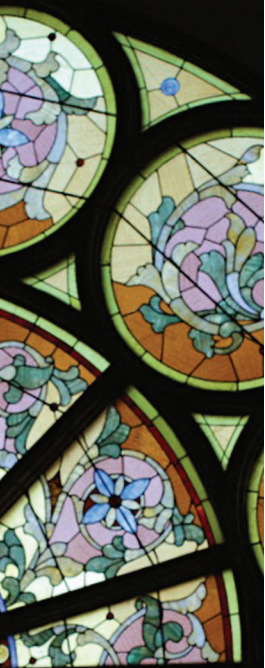
Reflect

As you pray, we believe the Holy Spirit will speak to you. Take some time to reflect on what you think God is saying to you. If you are married, talk with your spouse about where you sense the Holy Spirit is leading. If you are single, seek the Lord and continue to pray and reflect, humbling yourself before God.

Include Your Family

We want Elevate to be church-wide and multi-generational. Take time to share with your family what you've learned, what you've been challenged with, and how God is moving in your life. We'll be sharing **ELEVATE** with our kids, students and college students - one church, together on purpose, across all ages!





Stay Plugged In

ELEVATE will be presented over the course of three weeks - make sure you don't miss a single one! **Each week, we'll be looking at a different aspect of how God is leading us through ELEVATE.** Make every effort to be a part each week, continuing to attend regularly and continuing to serve faithfully in your area of ministry within Community Church.

Take a Step

Discipleship and generosity go hand in hand. As we go deeper into our relationship with God, we learn what it means to value Him above all else. Growing as a follower of Jesus is a journey of ongoing steps of trust in Jesus. We don't grow without taking a step of faith. **Growing in generosity requires us to take a step in trusting Jesus as we give what He has called us to give.** We do this because we value Him, and because we want to point more people to Him.

GIVING LADDER

The giving ladder is a familiar tool designed to help a person move from money being their god, to money being a tool for advancing God's Kingdom. It helps by focusing on the behaviors and attitudes of our hearts rather than on amounts or percentages, further transforming us into the likeness of Christ.

Each step represents growth in a lifestyle of generosity and sacrifice. These are not steps you slowly ascend to get to God, but simply a way to evaluate your growth in generosity. Scripture encourages us to grow in every facet of our walk with Christ, including the grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7).

Here are five steps in a person's '**Giving Ladder**'. Where are you on this journey?

Initial Giver *2 Corinthians 8:7-15*

An Initial Giver is someone who decides to give for the first time out of a response to God's Word about giving. This is someone who decides to give something and trust God and the leaders of the Church with this gift.

Occasional Giver *2 Corinthians 9:6-8*

This is a person who is becoming increasingly generous in their heart. When the opportunity to give occurs, there is a willingness and openness to give to the Lord. This person may give online, by text message, or in person on a Sunday morning. They may even be moving towards the discipline of giving regularly.

Intentional Giver *Luke 14:28-35*

An Intentional Giver is someone who begins to think about their giving in relation to other things on which they spend their money. For example, this type of giver begins asking the question, “Why am I giving more to AT&T than I am giving to God? Should I be giving to God more than I give for my car payment each month?” This giver starts to make their giving an intentional choice that reflects how they prioritize and spend their money. This may be the point when someone begins to tithe, reflecting intentionally about a certain amount or percentage they want to consistently give to God.

Surrendered Giver *Colossians 1:15-18, 22-23*

A Surrendered Giver is someone who recognizes the cost Christ paid on the cross for us, and as a result, is surrendered to honoring God with 100% of their resources. A Surrendered Giver gives in a way that changes them. Their giving governs their spending and saving rather than their spending and saving governing their giving. A Surrendered Giver isn't concerned with what they ARE giving but more concerned with what they're NOT giving and why. They seek to honor God with 100% of what He has given them, whether by direct monetary giving or with a God-honoring use of an existing resource like a home or a vehicle.

Lifetime Giver *1 Timothy 6:6-19*

A Lifetime Giver is someone who thinks about the long-term effects of generosity rather than month-to-month or year-to-year generosity. A Lifetime Giver makes decisions in the short term which have long-term effects regarding their capacity for generosity. They think of what home they buy, what car they purchase, how much savings they choose to keep, all in relation to their ability to be generous.. A Lifetime Giver might be someone who has a lifetime giving goal which governs their larger-ticket decisions. Much like a Surrendered Giver who makes a commitment that will govern his/her monthly and annual decisions, a Lifetime Giver makes a lifetime or long-term giving commitment that governs his/her larger item purchases like homes, cars, investments, etc.

COMMITMENT CARD

Continuing for the next year, we are focusing all tithes and offerings we receive into one fund. This single fund will resource the ongoing expansion of ministry at Community Church's three campuses in St. Johns, Alma and Mount Pleasant. This means every single dollar that is given will go to advance the mission of the Gospel at each campus.

We've included a sample commitment card on the next page so you can see how a "one fund initiative" works. Please take the time to fill this out, but don't worry, you'll get a new one on Commitment Sunday, which is **November 19th**.

ONE FUND APPROACH

Continuing for the next year, we are focusing all tithes and offerings we receive into one fund. This single fund will resource the ongoing expansion of ministry at Community Church's three campuses in St. Johns, Alma and Mount Pleasant. This means every single dollar that is given will go to advance the mission of the Gospel at each campus.

	\$	Current annual giving to Community Church
+	\$	Expanded annual generosity for ELEVATE
+	\$	Additional gifts from stored resources
=	\$	My One Year ELEVATE Commitment

Name: _____

Phone: (_____) _____ - _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

WEEK ONE NOTES

November 5

DIGGING DEEPER | WK 1

- See if you can recall all the elements within **ELEVATE**. What stands out to you? What excites and inspires you?
- Why do you think God often positions us as followers to be ‘uncomfortable’, or ‘in over our heads’?
- Read **Mark 9: 14 – 31**. Focus on verse 24. What does it mean to have belief and unbelief? What has this looked like in your own life and how do you think God estimates this in our lives?
- How can you commit to **ELEVATE** at the 1-year-point? Please pray that our whole church would be a part of this and that God would bless the entire initiative.

WEEK TWO NOTES

November 12

DIGGING DEEPER | WK 2

- Read **Acts 13: 22, 36**. It reads like a final summary from God, about David's life. Break down what it means to be a King, to have a heart for God, and to be about his purposes.
- If God were to summarize your life in a sentence or two, what would you like Him to say about your life?
- The sermon summarized David's life with two words... 'Sacrifice and Commitment'. What does sacrifice and commitment look like for you as you live for Jesus Christ?
- Read **2 Sam 5: 12**. David knew something in this passage. Why did God make him King? How does this translate for our church, specifically through **ELEVATE**.
- Please take time to pray, hear from God, and be sensitive to what he is asking of you. What does obedience look like? Pray for our church as we make commitments to the **ELEVATE** initiative this upcoming Sunday.

WEEK THREE NOTES

November 19



DIGGING DEEPER | WK 3

- Paul refused to be haunted by his past. How has this influenced you?
- Despite questions and concerns from others, Paul was not looking for man's approval. Do you struggle with pleasing people and how does that get in the way? Do you look for man's approval over God's approval?
- Paul calls himself an apostle and a slave. He underscores God's grace towards him rather than be crippled by inactivity, lack of mission or paralysis. Discuss the combination of 'apostle' and 'slave'. What informs you in terms of God's Mission and Vision?
- "By the grace of God, I am what I am". What do you call yourself in Christ?
- Pray for the **ELEVATE** initiative and discuss your part/role in it this upcoming year.



FAQs

When does it start?

ELEVATE began on Sunday, November 6, 2022 and has continued since then with all giving going toward funding the elements of the **ELEVATE** Initiative. We are asking people to commit to give toward this vision for the remaining 12 months, and to finish strong.

Will we be voting on any of the elements in the initiative?

No, our bylaws do not require a vote since we aren't buying property at this time.

Have other options and elements been considered?

Yes. Our pastors, elders, trustees, and leaders have been praying and meeting about these opportunities for over a year. We are convinced that these unique elements are what God is leading us to do in this season.

Will any debt be incurred as a result of this effort?

We are trusting the Lord for all the resources needed for these two years of ministry. We firmly believe that Community Church can support reaching the goal amount of \$8 million over two years. The Elders, Trustees and Pastoral Staff agree that responsible and appropriate debt will be incurred during **ELEVATE**.

What if we don't reach the amount needed in commitments or if financial commitments aren't kept?

We are intentionally prioritizing the elements in such a way to fully fund our ministry budgets and fund expanded ministry *only* at the level of giving committed. We believe the church will keep their commitment in full and that the Lord will provide through His people who currently attend and those who will begin to attend.

FAQs

Why \$8 million? Why not more or less?

We truly feel that this is a “God-sized” goal. It is bigger than what we would be able to accomplish under our own power. We also believe that this is not so far out of reach. We believe this goal is a healthy balance of faith and sound planning.

How will the church be kept updated?

We will continue to bring updates to the congregation via an annual report as well as ongoing updates on progress towards the goals for the initiative on social media and in Sunday services. On an individual level, the church finance team will keep individuals up to date on the status of their commitments and the fulfillment of those pledges.

What if I still have other questions?

We’d love to talk with you about any questions you may have. Please reach out to Eric Barz at (eric.barz@communitymi.org), or one of the pastors or elders. We will continue to update the congregation along the way that will likely address these questions and more.



COMMITMENT WEEKEND

On **Sunday, November 19th**, at the service and campus you attend, we'll ask you to cheerfully make a new commitment, keep an existing commitment, or expand an existing commitment to the amount God has laid on your heart.

We look forward with great anticipation to what God will do in us and through us as we seek to make an even greater impact on our communities, our nation, and our world!



communitymi.org/elevate



COMMUNITY
CHURCH

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