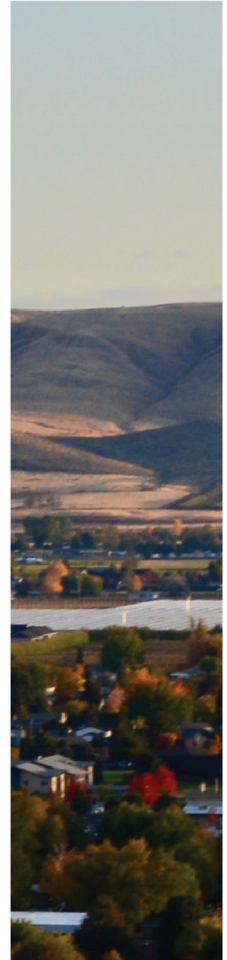
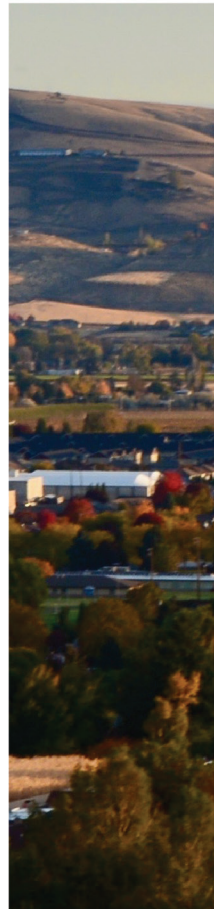
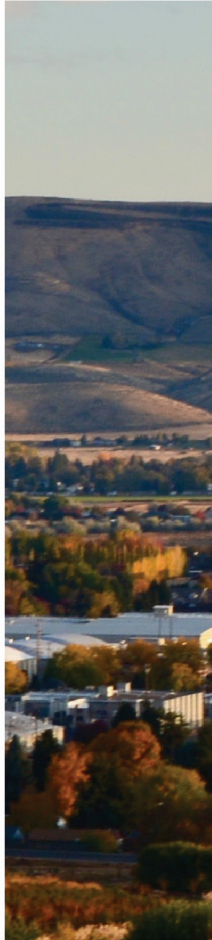
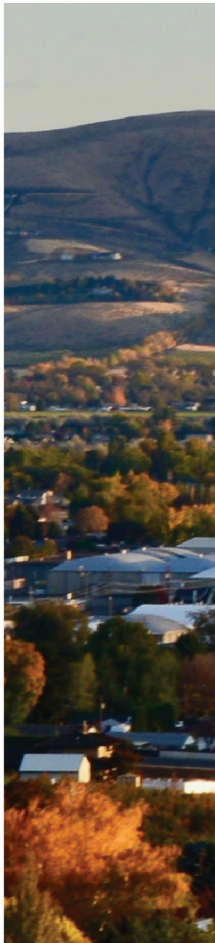
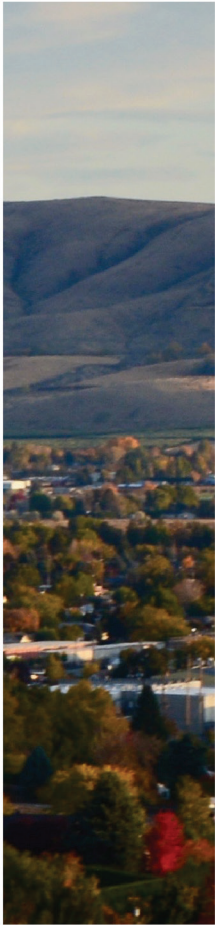




# HERE FOR GOOD

A Three-Year Campaign for West Valley Church



Trust the Lord  
and do good;  
live in the  
land, and farm  
faithfulness.  
Psalm 37:3 (CEB)

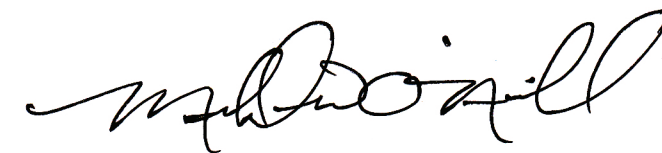
West Valley Church has a long and rich history on this corner and in this community, since our beginning over 60 years ago. We are excited to now build on that history and move into our compelling future as we pursue our mission to Introduce People to Jesus Christ, Equip People with a Faith that Works, and Live as People with Purpose. Everything we do, every dollar we invest, and every area we engage is prayerful and intentional toward our mission. We have now come to a time where doing so calls for greater levels of prayer, service, witness, energy, resources, and unity in Christ.

Therefore, we are launching Here For Good, a three-year generosity campaign to more effectively impact those who call WVC home, those in our community, and beyond. As you read through this booklet, you will discover ways all of us can get involved to make this vision a reality. We are here to do God's good work. We are not here for a season; we are Here For Good!

We are deeply grateful to those in the past who took courageous steps of faith to make it possible for WVC to be who we are today. Now it's our turn - now is our time!

Thanks for joining us on this journey. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve you, to serve with you, and to serve our community as together we experience what only God is able to do in our lives as we are Here For Good.

With you in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael O'Neill", written in a cursive style.

Pastor Michael O'Neill





# OUR HISTORY

It is difficult to highlight such a long, rich history with so many important dates and so many meaningful events and ministries. Here are just a few:

1956



February 12, 1956, ten people led by Pastor Paul Hayden began the church on this corner as Wide Hollow Church of the Nazarene, changing their name to "West Valley Church" in May, 1958

1959

July 1959 broke ground for the "North End Addition," and one year later the "South End Addition" was started. After 21 months of donated labor the remodeled building was dedicated Sunday, April 2, 1961



1973

August, 1973 Congdon Orchards sold an additional 2.37 acres to West Valley Church for one dollar, bringing total acreage to 2.75 acres



October 7, 1978, under the leadership of Pastor Ron Kearns, the new (and present) sanctuary was dedicated



1978

January 7, 2003 - certificate of completion received, new (and present) facility dedicated in May, 2003

2003



January, 2010 Pastor Michael O'Neill became the tenth Lead Pastor of West Valley Church

2010

2011

In May of 2011 WVC restarted the Wapato Nazarene Church as a bilingual church under the name "Mission Agape." For the next 8 years WVC donated volunteers for ministry, construction, and maintenance, giving a total of over \$90,000



September 2, 2012 dedication of the renovated foyer space into "Chapters Café." The \$120,000 project was paid in full within one year.

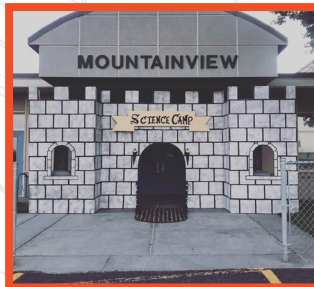
2012



August, 2014 - WVC entered into partnership with Victoria Village Church of the Nazarene in Guyana with our first team trip to help build their church and “community empowerment center.” We’ve involved 9 teams and 60 people, and 4 times leadership from their church visited us. We sent and spent over \$250,000 for this project over five years.



2014



2019

October 13, 2019, the building in Victoria Village was dedicated with Pastor Mike preaching the first sermon in that building.



Spring, 2019 WVC has the largest Upward Soccer program in the world for the 3rd time in the last 4 years with over 500 children

June, 2017 WVC received a \$25,000 grant from the NW District Church of the Nazarene to launch our partnership and future second campus with Mountainview Elementary School.

2017

## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

SINCE 2010

**295** new believers

**140** baptisms

**242** new members

Over **1300** backpacks filled with supplies given away

**\$250k** sent and spent building church community center in Victoria, Guyana

THIS YEAR

**690** people call our church home

**300** children involved in children’s ministries

**70** youth

**44** young adults

**29** small groups/classes involving over 430 people

**80%** of regular worship attenders volunteer in some significant way at WVC

Largest Upward soccer program in the world (over 500 players, over 200 volunteers, over 4,000 guests)

Trunk or Treat: **2,000** attended, **100+** volunteers

Breakfast with Santa: **500** attended, **100+** volunteers

2

0

2

0





# HERE FOR GOOD



Here For Good is a three-year giving initiative of West Valley Church. For ten years we have been planning for this day. After the last six years of intentionally prioritizing our missions partnership in Guyana, it is now time to eliminate the debt that West Valley Church has carried on our facility for nearly 20 years. It is time to move money from mortgage to ministry. It's time to save nearly a half million dollars in interest. It's time to liberate \$100,000 of annual mortgage payments for ministry. Now is also the time to renovate our nearly 50-year-old worship space, main restrooms, and other areas of our church, as we are able.

After a long season of prayer and careful planning, we believe we are being called to take the Kingdom of God to our community in new ways. To accomplish this, we must come together and maximize our resources in order to more effectively minister to those who call West Valley Church their home as well as those who have not yet joined us.

God has done amazing things through West Valley Church over the past 60+ years, and now He is presenting us with more opportunities to be Here For Good. We believe God has a vision for West Valley Church to have an even greater impact, a church that transforms the landscape of our community, of our surrounding communities, and of the world.

But it all begins with us. God is calling us to live lives of extravagant generosity. To be a part of Here For Good means that we are here for Christ - to follow him in all things, including giving, in order to advance His Kingdom. It means to be here for each other - to move money from mortgage to ministry so that we can more fully invest in our children, youth, and adult ministries as well as updating our facilities. Here For Good means we are here for our community; making our church a more welcoming and inviting place through updating old spaces and having more resources to reach out and meet needs. Here For Good means that we are here to be generous, just as God has been generous with us, through Christ. Here For Good means that we intend to be here for a long time to come and making a difference for Christ in our community and beyond.

Throughout the next three years, we hope to see 100% engagement as we step into new levels of faith and sacrificial giving to West Valley Church. We will eliminate our mortgage, saving the church a half million dollars in interest and at the same time moving \$100,000 each year from mortgage to ministry. We will begin long-overdue renovations of spaces in our facility that are nearing 50 years old, in order to be more effective in the use of our church.

Won't you join us and consider what it might look like for your life if you decided to step out in faith for the next three years, committing to give significantly more? What might it look like for the next generation because you were willing to give?



# HERE FOR GOOD IS A THREE-YEAR CAMPAIGN TO ENABLE WEST VALLEY CHURCH to more fully live out our mission: INTRODUCE PEOPLE TO JESUS CHRIST, EQUIP PEOPLE WITH A FAITH THAT WORKS, AND LIVE AS PEOPLE WITH PURPOSE

**We believe God** is calling us to be better stewards of our budget and our building by eliminating our mortgage debt and making long-delayed improvements to our worship center and facilities. To accomplish these mission-critical tasks will require us to make significant investments with our resources and our time.

We are setting out on a journey of faith together with the firm conviction that in order for our church to make its full impact for Christ in West Valley and beyond we need to grow in both our faith and our giving. Our church has been on this corner for over 60 years—we were launched by a faithful group of believers in 1956 who had a vision to bring the Kingdom of God to this community. Over the past 60+ years, this church and our people have indeed been Here For Good, sharing the good news of the Gospel with people in our church, in our community, and around the world.

*We face a significant challenge to expanding our Kingdom impact:*

Our \$1.1M mortgage debt is siphoning resources from ministry. Eliminating this debt would save over \$500,000 in interest and free up nearly \$100,000 every year to go directly to ministry. These funds will allow us to invest more strategically in our ministries to men, women, young adults, youth, children, outreach, and other critical ministry areas.

We must be better stewards of our aging facility. Our facilities are an incredible ministry tool, and yet we have allowed this tool to become dull. An ax that is not sharpened becomes ineffective over time, and our buildings have become less useful in serving the community of people God has brought to us.

**Our mission** to share the good news of the Gospel with our community will have a greater impact as we free up resources for ministry and invest in the facilities God has given us. For the last six years, we rightly prioritized missions over mortgage, but now it is time to move money from mortgage to ministry. Our vision is bigger than just what we see God doing right now. Our vision is to expand our ministry and our Kingdom impact in Yakima and beyond.

To achieve this important generation-changing step in the story of West Valley Church we are launching Here For Good, a Three-Year Giving Campaign to raise \$1.6M to eliminate the debt on our building and make much-needed updates to our aging facilities. We are asking God's people to take steps forward in their faith and their giving in order to reach our goal.

## A SUCCESSFUL \$1,600,000 CAMPAIGN WILL ACCOMPLISH THE FOLLOWING CRITICAL OBJECTIVES:

\$1,100,000 Debt Elimination (will free up \$100,000 per year for ministry)

\$ 500,000 Facility Improvements:

- Worship Center Enhancements (seating, stage, overflow space, sound, lighting)
- Foyer Restrooms Remodel (handicap accessibility, updated fixtures)
- Other areas, depending upon available funds (exterior entrance enhancements, nursery improvements, and more)



# SO HERE IS WHAT WE'RE ASKING OF YOU...

Our primary goal through Here For Good is that 100% of people at West Valley Church would engage in this campaign to experience a life-changing encounter with God.

## How Will You Respond?

We are asking you to go on a spiritual journey with God and your family—to take the biggest steps of generosity you’ve ever taken.

**1. PRAY FERVENTLY.** Pray that God would multiply our efforts to make disciples. Pray that He would do abundantly more than we ask or imagine for His great name.

*My Prayer for Here For Good is:*

**2. COMMIT FULLY.** Help us reach our goal of 100% engagement in Here For Good. Stand side by side with your church family. Commit to do what God asks. Put your “Yes!” on the table.

**3. GROW INTENTIONALLY.** Attend each Sunday from February 9, 2020 through March 8, 2020. Engage in the Here For Good study with your small group. Learn all you can about God’s heart and will for you and your resources.

*A Growth Area for me through Here For Good is:*

**4. GIVE GENEROUSLY.** Ask God to show you what it looks like to give in a way that changes you. Take whatever steps are required to see it through.


You may think your gift doesn’t matter when compared to our total goal for Here For Good. You’re wrong! Every gift matters to God. It’s not about the amount, but what that amount means to you.

## USE THIS TABLE TO SEE HOW YOUR MONTHLY GIFT ADDS UP OVER THREE YEARS

3-YEAR GIFT OF	ANNUAL GIFT OF	MONTHLY GIFT OF	WEEKLY GIFT OF
\$300,000	\$100,000	\$8,333	\$1,923
\$150,000	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$962
\$75,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$481
\$40,000	\$13,333	\$1,111	\$256
\$20,000	\$6,667	\$556	\$128
\$10,000	\$3,333	\$278	\$64
\$5,000	\$1,667	\$139	\$32
\$2,500	\$833	\$69	\$16
\$1,250	\$417	\$35	\$8
\$540	\$180	\$5	\$1.25







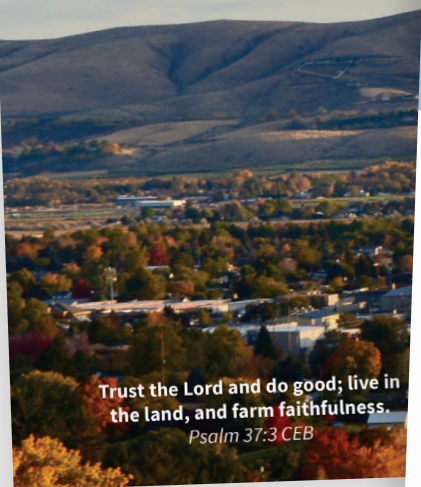
# HERE FOR GOOD

## THREE STEPS TO PREPARE:

**Step 1: Pray**  
This is the first and most important step in preparing your heart to respond to God's call to action. Ask God how He would have you engage in this campaign.

**Step 2: Prepare**  
Allow God to expand your vision. He often enables us to do more than we think possible. Pray that God would show you ways to give sacrificially.

**Step 3: Praise**  
Leave room for faith in setting your goal. Praise God for what He is going to do through the generosity of His people.



Trust the Lord and do good; live in the land, and farm faithfulness.  
*Psalms 37:3 CEB*

## COMMITMENT SUNDAY MARCH 8, 2020

Prayerfully consider what God is calling you to do to help us realize the vision. Our hope is that everyone will come together and fully engage in our mission to be Here for Good.

### THREE-YEAR GOAL: \$1.6M

GIFTS NEEDED	3-YEAR GIFT OF	ANNUAL GIFT OF	MONTHLY GIFT OF	WEEKLY GIFT OF
1	\$300,000	\$100,000	\$8,333	\$1,923
2	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$962
3	\$75,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$481
5	\$40,000	\$13,333	\$1,111	\$256
8	\$20,000	\$6,667	\$556	\$128
13	\$10,000	\$3,333	\$278	\$64
21	\$5,000	\$1,667	\$139	\$32
35	\$2,500	\$833	\$69	\$16
58	\$1,250	\$417	\$35	\$8
Many	< \$1250	< \$417	< \$35	< \$8

TOTAL GIFT GOAL: \$1,600,000

### THREE WAYS TO GIVE

- One-time cash gift
- 36-month goal for giving
- stored resources (stocks, bonds, savings, etc.)

\*description of stored resources gift: \_\_\_\_\_

### MY/OUR THREE YEAR HERE FOR GOOD COMMITMENT

I/We plan to give accordingly:

weekly for 156 weeks	\$ _____
monthly for 36 months	\$ _____
annually for 3 years	\$ _____
a one-time gift	\$ _____


TOTAL 36-MONTH  
COMMITMENT AMOUNT  
MARCH 2020-MARCH 2023

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



west valley church 7109 W. Nob Hill Blvd. | Yakima, WA 98908



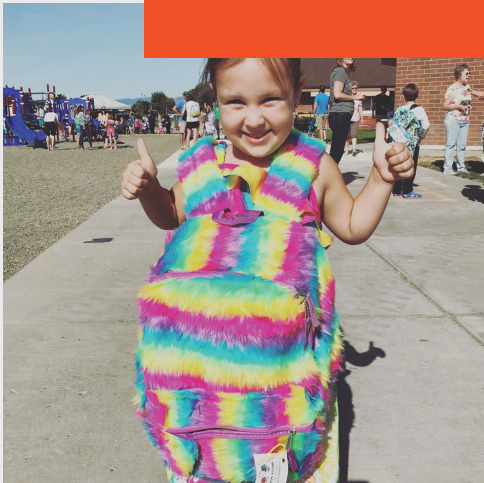
# Are You Ready to Take a STEP?

**SACRIFICE.** Would you prayerfully consider what God might be calling you to give up during the next three years to allow you to give more to His Kingdom through the work of West Valley Church?

**TRUST GOD.** Will you join us by trusting God in a way we have never done before? We need every person at West Valley Church to unite in faith that God can accomplish this.

**EVERYONE.** We can't do this alone. We can't do this with half of our body. We need everyone in our church to join together in unity as we stand up, take a step and live a life that is Here For Good.

**PRAY.** This is a spiritual journey more than it is a financial one. Please pray for God's wisdom, courage and direction every step of the way.





# CREATIVE WAYS TO GROW IN YOUR GENEROSITY

Generosity Campaigns rely on church members making gifts to *expand and accelerate* their current level of giving. The best path to increased giving is the spiritual path, where we set our hearts on things above. Financial priorities then take shape from the spiritual priorities.

One way of defining this is “Lifestyle Stewardship,” a term used to describe a level of giving that affects our living. The challenge of Lifestyle Stewardship is to find ways, boldly and prayerfully, to let our giving touch our living.

King David declared, *“I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”* (2 Samuel 24:24 NIV) David understood the gift that would touch the heart of God must first touch the heart of the giver. This is the spirit of Lifestyle Stewardship: If it is for my God, my gift must have value and meaning to me.

Often, Lifestyle Giving means giving up something in one area so that we can give more of ourselves in another. Three keys to effective Lifestyle Stewardship are:

- Reassess lifestyle
- Rearrange priorities
- Reallocate resources

Many believers have been amazed at their ability to give more generously to their church than they ever imagined. The following steps are offered to help you in this regard.

## 1. Practice priority budgeting

Many families will choose to rearrange their priorities and give up something in their current budget in order to give more to a generosity campaign. Priority budgeting may mean postponing a planned expenditure such as a new car, vacation, home remodel, or other major purchase. Many Christians giving to stewardship campaigns find a way to give through sacrificial commitments made in faith and coupled with priority budgeting.

## 2. Redirect present expenditures

Often, families have significant short-term expenditures for special needs. One example is the large expenditure a family incurs for a child to attend college. A family realized that their daughters would be graduating from college during the three years of the generosity campaign and, as a result, they were able to increase their commitment to the second year of the campaign by thousands of dollars by giving what they had been spending on their daughters’ tuition. Another example would be the cash flow that is freed up when a car or home loan is paid off.

## 3. Increased giving with Increased income

Some people receive periodic increases in salary or bonuses from their employers. The temptation for many of us is to increase our lifestyle to fit the higher income. In many instances, people have decided that they will commit the full amount of salary increases to a giving initiative.

## 4. Give creatively from stored resources

A young man decided that two collectors’ baseball cards worth over \$20,000 he had been holding for a number of years would be the most appropriate means of touching sacrifice for his family. Some families save money over a period of years for a special project. A couple had saved \$80,000 to build a lake cabin. When their church entered a generosity initiative, they decided the needs of the church were greater than their need for a second home.

## 5. Commit unexpected cash

Often, people pray for God to show them a way they can give beyond what they can presently see or afford. Sometimes, the answers come unexpectedly. A couple had been praying for weeks about their commitment to the church generosity campaign. Much to their surprise, they received an inheritance of several thousand dollars. They gave the entire amount to their church as part of their multi-year commitment, in addition to a gift from their regular income.

## 6. Sacrifice extra time

Some family members have extra time they would be willing to use in a part-time job to be able to give more to the church. This is particularly true for families whose children are grown and away from home and for semi-retired or retired couples. A man was in the process of retiring when his church entered a campaign. He and his wife secured new jobs and gave the first two years of their retirement income to the generosity campaign.

7. Donate appreciated assets

Many people own stocks that are worth significantly more than the original purchase price. That is good news. The bad news is that if these stocks are sold, a significant portion of the gain will be lost to taxation.

Gifts of appreciated assets (often investment securities or real estate) can be very advantageous to both the giver and the church. By transferring ownership of the asset to the church, the donor avoids capital gains taxes on the sale of the asset. In addition, the donor receives an income tax charitable deduction for the full market value of the asset. That, in effect, makes these gifts less costly to make. For example:

	Sell asset and gift net proceeds	Give asset directly
Value of Asset	\$12,000	\$12,000
Original Purchase Price	\$3,000	\$3,000
Amount of Appreciation	\$9,000	\$9,000
Capital Gains Tax*	\$2,340	\$0
Proceeds to Church (asset value minus taxes)	\$9,660	\$12,000

\*Assumes 12-month holding period, 15% capital gains tax, 6% state income tax rate.

Though it is important to invest your giving to further the mission of the ministry God has laid on your heart, it is also important to consider the tax implications of making a gift to the church. Before making a commitment of this type, please consult your CPA, tax attorney or other financial advisor.

A Final Word

Giving does not have to be in equal increments over the three-year period of the campaign. Many people are able to give more in the second or third year than in the first. When thinking about a financial commitment to the campaign, think not just of your potential to give right now, but also of your potential to give in the future. It might be that you can make a three-year commitment in which 35-40 percent is given in the first year, and 60-65% is given in the second or third year.

**FINALLY**, as you consider your financial commitment to the Lord’s work, you may wish to consider estate planning. Many faithful, committed Christian givers have not made provision for God in their wills and estate plans. Now might be a good time to do that. It might be as simple as including a provision in your will that 10 percent of the value of your estate will be donated to the church holding your letter of membership at the time of your passing. Or it could involve a planned gift such as a charitable remainder trust. While such gifts do not provide immediate financial benefit to this generosity campaign, they are marvelous gifts of faith commitment to carry on the work of the church for future generations.





# F

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# S

## What is Here For Good?

Here For Good is the name of our effort to eliminate our debt in order to move money from mortgage to ministry, and to update the most out-of-date spaces in our facility.

## How much is this going to cost?

The mortgage balance is currently \$1.1 million, and we have set a goal of an additional \$500,000 for renovations. This amount will not meet all of our renovation needs but will help us address the most urgent spaces.

## Why now?

Is this really the best time to take on a challenge of this size? For the last six years we have purposefully prioritized mission partnerships over mortgage. Now that we have dedicated the building in Guyana, this is the right time to take on this much-needed effort. If we do not resolve this now, it may take another generation before we can address it again.

## What is the timeline for Here For Good? What are the key dates?

This is a three-year focused effort based upon the participation of our entire church.

## How can I give to Here For Good?

You can give through all of our normal giving channels (in person, on-line, through the church app, or through a direct bank account transfer). If you have non-cash-assets to give, we are happy to talk with you about how transfer property, stocks, etc.

## Will my commitment be confidential?

This will be no different than your normal giving; only those who record your giving in order to give you an accurate donation report will know what you commit and give.

## How long will I have to fulfill my commitment?

Three years ( March 2020 - March 2023). The sooner we reach our goal to eliminate the debt, the sooner we can begin renovations. We will officially begin our giving on March 29, 2020 when we receive our “First Fruits” Offering.

## When do we start giving toward our commitments?

Any time you are ready to begin giving!

## Why are we doing this now?

Our Leadership Team (the Church Board) and pastors have prayerfully and carefully discerned that now is the right moment. We have spent the last decade preparing for this. We are at a pivot point in terms of our ability to expand our ministries and reach our community. We have the momentum, the leadership, and the capacity to do this. If we don’t act now, it may be another 10 years before we have the opportunity to do this.

## What are the priorities (how will the money be allocated when it comes in)?

We will first pay off our debt, and then we will begin the renovations.

## Why can’t we just keep making the monthly mortgage payment?

It’s not that we can’t afford to make the payment. It’s that we can free up \$100,000 per year (and \$500,000 in total interest over the life of the loan) by paying off our debt. Let’s move our money from mortgage to ministry!

## Does this mean we won’t be supporting Guyana anymore?

We will continue to support Guyana as one of our key mission projects. All proceeds from the café will continue to go to Guyana for the next three years. However, rather than putting money into their building, we will shift to helping them develop the ministries that will happen in and outside of their building.

You can learn more at web address [www.westvalleychurch.com/hereforgood](http://www.westvalleychurch.com/hereforgood)

# HERE FOR CHRIST

(Living our lives IN Christ IN West Valley)

FEBRUARY 9TH

*Psalm 37:3, Luke 9:57-62*

1. Willing to \_\_\_\_\_ for Jesus
2. Available to \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus
3. Determined to be \_\_\_\_\_ for Jesus

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

### WEEK ONE: HERE FOR CHRIST

1. In what ways will Here For Good help our church to be more fully “Here for Christ”?
2. Talk about someone in your life that you “followed” (it could be a parent, a coach, teacher, athlete, etc.). Why did you choose to “follow” that person? What did it require of you? How was your life different (better or worse) for following this person?
3. Read Luke 9:57-62. In this passage we have a series of people that Jesus invites to follow him, but they give excuses instead. What are some of the excuses that we might give?
4. Talk about Jesus’ response to each of the excuses; what was he trying to tell each one?
5. When you think of your Christian life, what are some of the sacrifices you have made in order to follow Jesus? What are some areas of your life that you sense Jesus might be asking for a deeper sacrifice? How will Here For Good help you step into that deeper sacrifice?
6. If Jesus were to say to you right now, “Follow me,” what area of your life would he specifically be talking to you about? What would it mean for you to be a servant to Jesus? In what ways can you make yourself available to him, so that when he does ask, you don’t make excuses?
7. What are some of the distractions that make it hard for you to follow Jesus alone, and not other things? What are some things that, with your hand on the plow, you still look back toward? Share those with each other.
8. Spend time praying together about making deeper sacrifices in order to follow Jesus wholeheartedly, confessing our excuses and areas that we “look back” to, and committing to always be ready when Jesus says, “Follow me.”



# WEEK 1 DEVOTIONS

## DAY ONE: Read Galatians 2:20

Paul is using striking images to explain the life of a Christian. Obviously, you and I were not present when Jesus was crucified, let alone on the cross with him. What then does this mean for us? Paul, who has said “if anyone is in Christ, he (or she) is a new creation” (2 Corinthians 5:17), is saying that, just as real and literally as Jesus was killed on the cross and was buried and rose from the grave, so is our “old life” before we met Christ. When we become Christians, the old life of living sinfully for ourselves, our desires, our lusts, and our greed, is dead and buried. The new life we now live is 100% for Christ; we allow him to live his life fully through us. That means we make the choices he would make; we love the people he loves; and we live our lives in selfless and generous ways - just like Jesus.

There is an old story about a new Christian in India who, after his conversion, attended church for the very first time. When the time came for receiving the offering, he realized that he didn’t have much to offer. Still, he recognized how freely God gave everything to him in the life of Jesus, and he knew he needed to be as generous in return. He took the collection plate from the usher, set it on the floor, and stepped into the plate with both feet. He said, “I give myself to Christ and his service!” If we are here for Christ, our entire life goes into the offering plate!

*Picture putting yourself in the offering. What things must go in with you, including things that you might want to leave out? Pray about*

*surrendering those things, along with your life, to Christ. Pray about what you can give to him that demonstrates that you are “all in.”*

## DAY TWO: Read Jeremiah 10:23-24

Jeremiah has been warning the people of Israel to turn back to God; they had been living for themselves and not living for the Lord. This had gone on so long, that the undesirable consequences were about to come upon them; they were going to be taken away into exile. Jeremiah interrupted his own prophetic message to write a poem of his personal thoughts and prayers, both for himself and his people.

Jeremiah realizes that if it is left to us to be “in charge” of our own lives, we will inevitably mess things up and choose sin. So he asks God to correct him (and them) out of His love and mercy, not out of the anger they deserve (or else they wouldn’t survive). Thankfully, in Christ we know we have God’s love and mercy!

“It is not for them to direct their steps...” this reminds us of Proverbs 16:9 (please read it).

*If you want your life to be “Here for Christ,” in what ways are you trying to direct your steps, that you need to submit to Him? What places do you need to stop going, or start going, for Him? What parts of your life do you need to allow Jesus to direct? Ask him to forgive and correct you out of his mercy and love (not as you deserve). Ask him to tell you what his plans are for your participation in Here For Good, and surrender your own.*

## DAY THREE: Read Matthew 6:33

Have you heard the story about how poachers used to trap chimpanzees in the wild? They would empty out a coconut and affix it to a chain that was staked into the ground near where they dwelt. Next, they would cut an opening in the other end just large enough for the primate’s hand to fit inside. Then, they would put a piece of fruit or a shiny piece of costume jewelry inside the coconut. When the chimp came upon the coconut it would reach inside to grab the item, but with the fruit or shiny thing in a fisted hand, it could no longer remove its hand. Rather than let go of the item, it would remain with its hand stuck in the coconut until poachers came back and netted the animal.

Jesus seems to know our propensity to grab for things and not let go and seems to be telling us that we are hanging tightly onto things that will only ensnare us. If we want freedom, we are going to need to let go and start reaching for Christ.

*Ask Him to show you what you need to let go of, in order to seek God’s Kingdom and righteousness first. As you pray about what you will commit to give for Here For Good, do you find it hard to consider letting go of it? If not, perhaps it is not a large enough gift. If so, let Him know you trust Him to take care of you and to “add to you” what you need.*

## DAY FOUR: Read James 4:7

What are you afraid of? That might sound like an accusatory question, but it’s intended to cause self-reflection. There are many things

that cause us to be fearful, and not in the scary-movie kind of way. We can be afraid of disease, or accidents, or bad news. We can be afraid that we won’t have enough of what we want or need.

If you think about it, fear is the opposite of faith. If we have faith in God, we trust that he will provide for us and take care of us. Fear is the devil’s domain; anytime we are afraid we are no longer trusting God. It’s no wonder James tells us that when we submit to God, the devil can’t stand to be around. Submission is the ultimate form of trust. It is our way of saying that we are going to let go of control, and trust God to direct our lives and provide for us what we need, when we need it.

Being Here for Christ means that we can obey Him in all things - even in generosity - because we don’t have to be afraid; we know we can trust Him.

*Spend some time thinking about what things make you fearful, and with each one, confess it to God and choose instead to submit to Christ.*

## DAY FIVE: Read Romans 12:1-2

There is a new form of carpal tunnel that doctors are seeing, and it’s called “selfie wrist.” Apparently, we are taking so many pictures of ourselves with our phones that we are hyper-flexing our wrists inward, putting strain on those tendons. Orthopedic surgeons and physical therapists are prescribing exercises to treat the malady in order to avoid surgery.

Spiritually speaking, we can be guilty of “selfie-sin.” We become so focused on ourselves that we cause pain in our lives (not to mention those around us). In the passage we are given the treatment for this malady: surrender our lives to God and start living for Christ. In doing so, we will start making choices that are worshipful - they will give glory to God - and we will be living our lives exactly as God intended for us.

*Ask God to reveal to you any areas of your life that are turned inward and confess them to Him. They may not yet be causing you or others pain, but they most assuredly will. Turn Romans 12:1-2 into a personalized prayer.*

**DAY SIX:** *Read Luke 9:23-24*

This is a difficult passage, since most of us (none of us?) will face physical crucifixion. This might help: someone once said that whenever what I want comes into conflict with what God wants, it is a “crossing of the wills.” It is in that thing that we must take up the “cross” and start following Christ. It may not even be a sin; it could be something benign or even good. But being here for Christ means that we surrender everything to Christ and follow him. For example, money in itself is not a bad thing - it does a great deal of good. But if we want to hang on to money when Jesus asks us to give it away, then we need to pick up that cross and start following (obeying) Jesus.

*Talk to God about areas of your life that may be crossing with what God wants you to do. Consider your involvement in Here For Good; if thinking about it causes you discomfort, start*

*praying about how you need to surrender that to Christ, and ask what He might want you to do.*

**DAY SEVEN:** *Read John 15:1-7*

In January, 2008, a story made the rounds about a 15-year-old girl in Australia named Demi-Lee Brennan. Brennan became the world’s first known transplant patient to change blood types from O negative to O positive, taking on the immune system of her organ donor. It’s always been assumed that a change like that can’t happen. Now they say she’s a “one-in-six-billion miracle.”

The blood stem cells in Brennan’s new liver invaded her body’s bone marrow, taking over her entire immune system. She now has an entirely different kind of blood—blood that welcomes life, rather than carrying death. “It’s like my second chance at life,” Brennan says.

When we give our lives to Jesus and determine to live here for Christ, something similar happens to us. In a way, Jesus “transplants” his heart into our life, and we get a new “blood type.” We cannot live our lives without the abiding connection to our new source of life.

*Take some time to pray through today’s passage, pausing with each verse. Ask God to make it true in your life, or confess areas of your life that do not align with Christ.*

# HERE FOR EACH OTHER

(Serving the Body; Mortgage-free, More ministry money)

## FEBRUARY 16TH

*1 Cor. 1:1-3*

1. The Church is a \_\_\_\_\_ community.

2. The Church is a \_\_\_\_\_ community.

3. The Church is a \_\_\_\_\_ community.

4. The Church is a \_\_\_\_\_ community.



## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

### WEEK TWO: HERE FOR EACH OTHER

1. What are some ways that our church is good at being here for each other (the members and regular attenders of WVC)? In what ways will Here For Good help our church to be even better at being “Here for Each Other”?
2. Name some things that are unique about a church community, different than any other kind of community.
3. Read 1 Corinthians 1:1-3. What role does God play in our church community? How do you see him directly and indirectly at work in our church?
4. What is the difference between the “universal” Church and the local church? Would the West Valley community notice if our church no longer existed? What differences are we making in our local neighborhood?
5. What does Paul mean when he describes the church as “those who have been made holy to God in Christ Jesus”?
6. How vital is unity to our church? How are we doing with this?
7. Of all the things that Pastor talked about regarding what the church is, which one do you feel you need to work on the most? What you can do specifically to help our church in this way?
8. Spend time praying for each other about this.

## WEEK 2 DEVOTIONS

### DAY ONE: Read 1 Peter 4:9-10

One of the significant reasons that we need to pay off our debt and renovate spaces in the church is so that we can better care for and minister to our church family. Freeing up all that money from mortgage in order to better fund ministry to our children, youth and adults will only serve to strengthen our own people and help us all grow in Christ. Having better spaces to gather and worship in will increase our effectiveness in providing hospitality to one another. By sharing together out of the resources God has given each of us, we are literally extending grace to each other, as well as to those who are to come after us. Participating in Here For Good is a powerful and direct way to be here for each other.

*This week we will consider how important it is to be “here for each other,” which is a significant motive of Here For Good. Consider what your involvement will be and ask God to show you how your participation will help you be obedient to today’s passage.*

### DAY TWO: Read Hebrews 10:23-25

Leonardo DaVinci is quoted as saying, “An arch consists of two weaknesses, which leaning against one another make a strength.” One wonders if DaVinci had today’s Scripture passage in mind; we really do need each other.

The writer tells us to “hold fast to the hope we profess...” Holding fast to the hope we profess means maintaining a consistent confidence in the salvation Jesus brings through His faithful life, death, and resurrection. Isn’t it interesting

that if we are going to hold fast to our faith, it will be evident in the ways that we encourage each other and help each other become even better at love and good deeds? Perhaps the converse tells us something: if we are not effectively helping each other get better in our faith, could it mean that we are not “holding fast” to our own profession of faith?

*Talk to God about how strongly you are holding to your profession of faith, particularly when it comes to the ways you help others in our church. Ask him to show you how you could demonstrate your faith better by helping others at WVC. How might your participation in Here For Good show this?*

### DAY THREE: Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11

African gazelles instinctively form “alert circles” while resting on the savannah. They gather in groups with each animal facing outward in a slightly different direction. This enables them to scan the horizon a full 360 degrees and to communicate about approaching dangers or opportunities. Instead of looking out only for themselves, the members of the group take care of one another. This is also God’s wisdom for followers of Jesus; we are to “encourage one another and build each other up.”

As Christians, we were never intended to go it alone. Together we are stronger. The goal of our care for each other is so much more than survival. It’s to make us like Jesus: loving and effective servants of God in this world—people who together look forward confidently to the hope of His coming kingdom. All of us need

encouragement, and God will help us help each other as together we draw near to Him in love.

*Consider the ways that others in our church have been there for you. Thank God for them, and for our church that looks out for each other. Pray that all of us will be here for each other, especially through Here For Good so that together we can accomplish what needs to be done.*

**DAY FOUR:** *Read Hebrews 13:15-16*

A young boy, on an errand for his mother, had just bought a dozen eggs. Walking out of the store, he tripped and dropped the sack. All the eggs broke, and the sidewalk was a mess. The boy tried not to cry. A few people gathered to see if he was OK and to tell him how sorry they were. In the midst of the words of pity, one man handed the boy a dollar. Then he turned to the group and said, “I care one dollar’s worth. How much do the rest of you care?” Today’s passage, along with James 2:16 (read that too) points out that words don’t mean much if we have the ability to do more.

This seems to be a consistent theme throughout the Bible: our love for Christ (demonstrated by our worship, vs. 25) is evident in how well we are here for each other (stated in vs. 26).

*Today, pray about your answer to the man’s question, “How much do the rest of you care?” Think about ways you can give to those in our church to show you care - including through Here For Good.*

**DAY FIVE:** *Read Philippians 2:2-4*

The theme throughout Paul’s letter to the church in Philippi is that we are to follow Christ’s example. That example is best seen in how we are here for each other. If believers can’t live in unity, then the power of the gospel comes into question. If we aren’t here for each other, the gospel message will lose credibility among unbelievers. Paul writes the letter in a way that builds up to one of the most beautiful passages in Scripture, which immediately follows this passage: Philippians 2:5-11 (I encourage you to read it, too). Theologians call this description of Jesus as “The Great Kenosis,” or “The Great Emptying.”

The passage is realistic, though: It’s not that we shouldn’t look out for our own needs - we need to be responsible for ourselves and especially those in our family of care. But we are never to do so at the cost of looking out for each other.

*Pray, using Philippians 2:2-11 as your guide. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how you might be out of balance in caring for yourself and caring for others in your church and thank and praise God for all that Jesus has done for you.*

**DAY SIX:** *Read Romans 12:10-13*

What is love, from a kid’s point of view? Here are some things kids have said:

“When my grandmother got arthritis, she couldn’t bend over and paint her toenails anymore. So my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That’s love.”

“When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You know that your name is safe in their mouth.”

“Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day.”

“You really shouldn’t say ‘I love you’ unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it and show it a lot. People forget.”

This passage tells us that the kind of love we have received from God is a familial love; that we demonstrate it by the way we put each other ahead of ourselves, endure difficult things together, and share with each other out of what God has given each of us. Hospitality is a significant concept in the Bible. Others will know that God is love by the way we care for and welcome each other and strangers.

*Pray about ways that you can “say and show love to others a lot,” so that people in your church won’t forget!*

**DAY SEVEN:** *Read Acts 2:44-45*

The Bible is all about community: from the Garden of Eden to the City at the end. The description of the first Christian church in Acts 2 has set the bar for every church since then, and for every church right up to the church that gathers together in heaven. If you are interested, you can read the entire description (vs 42-47). There is a list of practices that you will recognize; our church practices these, from our worship services to our small groups and everything in between. Our emphasis today is

on verses 44 and 45; the way that the believers shared what they had together. This way, those who had need could receive. By the way, that’s why the story is Acts 5:1-11 is so serious - it’s a story about believers who were not being there for each other but were lying about it as if they were.

This passage is what Here For Good is all about - being here for each other, sharing together in significant giving for the sake of each other. What you do in giving for each other matters - it is one of the ways that we continue to be like the very first Christian Church.

*In what ways has God been speaking to you this week? How has he been telling you that you can do more to be here for each other - for the people in your church family?*

# HERE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

(Outreach)

FEBRUARY 23RD

*Proverbs 11:11; Luke 19:1-10; Mark 10:45*

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

### WEEK THREE: HERE FOR OUR COMMUNITY

- 1. What are some ways that our church is good at being here for our community (the people of West Valley who do not attend church)? In what ways will Here For Good help our church to be even better at being “Here for Our Community”?
- 2. Read Proverbs 11:11. What does this verse say that the result of the “righteous” is on a community? (Hint: for our purposes, it refers to us at West Valley Church). Name as many ways as you can that you see our church doing this?
- 3. Read Luke 19:1-10. If you were to use this story as an example of our church and community, whose example should we follow? What people would Zacchaeus represent? What people would the grumblers represent? What would it look like in practical ways for our church to act like Jesus did in this story?
- 4. Read Mark 10:45. What does it mean for our church to seek people? How are we doing this now? How might we do this better?
- 5. What does it mean for our church to see people saved? How will Here For Good help us do that better?
- 6. In what ways do you see our church serving our neighbors? How will Here For Good help us do this better?
- 7. Share some of the ways that you sacrifice through volunteering to help our church be here for our community.
- 8. As we’ve been talking about giving sacrificially, share how your thought process and prayers are progressing regarding what you intend to commit (don’t share amounts - just share how you are doing in the process).
- 9. Spend time praying for our church and for Here For Good to be successful in WVC being here for our community.



## WEEK 3 DEVOTIONS

### DAY ONE: Read Matthew 9:36-38

This week we are thinking about how God has placed West Valley Church Here for our Community. We have a long history of showing hospitality, loving, and serving our neighbors in order to introduce them to Jesus Christ. Today's passage helps us set the tone for this week's readings.

Out of Jesus' deep love and concern for people, he implores us (implore is a strong word to describe what Jesus is asking of his disciples, and us) to pray that God would send out "workers into the harvest." This is a metaphor that we can easily understand in our community. There is nothing worse than ripe fruit left to rot on the limb. It is a waste of good food, not to mention time and money; all that goodness is there for the picking without much effort.

God has already been at work in the lives of people in our community. His Spirit and our long-term influence for good will bring them to a place of good in their lives, where they will be ready to respond to God's Good News of love for them. Doesn't it make sense for us to do all we can to reach them? Why would we want to send our giving to the bank to pay a mortgage when we could be investing in our unchurched neighbors for whom Jesus is moved with compassion? When they visit us, why would we want to make a challenging first impression with spaces that are nearly 50 years old and ineffective in serving their needs?

*Pray as Jesus implores you to, that God would do all He can to reach our neighbors; but*

*understand that you are a large part of the answer to that prayer, the least of which is by your giving. Determine to be obedient to God's direction for you.*

### DAY TWO: Read John 3:16-17

This is perhaps the most recognizable passage of Scripture in all the Bible - perhaps all the world. Because we can be so familiar with it, it becomes easy for us to see it without being struck by its profundity. All of the Gospel message is found in this concise summary, tying the events of Jesus' death to God's love for the world He created and everyone in it - not just his chosen people, Israel.

The term "One and Only Son" is a combination of two words in the original language: "mono," and "gene" - literally, God's "one gene," or the exact genetic code of God. God gave his very own Son for us. Once and for all, God demonstrated that his entire motivation and desire to save us comes from his love. He calls us to be carriers and representations of that "one gene" - God's love through his Son Jesus Christ, in us. Ours is not a call to try to be like Jesus; ours is a call to love sacrificially, with all of our lives, for the sake of others who don't know Jesus.

*Ask God to empower you in greater ways to "love the world," to give God's "one gene" of love in Christ in every way to everyone.*

### DAY THREE: Read 1 Peter 3:15, 2 Peter 3:9

In these two letters the Apostle Peter is writing instructions to a general audience of Christians

across a wide area. In the first section, we are told how to go about sharing our faith - not aggressively or rudely, but with gentleness and respect - after we've been asked to give a reason for our hope. The implication is that we are asked because it has been seen in our lives by others who are not Christians. The introduction of others to Jesus comes via both what we do and what we say.

Keep in mind that the second verse from Peter's second letter was also written to believers. More than a statement about God's desire to see people be saved by Him, it is also a statement of God's patience; but not just patience with unbelievers. It speaks of his patience with us, waiting for us to tell others about Jesus so that they won't perish without Him.

*Pray that you will do all you can to introduce others to Jesus, both by what you do and what you say. Thank God with his patience for you, but let him know you don't want to try his patience!*

### DAY FOUR: Read Proverbs 11:30

Consider fully the breadth of meaning in the words of this brief Proverb. God desires that you and I are righteous. The fruit, or the results of our lives is a "tree of life" - a source of life for others. And then, in case we aren't clear about what God is talking about here, we are told that if we are wise (i.e. able to discern the meaning of the Proverb and live by it), we will see others be saved. This is the expected "fruit" or results of every Christian's life - that others would meet Jesus and trust him with their lives.

Haddon Robinson, a well-known preacher said, "A kind of arithmetic has been spawned in the counting rooms of hell. This kind of arithmetic is always interested in reaching the masses but somehow never gets down to a man or a woman. This kind of arithmetic always talks about winning the world for God but doesn't think much about winning a neighborhood for God. That arithmetic makes it valiant to cross oceans and never really crosses streets." Let's get back to the "simple math" that is willing to love those in our neighborhood by every means possible so that they might know Jesus.

*Ask God for two things: 1) to make you more and more righteous, and at the same time, 2) to produce the fruit of saved lives through your life.*

### DAY FIVE: Read 1 Peter 2:9

Have you seen the images that represent the hashtag, #onejob? The term means, "You only had one job; it shouldn't be that hard!" For example, the picture of a school crossing with the word painted on the asphalt, "SHCOOL" followed by #onejob.

Think about the job of a priest from this passage: to assist others into a right relationship with God. The priest would instruct and teach, would be a representation of God, and would mediate the sacrifices on behalf of the people. This verse clearly states that the life of the Christian is like a priest. How are you doing at this? Unlike the priests who did so by following prescribed rituals, you are to do so with your life - by the way you live and the



words you share. You have “one job” - to assist others into a right relationship with God.

*Spend time in prayer talking to God about your #onejob. Commit to utilizing through all the means you have to introduce people to Jesus.*

**DAY SIX:** *Read Psalm 105:1-2*

Author Mark Batterson writes about how research in the field of bioacoustics has revealed that every day we are surrounded by millions of ultrasonic songs. Did you know, for instance, that the electron shell of the carbon atom produces the same harmonic scale as the Gregorian chant? Or that whale songs can travel thousands of miles underwater? Or that meadowlarks have a range of three hundred notes? Supersensitive sound instruments have discovered that even earthworms make faint staccato sounds! Arnold Summerfield, the German physicist and pianist, observed that a single hydrogen atom, which emits one hundred frequencies, is more musical than a grand piano, which only emits eighty-eight frequencies.

Science writer Lewis Thomas summed it up in this way: “If we had better hearing, and could discern the [singing] of sea birds, the rhythmic [drumming] of schools of mollusks, or even the distant harmonics of [flies] hanging over meadows in the sun, the combined sound might lift us off our feet.” This sounds like Jesus knew what he was talking about when the people praising him were told to be quiet. Jesus said, “If they keep quiet, the very rocks will cry out.” (Luke 19:40).

*Is your life declaring his praise? Are you making him known among the nations - or the neighbors? Pray that those who know you and those you meet will hear your life singing out the greatness of your God!*

**DAY SEVEN:** *Read Matthew 5:13-16*

Robert Bellah, a sociologist who teaches at the University of California at Berkeley, is very interested in the influence of religion on the community. In an interview in Psychology Today he said, “We should not underestimate the significance of the small group of people who have a new vision of a just and gentle world. The quality of a culture may be changed when 2 percent of its people have a new vision.”

John Stott writes, “There are many more than 2 percent of Christians in your country and mine. Then why aren’t we having more effect? Why aren’t we having more influence? I pray that God will call you to permeate non-Christian society for Christ, to take your stand there uncompromisingly with the value system and moral standards of Jesus.”

*Make John Wesley’s charge your prayer for yourself: “Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.”*

# HERE FOR GENEROSITY

(Stepping out in Faith)

**MARCH 1ST**

*Proverbs 11:11*

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_ to be a \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_ to do \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_ to make an \_\_\_\_\_

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

### WEEK FOUR: HERE FOR GENEROSITY

1. What are some ways that our church is good at being here for generosity (the ways that we give for the purposes of God through our church)? In what ways will Here For Good help our church to be even better at being “Here for Generosity”?
2. As you think about those who have made a difference in your life, how have you seen them passing along to you what they had?
3. What are some ways that God has worked in your life that you’ve been able to pass along to others (this could be teaching, life lessons, the use of time or a skill, resources, etc.)?
4. What are some ways that West Valley Church has been able to pass along benefits to each other and our community? Could any of these been done by an individual, or did it take many people working together to do so? In what ways?
5. Read Proverbs 11:11.
6. Talk through each of the three ways that Pastor said that our church is here to be a blessing to our community through our generosity. Share all the ways you see our church doing each one.
7. What is the difference between a bucket and a pipe? When it comes to your giving, which do you feel represents your life (be honest!)? How big is your bucket? How big is your pipe? What are some ways you can make the bucket smaller and the pipe bigger?
8. Pray for each other that we would be more generous in greater ways.

## WEEK 4 DEVOTIONS

### DAY ONE: Read Proverbs 11:24-25

By now we should realize that if we are “here for Christ,” we will be “here for each other” and “here for our community.” It should go without saying that to be those things, we will be like Christ - we will be “here for generosity” - we will have generous hearts and live generous lives.

The book of Proverbs is not a list of promises; it is principles. The reading today is not a promise that we will get rich if we give generously; it demonstrates a life principle that God has established in His Kingdom: the more you grasp and hoard, the more you need. Those who give freely and generously find that they’re happier, healthier, and experience more blessings.

Christian writer A. W. Tozer says, “I do not think I exaggerate when I say that some of us put our offering in the plate with a kind of triumphant bounce as much as to say, ‘There-now God will feel better!’ I am obliged to tell you that God does not need anything you have. He does not need a dime of your money. It is your own spiritual welfare at stake in such matters as these. You have the right to keep what you have all to yourself—but it will rust and decay, and ultimately ruin you.” The solution is to be as generous as possible, trusting the principle that God will provide for you and use you to bless others.

*As you prayerfully prepare to make a commitment to Here For Good, keep today’s reading in mind. How might it impact your giving?*

### DAY TWO: Read Luke 6:37-38

Some have used this passage as if it were a guarantee of wealth, or at least a “one for one” equation. To interpret this passage in such a way is to miss the point altogether. We are to be generous in all ways, regardless of what we might get out of it, even though all through the Bible God promises to take care of those who trust Him. This excerpt from Jesus’ sermon in Luke 6 tells us that generosity is both an attitude and an action, and it is one that involves love. We are not to judge or condemn people, but we are to forgive them without hesitation. This attitude of love then is naturally demonstrated in our generosity.

Comedian Bob Hope once said, “If you haven’t got any charity in your heart, you have the worst kind of heart trouble.” Generosity is the sign of a healthy, loving heart. Are you willing to trust God, and to demonstrate it with your generosity?

*Talk to God about your giving in general, and your preparation to give to Here For Good. Is it demonstrating a heart of love, or a heart that holds back? Ask Him to change your heart and attitude, so that it will be demonstrated in your actions.*

### DAY THREE: Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

The economy of Corinth was healthy - the city was renowned for its prosperity. Paul is writing the church in Corinth to encourage them to follow through on their commitment to give; they had promised to give generously, and now it was time to deliver on their promise. But



they may have been hesitant to do so, given the uncertainty of life in the ancient world. Paul doesn't want them to withhold generosity out of fear or any other reason; they had the means, they just now needed to be sure to give with a generous attitude. The word "cheerful" that describes the kind of giver God loves means more than "chipper;" it means merry, glad, gracious, and in some cases, "hilarious." In other words, our giving should be a source of joy in our lives.

The situation of the Corinthian church sounds much like ours today. We need to make our commitments, and we have the means to follow through. We need to do so with much joy. Sometimes people say, "Give till it hurts." Paul would say to go past that; he would say, "Give until you are cheerful!"

*Pray about your commitment to give to Here For Good. Are you committing out of a grudging heart, or out of duty, or are you cheerfully doing so? Ask God to help you give until you are cheerful!*

**DAY FOUR:** *Read Psalm 112:4-5*

Albert Lexie\* is a shoe-shine man. For the last 30 years, Albert has set up shop in Pittsburgh's Children's Hospital and knocked the dirt off other people's shoes. He buffs, he polishes. And he charges a mere \$5 for his labor.

Often, a satisfied customer will leave a tip. Most give an extra dollar, some give two. Once, during the Christmas season, a doctor gave him \$50 for shining one pair of shoes.

But big tips like that are few and far between. But when Albert has shined his last shoe and put away his shoe-shine kit for good, he will not be forgotten at the Pittsburgh Children's Hospital. Albert will leave behind a legacy.

Since the day he shined his first pair of shoes there 30 years ago, Albert has donated more than a third of his earnings to the Children's Hospital Free Care Fund, which helps parents who can't afford to pay for their sick children's medical costs. In addition, Albert has also given the hospital every tip he has ever received. Every single tip.

But Albert is just a shoe-shine man. How much could there be to give? According to the hospital administration, he gave just over \$200,000. It's a seemingly impossible number. 200 grand is what professional athletes give, not shoe-shine men. And yet that is the correct number. Every amount, given faithfully, adds up to a powerful legacy.

*Pray about the legacy you will leave; how you can be "gracious and compassionate and righteous...(and) generous...(and) conduct your affairs with justice."*

*\*Associated Press, "Pennsylvania shoeshine man gives hospital \$200G in tips" (2-21-13)*

**DAY FIVE:** *Read John 3:16*

You are probably thinking, "We already had this verse on day two of week three," but this isn't a typo. When we consider generosity, it is worth considering this verse again. Because God loved the world so much, he gave. Because

he loved, he gave. Someone has said, "You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving."

For three and a half weeks we've been praying about what it means to be Here For Good; it means to be here for Christ, for each other, and for our community. We've been praying about our giving to this important time in the history of our church - to eliminate debt and make overdue renovations. We've been praying about being generous in our commitment to give beyond our regular giving over the next three years. Our prayer is by now that you realize this is not a business transaction or even a not-for-profit donation and tax deduction; it is an act of love. This is by no means the only demonstration of your love, but if you love Jesus, your church, and your community, then shouldn't your commitment somehow reflect the depth in which God gave to you?

*By now you may have a number in mind that you plan to give over the next three years. But reconsider how fully God gave to you and compare that to what you intend to give to Here For Good. In fact, consider your life in light of what God has given to you. Pray that you will be generous in every way, out of love.*

**DAY SIX:** *Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19*

Jason Bradley is an author, blogger, pastor in Bellingham, WA., and a regular contributor to Relevant Magazine. Regarding this passage, he writes, "God richly provides everything for our enjoyment. It isn't his desire to withhold or diminish our pleasure. In fact, he wants us

to experience true pleasure. He wants us to experience the joy of being rich in goodness and generosity. Once again, Paul echoes the sentiment so prevalent throughout the scriptures: our benevolence now is an investment in eternity. Who would turn that down?

It's obvious that being conformed to the image of Christ includes emulating his sacrificial, giving nature. We should be using our own generosity as a gauge for our own spiritual health. How open are we to give? How sacrificially?

The beauty is that in Christ's promise "Look, I am coming soon, bringing my reward with me to repay all people according to their deeds." (Rev. 20:12) As Scripture reminds us constantly, this will include checking his meticulous accounts of our generous giving.

*Spend some time prayerfully considering your own generosity. What does it say about your spiritual health? Are you giving openly and sacrificially? If we are indeed rewarded by how much we are here for good (for Christ, for each other, for our community, and for generosity), how much of a reward will you expect right now? Is there anything you need to change?*

**DAY SEVEN:** *Read Proverbs 11:11, Psalm 37:3*

These passages talk about being faithful where we are and allowing God to use us to be a blessing to others. As we "farm faithfulness," as one translation puts it, God blesses not only our lives but the lives of others around



us. It is God’s desire for West Valley to be blessed because of our generosity at West Valley Church. If one of us withholds our faithful generosity, that is one less blessing for our community; one blank legacy, one life untouched for the better somehow.

Richard Halverson, former pastor of Fourth Presbyterian Church in Bethesda, Maryland and also the former chaplain of the United States Senate used the following benediction at the end of each service/message for many years in his ministry. It reflects his deep conviction that his church was not only where the congregation met on Sundays, but at each place where they lived and worked through the week. Prayerfully let this be what sends you out into your day, into your community, into your life:

*Wherever you go, God is sending you.  
Wherever you are, God has put you there.  
God has a purpose in your being right where you are. Christ, who indwells you by the power of his Spirit, wants to do something in and through you. Believe this and go in his grace, his love, his power.*

*In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
Amen*

# HERE FOR GOOD

## MARCH 8TH

*Psalms 37:3-6; Jeremiah 29:5-7*

1. Live \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_

2. Live \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_

3. Live \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_

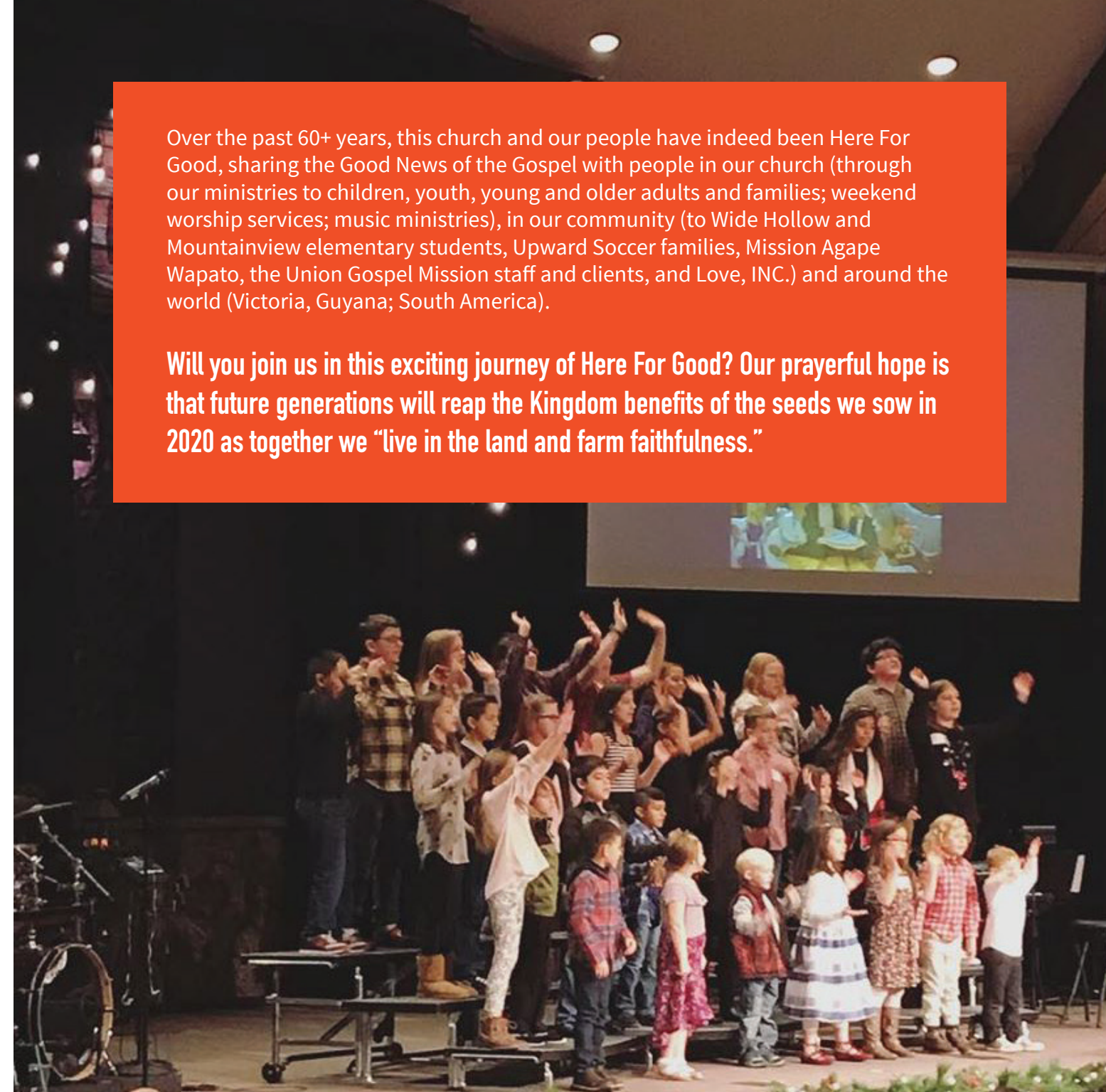
## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

### WEEK FIVE: HERE FOR GOOD

1. What does it mean for our church to be Here For Good (hopefully you know the answer by now!)? How will our generosity campaign help us to be Here For Good?
2. Read Jeremiah 29:4-7. God is talking about how his people are being punished by being sent into exile; they've been taken captive by another country and taken off to a different land. So why would God say what he did about what they are supposed to do?
3. In what ways are we as Christians today in exile? How do God's instructions apply to us today - what does it mean for us to do this?
4. Psalm 37:3 in the Common English Bible says, "Trust the Lord and do good; live in the land, and farm faithfulness." Take some time together to take that verse apart; what does it mean to "farm faithfulness"? What does that have to do with trusting in the Lord and doing good?
5. Read the rest of Psalm 37:3-7. In what ways does this passage talk about being here for good?
6. I hope you know by now that your church wouldn't pursue Here For Good unless we felt that it was vital in order for us to accomplish what God wants to do in us and through us. Given this, in what ways will Here For Good help us live out these two Scripture passages?
7. With today's sermon, we have finished the Here For Good series and will be prayerfully preparing for commitment Sunday. Share what you are learning so far from this journey; how are you learning to step out in faith in order for us to be here for good? (reminder: please don't share amounts you intend to commit).
8. Pray for each other as you prepare your commitment and pray for our church to be Here For Good.

Over the past 60+ years, this church and our people have indeed been Here For Good, sharing the Good News of the Gospel with people in our church (through our ministries to children, youth, young and older adults and families; weekend worship services; music ministries), in our community (to Wide Hollow and Mountainview elementary students, Upward Soccer families, Mission Agape Wapato, the Union Gospel Mission staff and clients, and Love, INC.) and around the world (Victoria, Guyana; South America).

**Will you join us in this exciting journey of Here For Good? Our prayerful hope is that future generations will reap the Kingdom benefits of the seeds we sow in 2020 as together we "live in the land and farm faithfulness."**







**west valley church**

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