

How will **YOU** measure your life?

Our Stewardship Focus

— give LOVE

— Worship

— IMAGINE

— missions

— discipleship

— Serve

— CARE







A warm hello, McFarlin!

Do you remember as a child being excited to see how tall you had grown? “Measure me! Measure me! How tall am I now?” Like children, we are eager to grow together in this next year.

McFarlin UMC is vital and valuable for children, students, families, and community near and far. We have had another year with new people finding faith and community at McFarlin—Welcome! Those who have called this place home for many years continue to celebrate and participate in difference-making ministries—Thank you!

It’s because of all of those who measured up and left their mark by annual faithfulness that we are now pledging for the general budget of 2024, our 100th Year! Our general operating budget supports so much: a room filled with singing children or learning youth, gifted staff members equipping a ministry team, a family grieving and remembering a loved one, neighbors gathered in worship and being uplifted, and so many more experiences of

God’s love at work. The budget we faithfully create and support represents how we are Changing Lives That Change the World here at McFarlin.

Our 2024 budget goal is \$3,234,928. As we greet the next year with robust confidence and increased commitments, let’s take a step up. While we work diligently to grow our ministries, there are obstacles such as inflation. We are called to face this challenge faithfully to continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Please join my wife Elizabeth and me in prayerfully considering how the Spirit may be calling us to increase our pledged giving. In order to plan well and be fiscally responsible, our church depends upon receiving your commitment card by Commitment Sunday, Nov. 5. Look for your commitment card in the mail in the coming weeks.

Pastor Rockford
Pastor Rockford

Connecting Finances to Our Mission

Your annual financial commitments provide the critical financial foundation that assures our church can measure up and increasingly accomplish our bold mission of lives changed and the world transformed.

The pledge cards that we dedicate on Commitment Sunday enable McFarlin to innovate and expand programs and initiatives yearned for and relied upon by many, both in McFarlin and in our community. Your gifts fund essential resources like staff salaries, utilities, and building maintenance, ensuring the church can provide the nurturing and supportive environment for spiritual growth and for community involvement you so deeply love. Without this shared financial generosity, McFarlin would struggle to maintain core ministries that inspire and facilitate life-changing experiences.

We are not settling for the status quo of ministry. There are no bounds to the ways in which Norman and

the wider world, like Tanzania, are yearning for our ministries to expand. Whether through local community projects like our food pantry to the wide-reaching comfort of our online worship that inspires thousands every year, these financial resources directly fund initiatives aimed at changing lives for Jesus Christ. Your commitments enable the church to introduce people to Jesus Christ, foster deeper, stronger faith, address societal issues, and provide care to all who need it.

What happens on Commitment Sunday turns our mission into reality. You provide the means to create a more compassionate, empowered, and impactful community of believers who, in turn, become catalysts for positive change in the world. These commitments are not just about dollars and cents; they are about investing in the shared vision of transforming lives and making the world a better place.



**Declaring the centrality
of Christ
in the lives of men.**

Financial Revenue Summary

McFarlin UMC currently measures as the largest United Methodist Church in Oklahoma, and throughout this book, you are going to see numbers, figures, and projections that quantitatively measure all that ensures the deeply felt impact of the people and ministries that make up McFarlin. Behind each number and every cost are lives being changed by God's measure.

While almost half of our operating budget is funded by annual commitments, gone are the days where a church of our size can financially survive on dollars placed in the offering plate alone. With the fast-rising costs of insurance, material costs, utilities, etc., and combined with prudent and faithful compensation of necessary personnel, McFarlin has proactively diversified our income streams to supplement the annual budget commitments of over 600 families who give to ensure all that McFarlin enables.

Our weekday childcare programs housed onsite operate with their own budgets. They benefit from our McFarlin insurance, utilities, administrative support, and use of space. In turn, they return annual contributions to support our general budget. Together, we are excited for the expansion into Meyer Hall to provide even more quality care and discipleship for more children.

These alternative revenue streams are not simply attempts to balance our budget, they flow together to advance our mission of Changing Lives That Change the World. Such supplemental income flows in from Norman's premiere childcare facility, from rent paid by a college student's tutoring service, from our faithfully managed endowments, and from our new Kid Zone after-school program. We continue to innovate creatively in both stewardship and ministry!



2023 REVENUE STREAMS

Annual Commitment Card Offerings	\$1,776,990
Nonpledged Offerings	\$466,000
Designated Funds	\$257,309
McFarlin Foundation & Endowments	\$234,629
Easter & Christmas Missions Offerings	\$70,000
Miscellaneous	\$122,040
Alternative Revenue Streams	\$307,960
TOTAL	\$3,234,928

“That one is like one who builds a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built.”

Luke 6:48

A Week in the Life of Fenn Hall

When you think of Fenn Hall, you might think about our growing Modern Worship service which happens every Sunday morning. You might also think about our amazing Food Pantry supported by so many volunteers, gifts, and prayers that is temporarily housed at the south end of Fenn Hall until the completion of our new Missions Center in the next few months. A closer look at what happens in Fenn Hall on an ordinary week captures the across-the-board, holistic, lived-out values of your church.

Sundays in Fenn Hall

Early on Sunday mornings, often prior to the rising sun, our AV director powers up all of our audio-visual systems. A facilities team member opens up the building, checking on how the weather may have unexpectedly impacted our beloved morning ministries. Pastor Trey prepares communion and his sermon while band members set up instruments. A volunteer brings in boxes of donuts and brews coffee. Classroom tech for

Sunday schools is prepared to open minds and hearts of whoever walks in. Nursery staff and greeters welcome families from all over Norman to worship together.



Mondays in Fenn Hall

On Mondays, Chef Aaron and his team are often the first people to arrive at the church, preparing meals and snacks in the kitchen for our childcare programs while the directors and early morning shift teachers organize their rooms to care and teach the 192 kids we care for each day. Later, Food Pantry volunteers begin their day unloading and stocking various deliveries from the Regional Food Bank and neighborhood grocers. That afternoon, Kid Zone after-school care buses unload children to play in Fenn Hall before lessons begin.



Tuesdays in Fenn Hall

On Tuesdays, the south sliding doors open and close repeatedly as a dozen Food Pantry volunteers shuttle in and out, often serving over 100 families in a single day. Later in

the day, our McFarlin Box Truck is filled with gas, packed with food, and taken to one of our local partner schools as our Mobile Food Pantry. Once a month Fenn Hall hosts Tuesdays Together, a rotating free meal, where faith, food, and fellowship intersect for those who so need all three. Our United Women in Faith gather in Fenn Hall once a month for their own meal and program, bringing together the seven circles of women and guests to deepen their faith and grow together.



Wednesdays in Fenn Hall

On any given Wednesday you can find every age utilizing Fenn Hall. Our childcare program uses the space for indoor play when the weather keeps them inside. At noon, a monthly meal and program called Bonus Years welcomes many of our 55+ ministry members. During this time they celebrate monthly birthdays, sing hymns led by one of our music staff members, and enjoy lunch and a program, all coordinated by our Director of Care and Senior Adult Ministries. But they can't stay too long because in the afternoon Children's Choir uses the space as a home base for the 75+ kids we pick up each week in one of the 10 buses or vans we own and maintain for all ministries of the church. Playing and growing in their faith through song, these children become more comfortable with their church, their home-away-from-home. As they walk out with parents, they cross paths with some of the 100+ youth who are here for Youth Group and Youth Choir. Here they eat, play, and deepen their faith in Jesus.



Thursdays in Fenn Hall

On Thursdays our Director of Student Ministries is often the first person in Fenn Hall. He is joined by a handful of our United Methodist Men who prepare the weekly breakfast for the junior high boys group, spending time together before the school day. Afterwards, they load up in our buses to be dropped off at Norman middle schools. As the buses pull out, those needing help from our Utilities Assistance program begin lining up, and over the course of a calendar year, supported by Easter and communion offerings and the staff and facility support necessary, we provide financial support to help families keep the lights on and heat running. That afternoon, S.A.I.L—Staying Active and Independent for Life, meets to help those of all ages stay fresh and engaged.

Fridays in Fenn Hall

On Fridays, our building team is fast at work making sure our entire 100,000 square feet of facilities is stocked and clean to welcome the over 1,000 people who will arrive for worship on Sunday or connect through online worship.



Saturdays in Fenn Hall

On Saturdays it may be gameday parking. Maybe it's the monthly United Methodist Men breakfast. You might find a mission team preparing to depart to serve, or the monthly Saturday Food Pantry ministry day filling gaps that our weekday service can't meet.

2023 Year in Review

In that one *week in the life of Fenn Hall*, you saw the breadth and depth of what makes McFarlin so special. A very similar story could be told for the Sanctuary, the Atrium, the Daycare, the Sunday school spaces, and almost every room in the church. To help capture more of how we measure Changing Lives That Change the World, **consider these 2023 numbers as of September:**

WORSHIP

1,052 Weekly Worshipers, Onsite & Online

16 Baptized

17 Confirmed

267 Identified Visitors

57 New Members

75 Children's Choir

22 Youth Choir

52 Adult Choir

20 Summer Youth Choir Tour

73 Handbell Members

CARE

175 Senior Adult Engagement

75 Prayer Shawls Created

40 Support Group Participants

220 Congregational Care Ministers Assignments

DISCIPLESHIP

509 Adult Sunday School Members

97 Early Childhood Sunday School Participants

113 Elementary Sunday School Participants

307 VBS Kids & Volunteers

71 McFarlin & Friends Campers

22 Camp Spark Campers

110 United Women in Faith Members

53 United Methodist Men Members

MISSIONS

\$146,584 Utility Assistance Given

7,778 Food Pantry Individuals Served

436,500 Pounds of Food Provided

4,460 Hours Served by Food Pantry Volunteers

102 Spring Break Missionaries

38 Summer Missionaries



In August 2023, McFarlin's "Back to School" offering raised \$25,000 to support children's education in Tanzania in partnership with our United Methodist missionaries, the Kalangwas.

Financial Expenses Summary

Our four ministry pillars of **Worship, Discipleship, Missions, and Care** stand upon McFarlin's foundation of faith in Jesus Christ. To accomplish these well, we divide our budget into three expense categories: personnel, programs, and property.

- **Personnel** makes up **51%** of our budget. Personnel is the people hours of the 65 staff we employ, excluding weekday childcare employees.
- **Programs** makes up **21%** of our budget. Programs consists of the specific program ministry budgets of materials, systems, events, and program-specific support necessary to accomplish ministry goals in all areas.
- **Property** makes up **28%** of our budget. Property reflects total annual insurance, utilities, and maintenance costs. It is calculated as a faithful estimation based on hours used and square footage occupied by each of our four ministry pillars as they transform our vast building into a hub of life-changing ministry.

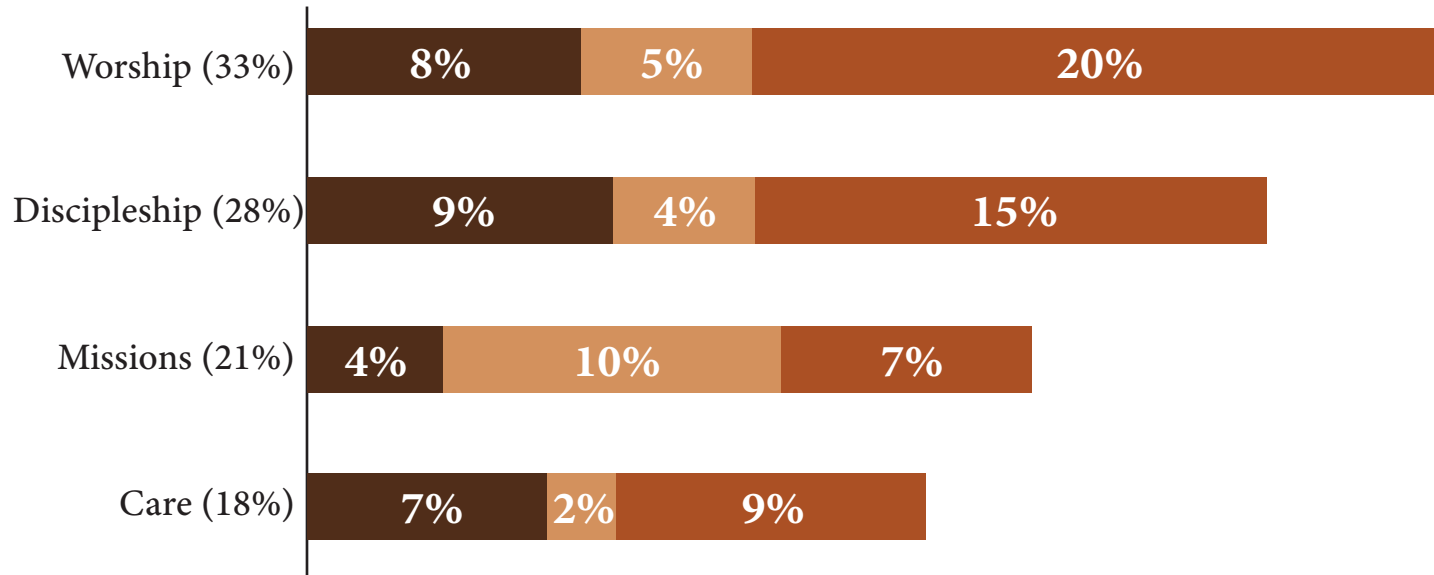
Since property costs to insure, maintain, and operate our sacred space are a rather inflexible number, any budgetary shortfall must be accounted for by personnel or program reductions. Such program or personnel reductions can happen, of course, due either to inflating property costs or decreased giving, or both.

“Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress”

1 Timothy 4:15

2023 General Operating Budget

Property (28%) Programs (21%) Personnel (51%)



Transparency and Accountability

This year's stewardship campaign is knocking on the door of our Centennial year. It comes at a pivotal moment in our long and meaningful history.

Since 2020, McFarlin has been faced with unimaginable challenges: from a global pandemic to denominational splintering to overall strife and anxiety in culture, any of which would have—and often have—been too much for any one church to survive. McFarlin has not only survived but thrived during this time, navigating each challenge because of your faithfulness.

But faithfulness does not come without cost.



Pandemic Costs

- During the peak of the pandemic, we created a financial safety net through the wise handling of emergency grants. We stretched one-year of support over four years to help counterbalance losses from unidentified offerings. However, this safety net is now dwindling.
- Because of global inflation, supply chain challenges, and market adjustments, our insurance and utilities costs have recently jumped 40% or about \$100,000.
- We heavily invested in expanding our livestream technology to meet online needs.

Denominational Challenges

- While about 20% of previously United Methodist Churches in Oklahoma have precariously chosen to disaffiliate, McFarlin has remained focused on strengthening our unity and connection and on the steady continuance of our vital and robust ministries. Yet, due to some denominational uncertainty, news of disaffiliations, related public rumors and speculations, and alternative understandings, we have had some beloved members choose to worship elsewhere, causing a financial loss of approximately \$77,600 annually.

The combination of these and other factors means that this year's Stewardship focus "How Will You Measure Your Life" is critical to keep our 2024 budget strong as we celebrate and secure the foundation upon which our next 100 years will be built.

Future Goals & Plans

As we approach our next century of Changing Lives That Change the World, we are measuring what matters. How can we grow our worshiping community, walk alongside more people as they deepen their faith, welcome and serve in wider and intentional ways, and ensure that we are there for you in the happiest days and hardest moments of your life.

While stewardship is rightly concerned with aligning expenses and revenue toward a balanced budget, the true measure of our stewardship is the extent of our desire to change and shape thousands of lives because God is moving through the people of McFarlin. This building is more than the cost to maintain and improve it; this church is a sanctuary. It is a hub for so many ministries that bless

and empower lives every day. We are proud of the staff and lay leadership we have, and are working to do all in our power not only to maintain but grow and improve our ministries and spirit to meet the ever changing needs of our community.

The future of McFarlin is a strong and vital community of grace. We measure our congregational life by how we worship together in excellence and faithfulness, reach and support the next generation of disciples, serve tangibly in our neighborhood and around the world, care for one another in mutual love and support, and invite and welcome all into a relationship with Jesus Christ. This is only possible because of your faithful generosity.



Donor Recognition and Thanks

At McFarlin Memorial United Methodist Church, we are immensely grateful for the unwavering support and commitment of our annual pledgers to our general operating budget. Your dedication to our mission of Changing Lives That Change the World is the **bedrock** upon which our church's **transformative work** rests.

We acknowledge that many of you are also actively contributing to our Standing on the Promises capital campaign, demonstrating your deep and abiding belief in the future of our church community. Your dual support is a testament to your **profound commitment** to making a lasting impact, not just within our congregation but also in the broader world.

As we embark on our annual Stewardship focus "*How Will You Measure Your Life?*" we are reminded that it is through your steadfast financial commitments that we can **measure up** to the ultimately immeasurable impact we collectively have on the lives of children, youth, families, and people of all ages here and around the world. Your generosity paves the way for transformative experiences and ensures that our mission remains a **guiding light for all.**

Thanks be to God and thank you!



Call to Action

Giving financially to our church is one of the best ways we measure our lives and our faith. Regardless of the amount, the aim is to find a level of giving that aligns with God's generous spirit, deepening your sense of joy in measuring your life.

One meaningful approach to this commitment is the practice of "percentage giving," aligning your contributions with your life's measure. Instead of offering what's left after expenses, you dedicate a portion of your income, emulating the biblical tradition of giving our "first fruits." Traditionally, this has been understood as 10%, a tithe, but we recognize that this may not be feasible for everyone. Start where you can, and if you're already contributing at a percent level, consider elevating by even just 1% as a measure of your personal growth.

Costs for property, personnel, and programs inevitably rise. Your households feel this, and so does your church home. McFarlin relies on your support, and increasing your giving is a testament to how you measure your life's purpose.

Life, with its ebbs and flows, may prompt adjustments. If your circumstances change, remember that you can reach out to the church to modify your pledge. We are all walking this journey together, measuring our impact in ways that resonate with our hearts and spirits. Together, we honor God's abundance and work towards creating a more meaningful world. Like children eager to be "measured up" by parents to see how much they have grown, may God inspire our eagerness to take a step up as our church steps into another year of ministry!



Your generosity makes all the difference in the world!

We hope you'll prayerfully consider how God is calling you to grow in your giving or to share your blessings with God's church for the very first time. We offer three ways you can make your commitment to the work of McFarlin.

Mail your completed commitment card that will be mailed to you at the end of October.

OR

Complete the online commitment card which opens on Nov. 1.

OR

Hand deliver your commitment card at one of our onsite worship services or by visiting the church during regular business hours.

Remember: Commitment Sunday is Nov. 5

Please take time to worship together, pray and consider the possibility of a measured step up in giving for 2024.

Thank you!



P. O. Box 6390

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