



# STANDING

## IN the PROMISE

LITTLE RIVER UMC | ACTS 2:46

### WHERE WE HAVE BEEN

Little River United Methodist Church began as a mission church in 1876. Mission and outreach are a part of our collective DNA. We are proud to be known as a church that has a tradition of mission and ministry at home, around the corner and around the world.

Throughout the years, the church has continued to grow, while maintaining a passion for mission. Our current mission statement states that we are:

“A community of believers in Jesus Christ that is:

\*Loving & Inviting, Teaching & Learning, Serving & Sharing, To make and grow disciples.”

This is who we are! But we are not this for our own ends and needs alone but for the transformation of the world.

### WHAT WE HAVE DONE

As the church has grown, we have purchased land and built facilities to accommodate the growth and help fulfill our Mission Statement. In the early 2000's, we purchased over eight acres of land adjacent to the church, with this purchase funded significantly by legacy gifts (bequests) to the church. More recently, in 2007 the church purchased 1.75 acres of adjoining land for \$450,000. This enabled us on September 28, 2008 to break ground on a 15,000 sq. ft. addition to the church facilities — the Life Center.

### CASE STATEMENT

The Life Center is a highly utilized and functional space. The list of activities that takes place on a daily basis is long and exciting. We do a bunch of stuff in this building. But it is not just about stuff. It is most importantly a space where we truly believe that we can meet Jesus and be sent into the world to serve Him.

The envisioned purpose of the Life Center was to provide more classrooms, more office space, plus a large, multi-purpose room and a new kitchen. The Life Center, built at a cost of \$2.5 million, opened for use in September, 2009. The task of building and paying off the building at once seemed like a dream. Now, we find ourselves approaching the time of paying off the debt that remains on the building.

The Life Center has made a difference in the life and ministry of this church, the life of the community and in the world.:

- Ministry of hospitality grown through hosting dinners, festivals and meetings;
- Ministry of outreach grown by the use of laundry and showers available to those in need in our community;
- Ministry of Evangelism grown by having space available for church and community events;
- Ministry of Discipleship grown by use and availability of classrooms for Sunday school, Bible Studies and other small group meetings;

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- Ministry with youth and children has the use of a great space as we look to grow this ministry in the years to come;
- The Life Center is also the home of what is today our largest single worship service on Sunday morning.

Promises have been made on our behalf since our beginning. We stand today ready to make good on those promises. When we stand in the Life Center and the accompanying spaces we find that we are actually standing in the promise.

## WHERE WE ARE

We celebrate our church's remarkable faithfulness over the years, in what has proven to be anxious economic times!

To make the Life Center a reality, to purchase the land, and to pay for its construction, the church has conducted numerous capital campaigns. If we are as faithful as we have been in the past, this will be the last campaign as it relates to the Life Center!

We have conducted four capital campaigns since 2002. The fourth campaign, Living the Promise, concluded in May 2016. This has allowed us to pay the purchase price of the land in full and reduce our indebtedness on the building to \$916,500 as of January 9, of this year. These campaigns have been successful. God has provided!

We have promised to faithfully participate in the ministries of the church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service and our witness. We celebrate what God has given us. We celebrate that we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us in ministry in this place. These buildings were built for us and we take seriously the responsibility of stewardship of that which we have received.

## MOVING FORWARD

Needing to address the remaining indebtedness, our Church Council, at its January 2017 meeting, approved a third 3-year capital campaign, whereby everyone in the church will be asked to prayerfully consider giving over and above our regular giving, so that we

can substantially reduce our outstanding debt, while still being able to minister and serve at home, around the corner and around the world in the most effective manner.

At this same meeting, the Church Council also approved the recommendation of the Committee on Finance to engage Dr. Bill Crosby from Resource Ministry Partners (RMP) to help lead us in this new capital campaign. The church's leadership team has set a goal of raising \$650,000 in this capital campaign, which would reduce the debt on the Life Center to approximately \$350,000.

## MISSION COMPONENT

In August of 2016 we celebrated giving \$57,400 to mission and ministries supported by the local church. This was 10% of receipts from our previous campaign. The mission that began here in Little River in 1876 continues here today in 2017. Our mission and outreach begins at home while it reaches around the corner and around the world.

This campaign is not simply about getting us to manageable or zero debt. Our goal is the same as it has always been. Our mission is the transformation of the world. We do not stand in the promise wishing that we could keep it for ourselves. We stand in the promise wanting the world to know that promises have been made on their behalf as well.

We state in our mission statement that we are to serve and share. Holding to this core belief and understanding of who we are our Church Council has approved that **10% of our capital campaign receipts will again be given to Missions!** The Missions Committee will solicit feedback from church members to help decide how this special mission giving can best serve the needy in our community. Using the \$650,000 capital campaign goal as a guide, we will be able to make a gift to Missions totaling \$65,000.

In closing, Rev. Russell Freeman, our senior pastor says, "God has not called us to do that which we cannot afford!"