



THE
NEXT
50 YEARS

*29-DAY
PRAYER DEVOTIONAL*

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THE NEXT 50 YEARS

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

Congratulations! You are entering an exciting chapter in the story of St. Mark! For the past 50 years, you, I and countless others have experienced Jesus at St. Mark, and now we have the chance to ensure that legacy continues beyond us with a capital campaign called *The Next 50 Years!*

There are two purposes to this campaign. First, to update our campus to reflect our dynamic and relevant ministry. Second, to make room to accommodate new growth.

It's a lofty and God-sized goal, but it's fitting to remember the missionary Hudson Taylor who said, "*God's work, done God's way, will never lack God's supply.*" To say it another way, if we tried to accomplish this goal with our own wisdom and resources, we would fall far short of God's plan for us.

GOD'S WAY

I wholeheartedly believe that "God's way" for us to accomplish this capital campaign includes bringing our voices together in passionate and desperate prayer. Put simply, your prayers are essential to this great effort!

But bringing our voices together is more than a metaphor, so we've asked some of the leaders of St. Mark to write a prayer for *The Next 50 Years* using a Scripture prompt as the basis of their prayer. Then, we compiled these prayers into a 29-day prayer devotional so you can join your voice in asking God to do the impossible in your church.

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Using this book is easy! For 29 days, from September 8th through October 6th, set aside a time each day where you can meet with God for just a few moments in prayer. Then, turn to the appropriate date in this book, read the Scripture, and pray aloud the prayer for that day written by one of our leaders.

As you pray these prayers, let the Holy Spirit work in your heart. Be open to his leading as he challenges, encourages, and guides you toward your commitment for *The Next 50 Years*.

Gratefully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Paavola". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

CHRIS PAAVOLA
Senior Pastor

*We will tell the next generation the
praiseworthy deeds of the Lord!*

Psalm 78:4

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 1

Sunday, September 8th

Vision Sunday 1

...we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy
deeds of the Lord!

Psalm 78:4

Please pray aloud:

Dear Heavenly Father, let it be said of me that I faithfully told the coming generation of the glorious deeds you have done and the wonders you have worked!

May your Word always be proclaimed here at St. Mark so that the generations to come will know you and worship you. May they keep your Word in their heart and live their lives according to your ways.

Raise up faithful volunteers and workers at *Our World for Children* and in our *Youth and Family Ministry* who will help kids experience Jesus. Surround the next generation with mentors in the faith who will teach them your Word so that they may know you and walk with you all the days of their lives.

Lord, as St. Mark begins this capital campaign, give us eyes to see beyond today and to be mindful of the needs of the next generation. Help us to have a concern for them above a concern for ourselves or the things of this world.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

MARY HUISINGA

Director for Our World for Children

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 2

Monday, September 9th

For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end.

Psalm 48:14

Please pray aloud:

Dear God, sometimes life feels so full of choices I don't know what choice to make. I can lose sight of the big picture of your purpose and get caught up in the tyranny of the urgent. But you promise to be my guide and be with me always. So please guide me this day, Lord.

Will you also guide St. Mark as we make decisions in the days and weeks to come that will impact the future of so many? You call us to reach as many people as possible to spend eternity with you as our God forever and ever, into eternity. So lead St. Mark in *The Next 50 Years* to do this good work. Guide the leaders, equip the volunteers, and encourage those who call St. Mark home to work together in this mission you've given us.

God, I seek your will and guidance in my own personal giving toward *The Next 50 Years*. What do you want me to give, Lord?

Help me not get stuck worrying about the day-to-day, limitations or fears. Help me remember that you are my God forever and ever and that you will guide me to the end. Help me trust and follow you, my guide.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

ASHLEY PAAVOLA
Youth and Family Director

DAY 3

Tuesday, September 10th

Our children will also serve him. Future generations will hear about the wonders of the Lord.

Psalm 22:30

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, you are too good not to share, your love is too incredible not to know. I want to leave a legacy that outlives my life and put aside comfort so future generations will hear about your wonders, Lord.

Thank you for the honor of sharing the good news of your wonderful grace with the next generation. I confess I often choose comfort over your kingdom, Lord. I'm sorry, I don't want to do that anymore. Please forgive me for the ways I've put myself above others and help me seek first your kingdom in everything I do.

Light a fire in my soul to passionately proclaim your name. I want all people to know you, Lord. I want all people to experience you. How do you want to use me to reach the next generation?

May this generation find their satisfaction in a relationship with you. Spark revival, that they may serve you and become beaming lights of your goodness in this dark world. That St. Mark can be a church the next generation calls their own.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

ZACH DEHN
Youth Coordinator

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 4

Wednesday, September 11th

Train up a child in the way they should go; and when they are old they will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:6

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, I come before you today with a heart filled with gratitude for the precious gift of children. I recognize the responsibility of raising the next generation and the impact I can have on their lives.

Grant me the discernment to instill your values and teach the next generation your ways. May I be a loving example of your character, demonstrating your love, mercy, and grace. Make me generous with my finances to bless our *Youth and Family Ministry*.

Nurture the faith of the kids at St. Mark. Plant the seeds of your Word in their hearts. Lord, I pray that as they grow, their roots will run deep in your love and truth. May they develop a strong foundation in you, enabling them to withstand the challenges of this world. Shield them from harm, protect them from the evil one, and guide them their paths with your truth. May they grow in wisdom and in favor with you and others.

Give the next generation the faith, devotion, and leadership they need to lead our church into the future!

In Jesus' name. Amen.

XYLINN ZUBALY
Office Administrator

DAY 5

Thursday, September 12th

One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.

Proverbs 11:24

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, I come before you with a heart full of gratitude. You have taught me that generosity leads to abundance and that withholding leads to poverty. I pray that I may embody this truth in my life, giving freely and generously, knowing that by doing so, I am building a legacy that will outlast my time on earth. Help me to give until my kindness and generosity inspire others and create a ripple effect of blessings that extend far beyond the reach of my gift.

Lord, I am reminded of your promise in Scripture, where Jesus tells us not to worry about our lives, what we will eat, or what we will wear. Just as you provide for the ravens, who neither sow nor reap, I trust that you will give back to me far more than I ever gave. Help me to trust in your provision and to live with the assurance that you are always with me, guiding and sustaining me.

What does it look like for me to give freely and generously, Lord?

Whatever your answer may be, Lord, help me to always remember your promises and trust in your provision.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

BRIDGET OLSEN
Director of Small Groups

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 6

Friday, September 20th

For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11

Please pray aloud:

Lord God, I take comfort in your promise that that you have plans for me and St. Mark in the days and years to come. I thank you that you have plans to grow us and give us a future filled with hope. I may not know your plans before they are revealed, but I do know that you are faithful to keep your promises to me and your Church.

Even though you have already given us so many blessings, Lord, I ask for you to continue to bless and grow St. Mark so that more people may experience Jesus in the days and years to come. As your Word declares, God, prosper us.

In the same way, direct and guide me to my part in making your plans a reality. How can I contribute to this capital campaign, Lord? I want to be a part of your plans for the future of St. Mark through *The Next 50 Years*.

Bless the work of our hands in *The Next 50 Years* that we may bring a hope-filled future to me, to the people of St. Mark, and the people of Battle Creek.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

JACK LANGFELDT
Pastor of Care and Counselling

DAY 7

Saturday, September 14th

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

Proverbs 11:25

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, you have blessed me with so much. Help me use the finances you have blessed me with wisely, but also show me how to refresh others with my wealth, that I myself will be refreshed.

It's easy, Father, to get caught up spending on my own desires and debts, that I lose faith in Your promise to provide. But You have shown me time and again that when I heed your Word and give with a joyful heart, your blessings are abundant.

Open my eyes to see your blessings until my heart overflows with generosity! Like the woman at the temple who gave all she had with a grateful heart, help me to always remember that you do not measure the size of the gift, but the heart that gives it.

Father, thank you for using this capital campaign to open my eyes to the importance and purpose of giving. Take my gifts, God, and do great things that touch the lives of others, that they may put their trust in you. Make all of St. Mark generous, God, that we may prosper in *The Next 50 Years*.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

ORALIA GARCIA
Director of Finance

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 8

Sunday, September 15th

Vision Sunday 2

One generation will praise your works to the next one,
proclaiming your mighty acts.

Psalm 145:4

Please pray aloud:

Father, I pray today that you open my heart this day to sing your praise! Let my praise encourage the next generation to do the same. May the songs I sing, the words I speak, and the things I do lead others to you.

Just as you create in me a heart of praise that sings, let me praise you in other ways—with acts of kindness, with service, and with generosity. It's hard, God, but help me to praise you with my finances even more freely than I praise you in song. Open my hand to give generously to this capital campaign, trusting in your provision, that we may secure your praise in this house for generations to come.

Thank you for your everlasting kindness and goodness that has been passed down from generation to generation, reaching us today. Your mighty works have been on display in the last 50 years at St. Mark, and I ask that we continue to be a place that displays and declares your praises for generations to come. God, may you be proclaimed at St. Mark today, tomorrow, and for the next 50 years.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

GRANT BOWDISH
Worship Director

DAY 9

Monday, September 16th

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

3 John 1:4

Please pray aloud:

Lord, I come before you with a heart full of gratitude and hope as we begin this journey of *The Next 50 Years* capital campaign. Your Word reminds us that there is no greater joy than to hear that our children are walking in the truth. As we look forward to the future of St. Mark, I pray this truth will be our foundation as well.

May our efforts in this campaign not only strengthen our physical church but also deepen our spiritual walk with you. Let every contribution, prayer, and act of service be a testament to our dedication to your truth and love.

I ask that you bless each member of our congregation with wisdom and discernment. Help us to see the vision you have for St. Mark and to walk in unity toward that vision. May our actions today lay a strong foundation for the generations to come, ensuring that they too will know the joy of walking in your grace and truth.

Thank you for the privilege and opportunity to contribute to the future of this community. May your truth guide us, your love inspire us, and your Spirit empower us as we commit to *The Next 50 Years*.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

NATE AND JACKIE OKRASINSKI
Directors of Hospitality

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 10

Tuesday, September 17th

Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds...

Hebrews 10:24

Please pray aloud:

Lord, I confess that I'm far too guarded and isolated. It's hard for me to be in relationships with others where we can — as your Word says — spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Forgive me, Lord, if I have ever been too reserved, too introverted, or too self-focused.

As you forgive me, move in my heart by your Holy Spirit to be in godly relationships within the church where we encourage one another to follow your Son. Continue to raise up Small Groups so we can live out the “one another” commands of Scripture.

Make St. Mark a place where we spur one another along in the faith, Lord. Make us disciples of your Word and your love. Open our eyes and our hearts and show us how to reach out and welcome all people who have and have yet to experience your love.

Finally, Lord, spur every person at St. Mark to show their “love and good deeds” by sacrificing freely of their treasure to this capital campaign, that we may build a house pleasing to you.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

KEITH ROGERS
Facilities Director

DAY 11

Wednesday, September 18th

These commandments I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7

Please pray aloud:

I confess that though I hear your commandments, I do not always carry them out faithfully. I allow my wants, needs, and fears to take up space in my heart and mind. Forgive me, Lord.

Lord, I know you've put me in a position to be a role model for my family and my community. Help me show others what it is to experience and love your son, Jesus. I pray for clarity and ease of speech as I live out your commandments and share them with those I encounter.

I thank you for *Our World for Children*, which allows us to impress your commands and a love for Jesus on our children, as your Word commands. I pray all of our teachers would continue to be faithful stewards of your Word.

This campaign we are beginning is about building the future of St Mark. But it's not for our glory, God, but for yours! Make me a vehicle of hope and inspiration to help further your kingdom for the next generation.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

KRISTIN HOOK

Council Chair for Our World for Children

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 12

Thursday, September 19th

Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.

1 Timothy 6:17

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, I praise you for saving me and giving me meaning and purpose. Forgive me for ever being proud or for setting my hope on my riches, which are unreliable.

Help each person at St. Mark to rejoice and remember that you are eternal, God, and only work done for you will last. Make us a generous people, rich in good works, and always ready to share the blessings you have freely given us.

Father, guide every person at St. Mark to make decisions for the next 50 years the same way you guided this congregation 50 years ago. Teach us to be good stewards of the money you've blessed us with, to trust you to provide for us, and to prioritize you above everything.

Teach us to lay down our lives, Father, so as many as possible experience Jesus here at St. Mark.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

NATE KARES
Council President

DAY 13

Friday, September 20th

I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.

Habakkuk 1:5

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, I confess that I often feel like my prayers have gone unanswered. But it's not until later that I realize that you are at work, even when it feels as if you are not. Continue to remind me that I am not in charge, but you are, and it is not my timetable, but yours.

Lord, there are not enough words to say thank you for what you have done in my life—even if it is not what I envisioned for myself. You know what I need and when I need it.

Thank you so much for leading me to St. Mark when you did. It was the place I needed and continue to need. I pray that others in Battle Creek and beyond will be able to experience the same caring environment that I have experienced. Continue to make us a place where people can begin their faith journey and grow in it.

As St. Mark begins this capital campaign, God, help us to believe your promise that you can do something in our time that is beyond belief. Please bless St. Mark that we may continue to grow over the next 50 years. According to your will, your timetable, and your plan.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

LISA KNOOP
Council Vice President

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 14

Saturday, September 21st

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

Matthew 19:14

Please pray aloud:

Dear Creator of life and loving Father, I thank you for the children here at St. Mark. Please help us to remember the most important thing we can do for them is to teach them about you! I know that as much as we love them, you love them even more and have big plans for them.

Guide the hearts and minds of our children towards you, Lord. Let our actions and the actions of St. Mark encourage each child to have a personal relationship with you, that they may encounter your boundless love. As you guide our children, guide us, also. Give our *Youth and Family Ministry* the volunteers, resources, and space they need to serve the next generation.

As we look ahead to *The Next 50 Years* of ministry here at St. Mark, give us the wisdom and foresight to anticipate the needs of the children in our community. Let no action or inaction of ours hinder them. Equip our staff, volunteers, and our facilities so that no child with physical, developmental, behavioral, emotional, financial, or sensory needs is hindered from experiencing Jesus at St. Mark.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

KAYLEE RIZOR
Council Secretary

DAY 15

Sunday, September 22nd

Vision Sunday 3

Good will come to those who are generous
and lend freely...

Psalm 112:5

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, when it comes to generosity, you are the best model and mentor—you gave your Son, Jesus, as a sacrifice for our sins. You’ve also given me everything I have. Thank you, Lord, for your generosity and unending love!

Forgive me for the times I have let your gifts become “my possessions” and for the times I worry whether I will have enough. Remove any pride or selfishness or the love of money from my life, Lord.

I want to live a life that glorifies you and shines Jesus’ light to others. Continue to teach me that being a good steward with my finances begins with generosity, Lord. Each day, open my eyes and my heart to how I can use your blessings to bless others, for your glory.

As we look to *The Next 50 Years* of St. Mark, I know your Word promises good things when we are obedient to you and generous to others. Cultivate our hearts to become a church known for its exceptional generosity so as many as possible experience Jesus at St. Mark.

In Jesus’ name. Amen.

KARL DEHN
Council Treasurer

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 16

Monday, September 23rd

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.

Malachi 3:10

Please pray aloud:

Lord, as we begin this journey to enlarge and improve your house of worship, fulfill your Word to provide for us when we bring a tenth of our wealth to you. Open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so many blessings for us that there will not be enough room for them.

Please bless us with the resources, wisdom, stewardship, patience and vision we need to create new spaces at St. Mark. Use them to provide comfort, accessibility, fellowship, and excitement so as many as possible in our community will experience Jesus at St. Mark for decades to come.

Lord, as you know, we have been blessed to experience your love in our current sanctuary for over 50 years because of the vision, commitment and sacrifice many made before us. Don't let us take their efforts for granted, but instead, let their sacrifice challenge us to do the same for *The Next 50 Years*. Help us to create the legacy we wish to leave for future generations.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

TOM BEUCHLER
Council Property Chair

DAY 17

Tuesday, September 24th

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

2 Corinthians 9:6

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, I come to you today offering all my praise and thanksgiving for your blessings. I am so thankful for the people I get to see each Sunday, and I look forward to bringing my offering to you at your house.

Help St. Mark to remember the promise of your Word that "whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully", that St. Mark may reap abundantly in *The Next 50 Years!*

Lord, I know your Son is the Cornerstone of our faith, and that your Word is our foundation, but I also know that our church building is a manmade structure that needs to be updated from time to time. Help us to be good caretakers of this building you've entrusted to us and keep us from being neglectful, that it may bless thousands more for decades to come.

Finally, Father, I ask for you to move mightily in and through the people of St. Mark during this capital campaign to bring you the honor and glory you are due.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

TIM WETHERILL

Position

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 18

Wednesday, September 25th

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:7

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, only you know what's in my heart when it comes to giving. There are times that I feel like my bills are overwhelming and it feels hard to give with a willing heart. There are also times when I have an abundance of money and do not think twice about where I spend it.

Please help me with the ability to open my heart and be a cheerful giver. Remind me that earthly things are temporary and that you are eternal and giving to this capital campaign will add to your kingdom.

I think of the story of the widow who gave her last two coins to the offering out of the love she has for you. Or Jesus' words to "give to God what belongs to God." Thank you, Lord, for reminding me that my money belongs to you, and that we are here to grow your kingdom.

Please watch over St. Mark and *Our World for Children*. Use us, so the next generation will feel welcomed in a church they can call their own.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

MATT NEAL
Head Elder

DAY 19

Thursday, September 26th

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

2 Corinthians 9:11

Please pray aloud:

Gracious God, I come before you with a grateful heart, thankful for the countless blessings you've given me, both seen and unseen.

I pray for the future of St. Mark, Lord. Give us guidance and wisdom that we might always share your Word with our community in new and creative ways.

As your Word says, enrich us in every way and give us a spirit of generosity so that each one of us may be generous to grow your kingdom. Strengthen our hearts, minds, and hands for this sacred work of giving, God. Grant us what we need to fulfill your vision for us in the next 50 years.

May my financial gifts and efforts in this capital campaign be a sacrifice worthy of your great name, Lord. As your Word says, use my giving to compel more and more people to give thanks to you for years to come, gracious heavenly Father.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

ED WEISMILLER
Elder

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 20

Friday, September 27th

Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.

Luke 12:33

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, as we begin this journey of faith, I turn to you with a heart full of gratitude and hope. Your Word reminds me to lay up treasures in heaven where no thief can steal and no moth can destroy. You call us to hold our earthly possessions lightly, trusting that true wealth is found in your kingdom.

Today, as we look to the future, I pray for wisdom and guidance in this capital campaign. May our efforts not just be about buildings or budgets but about creating spaces where your love is felt, your Word is heard, and your community thrives — where opportunities to experience Jesus are abundant. Help me to see beyond the immediate needs to envision what you have in store for *The Next 50 Years*.

Let my giving reflect my trust in you and my desire to invest in the eternal. Lord, may every contribution to this capital campaign, no matter the size, be used for your glory, not ours.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

DAVID SMITH

Elder

DAY 21

Saturday, September 28th

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Please pray aloud:

Gracious and merciful Lord, with deepest gratitude I thank you for loving us so much that you would sacrifice your only Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus, to die on a cross so that we might receive eternal life. So precious and monumental, this gift will forever be the cornerstone of my faith.

Help St. Mark to share the good news of your gift in creative ways as we live out our daily lives. Lead and guide us to find the lost, the lonely, and the weary souls all around us who have yet to receive the gift of your Son. Allow your light to shine brightly through each of us as we carry out your mission to lay down our lives so as many as possible experience Jesus!

Holy Spirit be with us now, let us feel your presence. Guide us with joyful hearts and bless us with fruitfulness as we work together through the many facets of this capital campaign that will pave the way for the next 50 years at St. Mark. Use each of us to inspire new generations, to sow diversity in our community, and to grow your kingdom.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

ROB HOWES

Elder, Education Team Leader for The Next 50 Years

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 22

Sunday, September 29th

Vision Sunday 4

Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come.

Psalm 71:18

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, I rejoice knowing your presence is always with me, just as your presence is with St. Mark during this capital campaign. I have faith knowing your almighty power will still be present for the next generation. You love the next generation, even before they are born, and yet we share one faith with them.

Help the younger generation at St. Mark carry on the legacy of faith. Bless their outreach efforts and ministries so as many as possible experience Jesus here.

I pray especially for our kids and youth ministries at St. Mark. Guide and grow the faith of this next generation to know the love of Jesus. Also, continue to bless, protect, and provide for the incredible mission of *Our World for Children* as you have these last twenty years.

God, use me however you'd like to help update and expand our church, your house, for *The Next 50 Years*. I've been so blessed by this church, and I pray the same will be true for thousands in the decades to come.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

JERRY PORTER

Elder and Director for The Next 50 Years

DAY 23

Monday, September 30th

You are rich in everything—in faith, in speaking ability, in knowledge, in the willingness to help, and in the love you learned from us. So now we want you to be rich in this work of giving too.

2 Corinthians 8:7 (ERV)

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, I come before you today asking you to make me mindful of your presence.

In the rush of my busy, everyday life, I sometimes find myself challenged to take some time to just be in the moment with you. I often think that I need to be in control of the path my life is taking, but the reality is that you are the one in control. So, I look to you this day for guidance in all things, including my finances.

God, I know you are glorified when I speak or when I serve but I want you to also be praised when I give of my finances, that others may experience your grace through my generosity. Help me to give to you without compulsion or resentment, but to be, as your Word says, “rich in everything”.

As St. Mark begins this giving journey, help us to live each day with the next 50 years in mind so that we may live out our mission to lay down our lives so as many as possible experience Jesus.

In Jesus’ name. Amen.

JULIE HOWES

Early Commitment Dinner Coordinator for The Next 50 Years

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 24

Tuesday, October 1st

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Matthew 6:33

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, so often I think of giving to you as an afterthought, giving what I have left after I fulfill my household bills, my needs, and all of my wants. I confess I so rarely think of giving to you first because I am clouded with earthly desires, and filled with worry and anxiety that I won't be able to provide for the things I feel are necessary to life.

Forgive me, Lord. And as you forgive me, renew me to seek you first in all I do.

Please help me realize that when I give my worries, thoughts, and anxieties to you, my heart will be lighter. Please give me the faith to believe your promise that when I seek you first, you will richly provide for all my earthly needs.

I pray the same for St. Mark, God. It's exciting to see how you continue to draw more and more people to experience Jesus at our church. Use the season of this capital campaign to help us drop the burden of worrying about the little things, and to seek first your kingdom with our finances.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

JENNIE SANDEL

Commitment Day Coordinator for The Next 50 Years

DAY 25

Wednesday, October 2nd

Let each one of you bring a gift in proportion to the way the Lord your God has blessed you.

Deuteronomy 16:17

Please pray aloud:

Heavenly Father, thank you for the wonderful and numerous blessings you have given to me. Everything I have—my abilities, my possessions, my resources—are from you. You have given me my job, house, my home, my family, my finances, and countless other things.

All you ask is that a portion of what I received be given back to you, and to do so with a generous and cheerful heart. Forgive me for not always recognizing the blessings that you have given me and for my stubbornness to give.

Help me and guide me to be a good steward of everything you have entrusted to me and to give in proportion to what I have received with a generous, thankful, and joyous heart. Make me a bold giver, Lord. You have blessed me to be a blessing, God!

As St. Mark moves forward for another 50 years, may my giving go above and beyond to reflect my gratitude for what you have given me. Use my gift to be a blessing to St. Mark and others in the Battle Creek area, that all may come to know Christ.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

DAN GERBER

Creative Gifts Coordinator for The Next 50 Years

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 26

Thursday, October 3rd

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

2 Corinthians 8:9

Please pray aloud:

Father, I know that I am a sinner with many faults. Faults that are seen and known by others and faults that are known only to you. Despite my faults, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to die for my sins.

When he lowered himself to human form, he became poor for my sake. But through his poverty, you made me rich with the gift of salvation and eternal life. Thank you, God, for loving me so much!

Help me today to see all the riches you have given me—whether it's my talents, passions, finances, or other resources. You've given it all to me!

Give me a heart to joyfully give a portion of my riches back to you. Help me to remember that doing so will glorify you and grow your kingdom at St. Mark and the greater Battle Creek community for the next 50 years and beyond. As I give back to you, God, use my gift to bless others with the riches of Christ's love.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

MICHELLE SPRYGADA

*Media Team Leader for The Next 50 Years and
Administrative Director for Our World for Children*

DAY 27

Friday, October 4th

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce.

Proverbs 3:9 (NLT)

Please pray aloud:

Dear Heavenly Father, you are a mighty and awesome God. You are my King and God. Thank you for always loving me! You are the compassionate, just, and generous, Father.

Lord, I commit to giving you the first and best of the wealth, time, and talents you have given me. May I be a good steward of them and use them to further your kingdom with future generations.

Everything I have is a gift from you, so help me to honor you by being a good steward of what you have given me. Lord, grow in me a generous spirit so that I may bless others with what you have blessed me with.

As we prepare for *The Next 50 Years*, help me to be generous with my wealth, time, and talents to be a blessing to future generations. Use my wealth to build your kingdom. Use my talents to be a blessing to your kingdom. And use my time to love your kingdom.

Thank you, Lord, for letting me be a part of building your plan, I can't wait to see what you are going to do!

DAVE HUISINGA

Prayer Coordinator for The Next 50 Years

THE NEXT 50 YEARS

DAY 28

Saturday, October 5th

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.

Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV)

Please pray aloud:

Father God, I often put you in a box and limit what you can do in my life, pulling you out only when I think I need your help. Other than that, I'm far too content to take control of my own life. Forgive me for my shortsightedness and for not trusting your goodness.

You love me so much and want to bless me more than I want to be blessed. Your presence and love are more than I could ever deserve or hope for. Thank you for loving me and wanting to have a relationship with me.

I stand on your promise in Scripture that you can do exceedingly and abundantly more than I can hope for or ask. Lord, we cannot imagine the good things you have in store for us over the next 50 years at St. Mark. Help us to be mindful of the people we have not met and of those not even born yet. As we enter this commitment season, let us stand on that promise and blaze a path for the next 50 years as we "lay down our lives so as many as possible experience Jesus."

In Jesus' name. Amen.

MARK SMITH

Prayer Coordinator for The Next 50 Years

DAY 29

Sunday, October 6th
Commitment Sunday

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only
God, be honor and glory for ever and ever.

1 Timothy 1:17

Please pray aloud:

O King, eternal and immortal, you are worthy of everything we own! I pray that you are pleased with the collection we present to you this Commitment Sunday. Take our offerings and the prayers we've prayed about this capital campaign and use them for the good and the growth of your kingdom!

Going forward, I pray for wisdom with these funds entrusted to us, Lord. Let your Holy Spirit give us foresight and discernment to anticipate the future needs of ministry on our campus, that we make the most of every dollar pledged.

In the same way, I pray for the unity of the church during the construction process. Sovereign Lord, let your vision reign supreme and unite us. Keep everyone safe, especially the workers. Guard our campus from damage or costly mistakes.

I pray all this so St. Mark may ever be a place where your kingdom would come. So as many as possible will find forgiveness, healing, direction, joy, and abundant life.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

CHRIS PAAVOLA
Senior Pastor

