



# A TWO-YEAR VISION INITIATIVE





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 (NIV)





Journey Community Church exists to help people **START** their journey with God, **STRENGTHEN** their journey with God, and **SHARE** their journey with God.

Over the last twenty years, we have seen this vision become a reality hundreds of times. Although we love to celebrate what God has already accomplished, I'm also extremely excited about what I believe He wants to do in the days ahead!

That's why I invite you to be a part of what will be a historic and monumental season in the life of our church. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, no matter what your current involvement level is, this is an opportunity for you to be a part of history in the making!

God is uniquely positioning us to share the gospel with a lost and hurting world. The area surrounding our church is the fastest growing area in Brown county. Our church is growing, people are seeking, and God's heart is wanting to reach them. That's why we are planning Prevail NEXT.

Prevail NEXT is a 2 year initiative that will help us share the gospel to thousands of people in the years to come. As you read what we have planned, I encourage you to consider the part God wants you to play in this endeavor. Imagine what He will accomplish through our church when every one of us decides we're going to invest in the eternal. We're going to dedicate ourselves to significant sacrifice. We're going to declare through our actions, "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 of all who are to come" Psalm 71:18

Mark Schmechel Lead Pastor





## **OUR STORY**



If you haven't yet met my family, allow me to introduce them: my incredible wife Becky and three wonderful (and now adult) kids- Sami, Emily, and Luke. It all started at UW Green Bay through a campus ministry, when Becky and I met. Four years later, we got married and moved to Greeley, Colorado where I took a Youth Pastor position. Four years after that, we moved back to Wisconsin with a dream of planting a church. We developed a core group of about twelve people and on September 12, 2004, Journey Community Church began in De Pere!



The early years were challenging. There was setup and tear down at De Pere Middle School every Sunday. As a small church, we faced financial challenges, fears and uncertainties. However, there was a growing and committed group of people during those early years. God was faithful! After seven year's at the Middle School, the time finally came to move to a small building in downtown De Pere on Wisconsin Street.



It was such a relief to not have to set up and take down every Sunday! We had a permanent house to worship. However, within 7 years our church outgrew the Wisconsin Street location and the search began for a new facility. Then the lord moved powerfully by orchestrating an opportunity to really grow again and we moved to Grant Street in 2019. Not long after we moved to this location, Covid hit. Thankfully we were stable! As the world re engaged in connecting with their communities, church attendance grew. god remaining faithful through all circumstances!





## LIFE CHANGE

#### ANYONE WHO BELONGS TO CHRIST HAS BECOME A NEW PERSON. THE OLD LIFE IS GONE; A NEW LIFE HAS BEGUN! 2 Corinthians 5:17



Thatsanee Wiser

I grew up in a small village in northeastern Thailand where people are very conservative. My parents are Buddhist, so I grew up learning to be a Buddhist as well. I loved going to temples, and listened to calming chanting. However, Buddhist chanting is done in Sanskrit, and I never really understood the meaning. Monks did teach in Thai a few times a month, so I learned about Karma and Reincarnations. As a Buddhist, I tried to follow the 5 precepts and the teachings of Buddha in general. The 5 precepts are nearly the same as the 10 commandments in Christianity.

Yet, I was still searching for God. When I moved to Alaska in 2020, I became very depressed. I did not know what I wanted in life. One day a friend of mine wished me a happy birthday. He said "May this be the year of meaning and wisdom and peace for you." The word "peace" is what I was looking for. So I started listening to a mindset podcast and some Buddhist monks on YouTube. It helped me focus on the positive, but I still felt lonely. Then I learned about Jesus's generosity. He always gives. In 2023, our family moved to De Pere. We were hoping to find a church so our girls could learn about God. We did not know where to start. However, I drove by Journey every day to drop the kids off at school. I really enjoyed reading messages on the sign out front. My favorite one was "come as strangers and leave as friends." So I told my husband that I wanted to go to Journey. The first time we visited the church was at the end of November 2023. Everyone was so welcoming. I loved the music and I enjoyed listening to the sermon. I sometimes didn't understand the sermon but I prayed that God would help me. In the mean time, I also watched the movie "Buddha" and learned more about Buddhism. I decided that staying Buddhist was the best for me. Later in May 2024, Pastor Mark did his 'Life after Death' series. That made me think harder about my faith. I prayed that God would help me to find an answer. At the end of May, I realized that I am God's daughter. For a long time, I struggled with the idea that I should be anything but Buddhist. I felt like it would be a betrayal of my family and culture but I realized that my faith had changed and I was a Christian. I felt so free and very happy. I am loved and forgiven and most of all, I don't feel lonely anymore. I feel more confident. I am at peace. I am thankful for our church and excited to be part of a church that truly impacts peoples lives.



Alex Kuske

Not growing up in a Christian home or, for that matter, in any sort of religious background, allowed me to not grow up without any misconceptions about God. When I was 17, my then girlfriend (now wife) told me we can date under one condition–I must attend church every Sunday. Easy. What I wasn't ready for, was for the Creator of the universe to completely flip my world upside down over the next couple of years. After being baptized, getting married and having 3 children, my life is a direct reflection of the transformation that Jesus can do in someone. He took a sin loving, drug addict who was only satisfied in pleasing himself, and made him into a new creation–loving righteousness and seeking God's will.



Nicole Sultze

Looking at my life before God, it seemed empty and lonely. I was angry, confused and lost. Then a big event in my life happened and I needed strength. I made the choice to turn to God. Coming to Journey Community Church has only strengthened my relationship with God and others. It has provided me a sense of belonging that I was looking for, a community of like-minded people that encourage you to continue to grow in your faith. The growth groups have been a tremendous asset for me. It not only helped me to gain friendships but also knowledge in God's Word.





**Bridget Leverance** 

I grew up knowing about Jesus, but I didn't really know him. When attending college, I started to have panic attacks, fearing "What's after death?" I put my faith in and sought value in earthly pleasures of money, appearance and pleasing others. Fear and anxiety took over my thoughts. I felt isolated and hollow. Looking back, I can see how God led me to my husband, to De Pere, to Journey, to my growth group, back to Jesus! During a panic attack, I prayed to God for a sign, and hope for the future. The next day, I found a hand written letter that had actually been delivered a day prior to my panic attack. "Life these days can be filled with anxious thoughts. Do you ever wish you could make them go away?" The writer wrote about Isaiah 35:4 "say to those who are anxious at heart: be strong. Do not be afraid...He will come and save you." I knew in my heart God was in charge of that letter, and in control of the past, present and future. Since that letter I no longer have panic attacks. I feel a weight lifted off my shoulders and am continuously reminded that nothing I have done or will do, will lead to my salvation. Jesus has graciously already done all the work for me! I know He loves me and is working in me every day. I have since been growing in my relationship with God through my community in church and growth groups as well as my own studies. I pray each day that I can live more like Jesus.

# WHAT IS PREVAIL?

Prevail is a vision for our future based on Matthew 16:18: Upon this Rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell will not <u>prevail</u> against it.

When Jesus said this to his disciples, he was in Caesaria Philippi in a place that was literally known in the past as the "gates of hell." So the significance is enormous, as He will build His Church on top of the gates of hell. It's like playing both offense and defense, as a church! What would that look like for us today? We laid it out in an acrostic:

**Plant Community Groups**: helping gospel centered groups in communities get started.

**Reach Surrounding Communities**: our target is a 5 mile radius around the church that we have been reaching out in various ways over the last two years.

**Expand our Campus:** we knew we would need to expand to reach more people.

**Virtual Presence:** through social media and our online broadcast, most people will check us out online before they come in person. We want this to be a good experience.

Additional Staff: with our growth, we have been and will continue to hire staff as needed. In the days ahead, we will be looking for a full time Worship Pastor and Youth Pastor.

**Intentional Discipleship:** discipleship does not just happen by accident. We have created a pathway toward intentional discipleship based on the 7 rhythms in the Rooted Network.

**Leadership Development:** we are constantly learning, growing, and developing leaders along the way as we navigate the future together.





We could not do it all at once, so we broke Prevail into two segments:

# **Prevail NOW**

New Ministry Expansion: sound panels, staff, saving toward church planting Operating Budget for 2 years: our operating budget has been met every month since before Covid

Wipe out Current Debt

We have done each of these between 2022-2023 (including paying off over \$900,000 and will soon eliminate our current mortgage!)

## **Prevail NEXT**

now our focus is

Plant Community Groups

Expand our Campus

Additional Staff

While the "**P**" and the "**A**" are continuing to receive our attention and focus, it is the "**E**" that requires funds outside of the operating budget, thus the need for this initiative.

## WHY PREVAIL NEXT?

We have seen God bring so many people through the doors at Journey! Below are the weekly average attendance numbers for both Worship and Journey Kids from 2022-2025.



These numbers do not include those watching online, and those not in attendance on that Sunday. There are days we have come very close to turning children away from our Journey Kids program! Sometimes there are over 90 kids back in the children's wing and have come close to capacity.

> We have expanded to 3 services in November 2024. We are in the fastest growing area in Brown County. People are searching for love, hope and God. The time is right now to expand and that is what Prevail NEXT is about!





WHAT WILL OUR EXPANSION LOOK LIKE?

The expansion includes over 17,00 square feet and will feature:

A 400 person state of the art auditorium

#### Auditorium

The auditorium can be used as a space for pickleball, volleyball, and basketball. The idea is to reach those who may not come on Sundays, but would come for sports or family activities.

#### **Children's Environments**

On Sundays, our Journey Kids will utilize the Roots (current auditorium) space for their large group sessions. The expansion will also include 4 new children's classrooms.

#### **Youth Space**

Roots, our Student Ministry will find space in the current auditorium. This will be a great space for teens to hang out, play games, worship and enjoy.

#### **Additional Spaces**

Remodeling the kitchen, adding a larger conference room and additional staff office.

#### Lobby

A lobby including a fireplace, plenty of seating, and a beautiful coffee bar to serve our guests.

# FLOOR PLAN

CHURCH EXPANSION 17,000 SQ FT EXPANSION









# RENDERING-AUDITORIUM

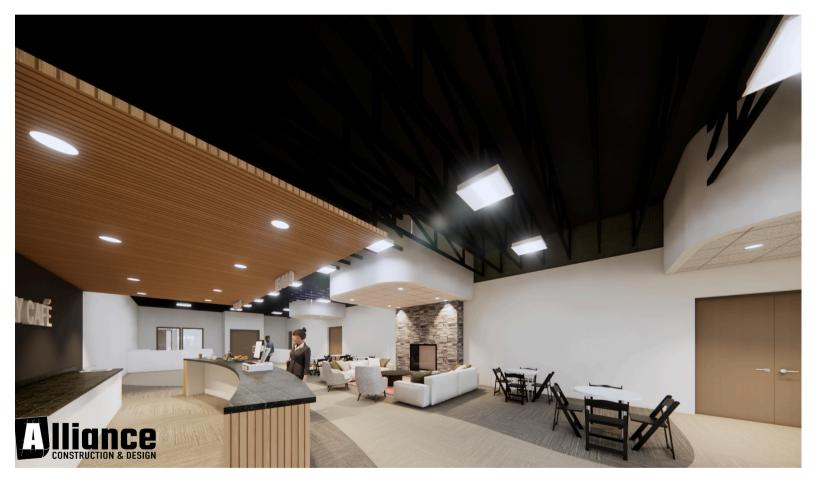






# RENDERING

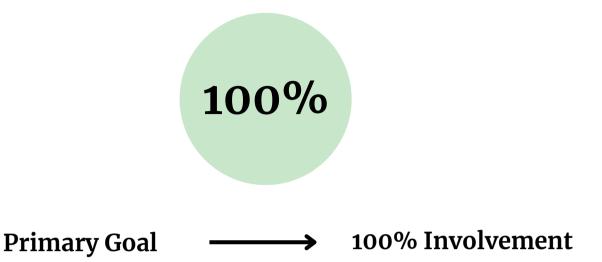
# FIRE PLACE



CAFE

## **HOW MUCH WILL EXPANSION COST?**

For this Prevail NEXT expansion, we have a Primary Goal and a Secondary Goal.

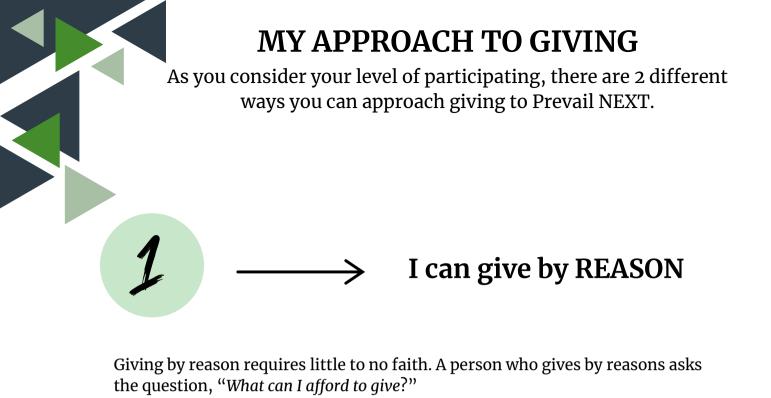


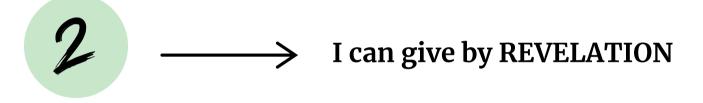
We want every single person who calls Journey home to courageously commit and give generously, as we grow in faith together.



The total cost of the project will be approximately \$4.8 million. We would like to reach \$2.5 million to have our mortgage managed well.







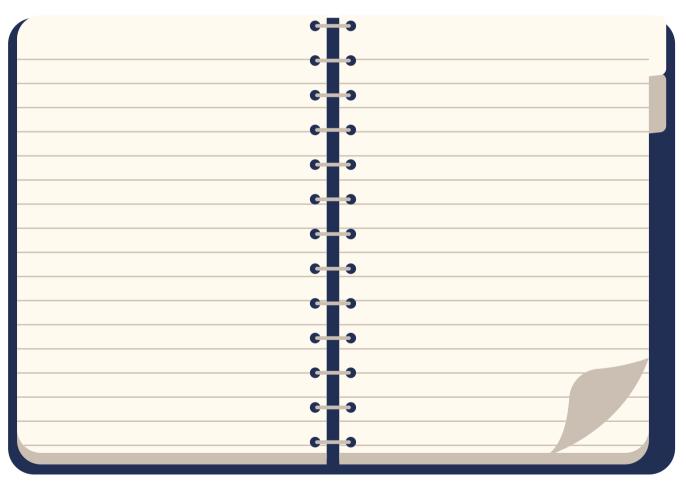
Giving by revelations requires faith in God to provide for us. A person who gives by revelation asks the question, "God, what do you want me to give to accomplish Your vision through me?"

"Some people say, 'God will never ask me to do something I can't do.' I have come to the place in my life that, if the assignment I sense God is giving me is something that I know I can handle, I know it probably is not from God. The kind of assignments God give's in the Bible are always God-sized. They are always beyond what people can do because He wants to demonstrate His nature, His strength, His provision and His kindness to His people and to a watching world. That is the only way the world will come to know Him." Dr. Henry Blackaby

## PRAYER

"My prayer for everyone who calls Journey home is that we would decide to give by God's Revelation, we ask God and listen to what God reveals to each of us. We hear His voice. Every gift is important, large and small. I pray that our earthly possessions become less important while God's purpose for us becomes more important. May we each feel the joy of allowing God's priorities to become our priorities." Pastor Mark Schmechel

## YOUR PRAYER



Take a moment and write your prayer for Prevail NEXT on the lines below

Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and He will give you everything you need. Matthew 6:33



## **MY NEXT STEP**

We are all on a journey, and that includes a generosity journey. As Martin Luther said "Every man needs two conversions: their first, his heart, the second, his wallet." Sometimes it takes a while for our wallet to catch up to our heart. But we want to take a step. Before starting any journey, it is important to recognize two things: where you are and where you want to go. Please prayerfully reflect on the Giving Ladder below, and consider the step God may be asking you to take.

#### LEGACY GIVER

Someone who decides to leave a legacy of generosity to continue to make a kingdom impact long after their time on earth. This person considers how God has blessed him or her and discerns how God could use them to leave a legacy that outlives them.

#### **IMPACTFUL GIVER**

Someone who gives 10% or more and determines that generosity will become the driver in their financial future. This person is honored and excited to give generously and sacrificially to special projects, and experiences God's many blessings.

#### INTENTIONAL GIVER

Someone who gives a set amount on a regular basis (such as 5%) and is working toward greater generosity, learning the joys and benefits of giving toward the kingdom of God.

#### SPORADIC GIVER

Someone who begins to give but is not able to give consistently yet. This person is beginning to discover the joys of generosity and desires to do more, but needs time to rearrange and prioritize their finances.

#### **INITIAL GIVER**

Someone who gives for the first time, starting their generosity journey. This is an important step as this person declares they are trusting God at the start of their journey.

## HOW DO I DETERMINE WHAT TO GIVE?



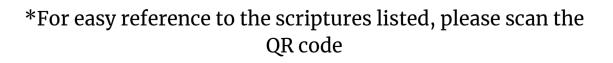
## Pray

"God, what part do you want me to play in fulfilling this vision for our church?"

## **Reflect on God's Word**

Consider the Scriptures. Spend time reading and reflecting on what God says in the Bible. Below are a few helpful passages. Take a moment and write down what you feel God is saying:

- 2 Corinthians 8:9
- 2 Corinthians 9:7-11
- 1 Timothy 6:17-19
- Psalm 24:11
- 1 Chronicles 29:1-20
- Matthew 25:14-30
- Luke 6:38
- Malachi 3:10
- Proverbs 11:25









## Think Sacrificially

God often speaks to us as we consider making sacrifices. Sacrifices remind us that we can live on less, and go without. It reminds us that we need Him. You would be shocked at how financial sacrifices can add up quickly and turn into generosity. "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." – Hebrews 13:16

- Sacrifice one specialty coffee drink/week (\$6.50 for two years)=\$676
- Donate plasma: first time givers receive \$750, plus \$50-\$75/appointment
- The average American family spends about \$300/month going out to eat. Consider going out 1/2 that and donating \$150 for two years = \$3,600
- The average American family tax returns is \$3,138

## Be Open and Fight Fear with Faith

So often, we think instead of listening to God. We logic it out with facts, numbers, and budgets and can be closed off to really hear what God wants. If it doesn't add up in our brain, we are closed off to it. We truly want to hear from God. And part of our challenge is to learn to live by faith. Often it is after we step out in faith, that we see God pour out His blessings. It may not make sense to us but we discover His blessings afterwards. God may lay it on your heart to do something significant. We have heard of people God has prompted them to:

- Sell something: ex: car or boat and donate the proceeds (Acts 4:37)
- **Gift Stock.** Do you have a stock you would not miss if you gave it away? Consider gifting your stock. There are tax advantages to give to a non-profit, especially in capital gains tax savings. We have an account with the National Christian Foundation to make this process easy and done right.
- Savings. Give from your savings. Although we encourage people to save to build margin, sometimes greed can take the form of security (we can never have enough in the bank, so we fail to trust God). Our goal in life is not to be a bank but a dispenser of resources to further the work of God on this earth.

## "We walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Corinthians 5:7

## Commit

Be courageous. It's time to take a step of faith and trust God! Remember, it will take all of us, together, saying "yes." It may be a bit scary. That's ok, that's where faith comes in. God may be testing our faith. He will bless us in so many ways if we step out and trust in Him. Imagine how you will *feel* knowing that you have stepped out in faith and were a part of building God's kingdom? It's time to commit-By faith.

## "Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him, and He will act." Psalm 37:5

# Lets' take a step together!







#### Chris and Dena Strebel

When we made our Prevail Now pledge, we were a two-income family. We made our two-year pledge of tithing plus end of year gifts based on that income situation. A couple months later while Dena was pregnant with our second son, she felt called to leave her full-time job and be a stay at home mom for the boys. At that time, we decided Dena would go back to work after her maternity leave to finish the year and then resign to stay home with the boys full time. As we were working out the financial logistics of becoming a one income family, we were worried about how we would meet the Prevail Now pledge we had committed to a couple months earlier. But God was faithful even in our doubt and He provided for us in a way only God could.

A month later I was asked by a colleague if I had any interest in starting a side business to assist a company that provides training in my specific field of work. We chose to pursue that opportunity the month before our second son was born and created a small consulting business. That same month, we gained a second client which ultimately led to an unexpected new full time opportunity for me the following year. Combining the developments above with unforeseen circumstances with Dena's job prior to her returning, it became clear to us that is was part of God's plan for her to stay home after our son's birth and not return to her full time job at all.

At the end of Prevail Now, the additional income from out side business plus my new full time position had almost replaced what we gave up with Dena's resignation. We cannot honestly say we had full faith that it would work out quite like that, but we did believe God had a plan for us and we trust his plan.



## Rob and Veronica Geurts

A year into our marriage, we decided to pursue legal placement of Rob's two daughters. Our attorney told us that our chances were slim and we'd have to settle for 50–50, at best. After this major decision to go for placement, the economy slowed down to the extent that Rob got laid off. This resulted in a substantial reduction of our income. As this dragged on for several months, we had a family meeting to decide what we could do to spend less and save money. One of the suggestions Rob had was to cut out tithing. Veronica's response was "that will NEVER happen!" Having learned that this is one area that God says He can be tested, we decided to continue tithing as we always had, at the same level, trusting that God would provide for us! The layoff lasted over a year and custody battle went on for over two years, but prayers were answered and we were awarded full placement. Rob went back to work full time and has worked steady ever since. During this period we actually became more financially stable and eliminated all of our debt except for our mortgage. GOD IS GREAT!



## Gift Chart

As you pray about the level at which God is leading you to participate in the Prevail NEXT, initiative, consider using the gift chart below as a reference guide to inspire and challenge you to commit courageously to this significant vision. Together, let's give generously, so we can increase our influence for Jesus through investment in things that will make an eternal impact.

## TWO YEAR GOAL: \$2.5M

NUMBER OF GIFTS	AMOUNT OF EACH GIFT	ANNUAL AMOUNT	MONTHLY AMOUNT	WEEKLY AMOUNT
1	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$5,208
2	\$250,000	\$125,000	\$10,417	\$2,604
2	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$1,041
3	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$520
7	\$35,000	\$17,500	\$1,458	\$364
10	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$1,041	\$260
20	\$15,000	\$7,500	\$625	\$156
20	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$416	\$104
30	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$208	\$52
30	\$2,500	\$1250	\$104	\$26
40	\$1000	\$500	\$42	\$10
50	\$600	\$300	\$25	\$6

#### Primary Goal: 100% engagement

We want everyone who calls JCC home to take his or her next step in discipleship and grow in generosity.

#### Secondary Goal: \$2.5 million

This will allow us to be here for the NEXT generation!

Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think - Ephesians 3:20

## **HOW DOES GIVING WORK?**

Are you ready to **GIVE GENEROUSLY** to Prevail NEXT? We are excited about reaching future generations and can't do it without your generosity.

#### Here is how it works:



You can automate your giving by using the app, online, or bill pay through your bank. Be sure to designate it for **<u>Prevail NEXT</u>**.



If you are giving out of stored assets (stocks, mutual funds, real estate, etc) and would like to transfer funds through the National Christian Foundation, set up an account with them, and the funds will easily transfer. Again, there are excellent tax advantages for this. Please consult a financial professional for advice related to your particular circumstances.



You can always continue to give to the normal ways we describe each Sunday, such as cash or checks through the boxes on the wall. Be sure to designate it for **Prevail NEXT**.



Please continue to give your regular giving as normal. When you give to Prevail NEXT, please use an additional transaction. For example, if you give monthly through the website or app, one transaction would be your regular giving. Another transaction would be your Prevail NEXT giving. You would be making two transactions per month instead of one.

\*Please do not take your regular giving and pit it toward Prevail NEXT as this will Hinder operating costs.

If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office at 920-336-7418 or email office@journeydepere.com.



## Prevail NEXT: Building for the Future Frequently Asked Questions

#### Q: What is Prevail Next?

A: Prevail Next is a two-year faith journey at JCC, focusing on reaching more people with the hope of Jesus. It's a spiritual process of seeking God's will for our church's future and aligning our resources with that vision. We already have a space problem and it is critical to our future that we make room for children, teenagers, and adults who are searching for Jesus.

#### Q: What are the goals of Prevail Next?

A: Prevail Next focuses on three key areas:

- Plant Community Groups: Launching community groups in surrounding areas to reach the next generation through outreach and potential church planting.
- Additional Staff: Expanding our pastoral team with a full-time Worship Pastor and Youth Pastor to better serve our growing congregation.
- **Expand our Campus:** Expanding our facility to accommodate current needs and position us for future growth.

#### Q: Why is JCC undertaking Prevail Next?

A: Our church has experienced significant growth. Our average weekly attendance has nearly doubled in the last three years, leading to overcrowding in our current facilities. In 2022, our average in-person attendance was 197. In 2025, we are averaging so far 360. Our current auditorium only holds 184 and we have gone to three services. In Journey Kids, we have almost had to turn children away from participating. Finally, the Town of Lawrence is rapidly growing, with new housing developments nearby. We are in the fastest growing area in northeast Wisconsin. We need to expand to meet current needs and prepare for future growth.

#### Q: What are the specific expansion plans?

A: We plan to add 17,000 square feet to our existing building, including:

- A new 400-person multi-purpose auditorium.
- Renovation of the current auditorium for youth and children's space.
- A new lobby with a fireplace, cafe, and seating.
- Four new Journey Kids classrooms.
- A new conference room and pastor's office.
- General updates, including a kitchen remodel.
- Increased parking capacity.
- Removal of the parsonage to increase parking.

#### Q: How much will the expansion cost?

A: The estimated total cost is \$4,800,000.

## Prevail NEXT: Building for the Future Frequently Asked Questions

#### Q: How will we fund the expansion?

A: We aim to raise \$2.5 million in pledges, which will enable us to secure a \$2.3 million loan.

#### Q: When will the expansion start and end?

**A:** Construction will begin once we have secured \$2.5 million in pledges. The Prevail Next campaign runs from June 1, 2025, to May 30, 2027.

#### Q: How will the operating budget be impacted?

A: We anticipate increased costs for HVAC, electricity, and cleaning. We are also likely to hire additional staff to manage the expanded facilities.

#### Q: Are we getting out of debt to go back into debt?

A: While being debt-free is a good goal, our primary mission is to proclaim the gospel and fulfill the Great Commission. We have shown to be good stewards of our finances and will continue to be good stewards of our finances.

#### Q: Why expand? I prefer a smaller church.

A: We want to honor God's potential for growth. We see God moving and reaching people through JCC, and we want to provide the space for that to continue. The heart of JCC, our authentic community, will continue in growth groups. Who are we to tell God what size church He wants us to be?

#### Q: What will remain the same?

A: The core values of JCC, such as community and authentic relationships, will remain unchanged. Growth groups will be key to maintaining our close-knit feel.

#### Q: Why not plant a campus/church instead of expanding?

A: We see it as a "both/and" strategy. A healthy, growing church supports church planting. Church planting is to reach new communities, not to solve main campus congestion. Plus, we want to do it well and when the right leadership is in place.

#### Q: How will pledges work?

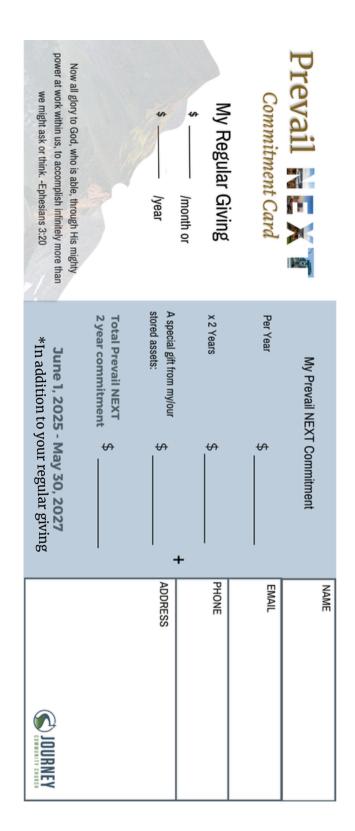
A: We will ask everyone to prayerfully consider their role in this vision. Pledge cards will be turned in on Sunday, May 4. Pledges are confidential.





For more Q & A scan the QR code

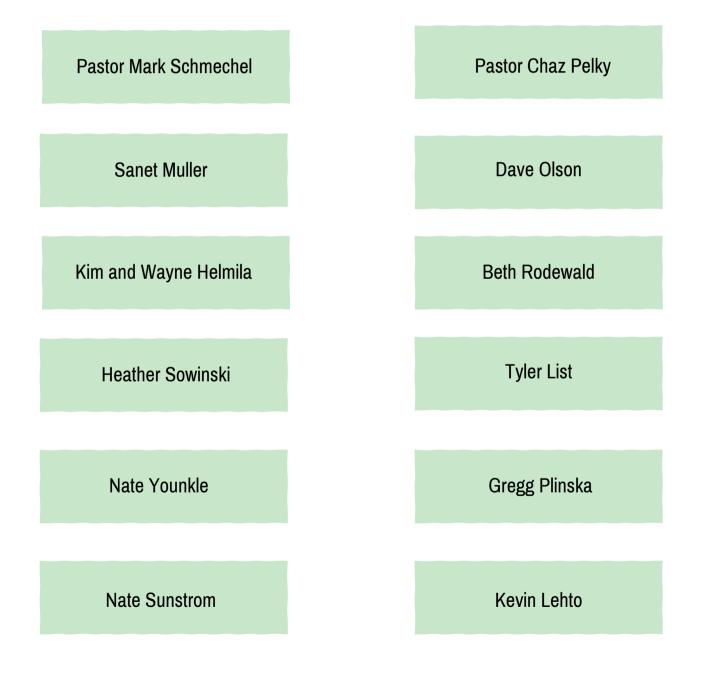






# Prevail NEXT Leadership Team







# Prevail



