



Together We Grow

not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice

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A Word from Our Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Our church has a history of generously meeting needs that arise in our church and community. Once again, we are faced with a great need and great opportunity.

We believe that 4 years ago the Holy Spirit led us to a plan called Challenge to Build. It was a plan to expand our facilities so that we could be better able to reach our growing community for Jesus Christ. We responded with obedience to the leading of God as we understood it and as a result God has blessed us tremendously.

God has blessed us with unity, love, and joy as a church family. He has blessed us with wonderful growth as new families have joined our church and he has blessed us with the joy of seeing many people being baptized as believers in Jesus Christ. Our Sunday School classes are filled with children and adults studying the Word of God and our sanctuary is filled with people who have come to worship God and hear from him.

I am convinced that we would not be where we are today if we as a church had not obeyed God's leading in giving sacrificially. Obedience to God always leads to blessings from God. And now we stand at another great opportunity in our church.

What will we do?

We know God desires to continue building his kingdom through WRBC and we know that if we are open to God and obedient to his leading, He will bless us in even greater ways in the years to come. I trust that is the desire of your heart. Together we will grow, God's kingdom will be built and God will be glorified through us.

Brother Hal



Pictured below are two ground breakings separated by approximately 20 years of time. The first one was on February 4, 1990, and the second on July 20, 2008.





What is Together We Grow?

"From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." **Ephesians 4:16**

What is "Together We Grow?" It is a ten week campaign to guide our church in our efforts to seek God's will for our church and to align ourselves to his will. And specifically it is to put us where we need to be spiritually and financially so God can continue building his kingdom through us in the days ahead.

These ten weeks are divided into three sections and accomplish God's will in our church.

1. Four weeks of preparation from January 8 – February 5.
2. Four weeks of intensive prayer and information, February 6 – March 4.
3. Two weeks of celebration and collecting of pledge cards, ending on Victory Sunday, March 18, 2012.

By seeking God's wisdom, each family can determine their Together We Grow commitments. 'Not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice' is the emphasis for our program. Though everyone's gifts may not be equal in quantity, each family should give sacrificially.

"...I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing." **2 Samuel 24:24**

Testimonies Will Be Coming

During the next few weeks during Sunday and Wednesday services we will enjoy testimonies from church friends and family. They will share testimonies of their commitment to our Together We Grow program and relate how they reached their decisions in response to God's leadership. The first testimonies will be given Sunday, February 12, 2012.

They will express the convictions and enthusiasm of our people for our church and will bless and enlighten each of us.

"...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Philippians
1:6

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Hebrews
10:24-25





How God Has Worked Through the Years

In 1987, the Madison Baptist Association realized the need for more churches in the Huntsville area. Huntsville was growing with Space related jobs that were coming to the area. As a result, five new churches were started in the Huntsville area. One of those five churches was Winchester Road Baptist Church (WRBC).

The Madison Baptist Association purchased 12 acres of land for WRBC and several nearby churches agreed to assist in the startup of the church. At first, meetings were held in members' homes and garages. The first official church service was held on March 2, 1987, at Jackson Way Baptist Church since there was not yet a meeting place for WRBC.

WRBC started with 42 charter members and in 1988, Pastor Hal Howard was selected to lead this new church in its quest to serve the community for Christ. And in 1990 WRBC became formally organized. Once there was land, it wasn't long before there was a church. At first it was merely a trailer, then a small trailer with a steeple. But it was a beginning and by this time, there were 60 members.

Next came the sanctuary and East wing that was built completely by volunteers with the help of Carpenters for Christ. Then later, the fellowship hall and more rooms were added, the sanctuary was enlarged and another trailer for office space was brought onto the site.

We continued to grow and in 2007 we realized that we needed to expand our facilities once again so we could reach more people for Christ. The church was asked to earnestly pray for God's wisdom and direction in exactly how to do this. In April 2008 we believed that we needed \$100,000 cash in hand to proceed with our building plans and in 6 weeks we had just over \$100,000 that people in the church gave. In the summer of 2008 building plans were completed and enthusiastically approved by the church at a projected cost of \$1,060,000.

In September of 2008 we asked the church to pledge to give an amount above their tithe for the next 3 years to help pay for these new facilities. This effort

was called "Challenge to Build." It was a time in which people were asked to sacrifice as God led them. And people did just that. We sacrificed greatly and over \$320,000 was pledged for the period of October 2008 - September 2011. This was a tremendously exciting time for our church as we saw God move and provide in some incredible ways.

Construction began in December 2008 and it was completed in August 2009. It was completed on schedule and slightly below budget. It was a wonderful process of unity for our church.

People have continued to give to the building program and through December 2011 just over \$322,500 has been given. For this amount of money to be given during such bad economic times is tremendous evidence of God working through us to build this church.

Now we are enjoying these facilities and watching how God is blessing us in so many ways.

Pictured above is a photo of our first church — a mobile home with steeple we used as our church for a time. Next is our first church building. To the right is the youth trailer and new building completed in 2009.

Banquet

The upcoming Together We Grow banquet will be held in celebration of our success through prayer and sacrifice. It will be held on March 4 at 5:00 p.m. in the church sanctuary. This event promises to be a night of fellowship and celebration long to be remembered at WRBC.

The banquet will mark the inspirational climax of our Together We Grow campaign. Every person who attends our church will be sent a special invitation to be present at this momentous celebration. Children sixth grade and under will be cared for at a children's party at WRBC. Anyone seventh grade and older will be invited to attend the banquet. The meal is completely free of charge and there will be no solicitations.

A Together We Grow hostess will be calling each household within the next few days with an invitation to the banquet and to answer any questions that you may have. Please be ready for the call and have your numbers prepared for reservations at the banquet and children's party. We look forward to joining you in celebration at the banquet!

Please Pray

Why is prayer so important for our success? The definition of prayer is as follows: "Prayer is the act of attempting to communicate with a deity or spirit. Purposes for this may include worshipping, requesting guidance, requesting assistance, confessing sins, as an act of reparation or to express one's thoughts and emotions. The words of the prayer may take the form of intercession, a hymn, or a spontaneous utterance in the person's praying words." Praying can be done in public, as a group, or in private.

So why do we need to pray during the Together We Grow campaign? First of all, we must be sure that all we do is according to God's will, not our own will. Without God's spiritual guidance, it is impossible for us to make wise and correct decisions. Following our own hearts instead of God's heart often gets us into lots of trouble that could have been avoided with just a little prayer.

Secondly, prayers are very powerful. When you pray, you are not just tossing words up into the air. You are communicating with the Lord God Almighty! Throughout the Bible, you will find examples of people who prayed — powerful people, slaves, rich people and poor people. A heartfelt prayer can avert destruction, stop the sun, bring fire down from heaven and save a city. How many of us have been heartbroken and desolate only to be brought the peace promised by God through simple prayer?

God loves us and wants to hear from us. He already knows our hearts, but he wants us to know His. To do this, we must make the effort to communicate with Him. And by doing that one small act, we gain everything — peace, hope, guidance, strength, protection and endless love and mercy.

During the period of February 6-18 prayer teams will be visiting in each home of our church members. The purpose of these visits is to pray together about your family's needs and the growth of our church.

If for any reason you don't want a prayer team to come to your home, contact the church office by February 5, 2012.



Our desire is to visit with each family, so if a prayer team has not met with you by February 15 please call the church office.

So please be in prayer for the Together We Grow campaign and for our church. Ask God to touch your heart so that you find the correct path for your own personal contribution through time, money and sacrifice.

TOGETHER WE GROW

A reality through...

FAITH "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." Mark 11:24

PRAYER "I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name." John 16:23

SACRIFICE "Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops." Proverbs 3:9

Look What God is Doing!

Since our Challenge to Build program began three and a half years ago, God has blessed us in many ways. The following charts show some of what God has done among us. It is not just building a building that has led to the blessings of God; it is obedience to God's leading that has led to his blessings.

Obedience to God always leads to blessing from God.

Average Weekly Church Attendance by Calendar Year

2009 • 175

2010 • 202

2011 • 244

Average Weekly Sunday School Attendance by Church Year

Oct 2008 – Sept 2009 • 134

Oct 2009 – Sept 2010 • 132

Oct 2010 – Sept 2011 • 149

so far this church year • 179
(Oct, Nov, Dec of 2011)

New Members by Church Year

Oct 2008 – Sept 2009 • 17

Oct 2009 – Sept 2010 • 25

Oct 2010 – Sept 2011 • 36

so far this church year • 23
(Oct, Nov, Dec of 2011)

Baptisms by Church Year

Oct 2008 – Sept 2009 • 4

Oct 2009 – Sept 2010 • 9

Oct 2010 – Sept 2011 • 15

so far this church year • 8
(Oct, Nov, Dec of 2011)

TWG Steering Committee

The Together We Grow campaign is led by a group of leaders within the church who are committed to the success of our endeavor. Each person will head up a committee to ensure that everything possible can be done so that our church can be used of God to grow his kingdom. The Steering Committee members are as follows:

Pastor: Hal Howard

We can have no spiritual campaign without the leadership of our pastor. Brother Hal is very excited about the growth of our church so that we may better reach our community for Christ. He will aid in this campaign through his preaching and teaching throughout the next several weeks.

Director: Scott Hutchins

The director heads up the steering committee and makes sure that everything flows smoothly throughout the coming weeks. He will make sure that all committees work together for one goal and will help in any areas that need assistance.

Secretary: Amy Wilburn

The secretary will prepare all necessary forms and materials to be used throughout the campaign. She will also keep track of results from commitment visitations.

Spiritual Emphasis: Charles Sullivan

The spiritual emphasis director will make sure that every facet of our endeavor is immersed in prayer since without prayer there is absolutely no hope of success. He will be responsible for prayer visitation, public testimonies and special Sunday school lessons.

Promotion: Gena Dawson

The promotion director is responsible for the publicity of the whole campaign. It is essential to make sure that the Together We Grow campaign is in the forefront of every members' thoughts and prayers. To this end, she is responsible for newsletters, the brochure, presentations, posters and all printed materials.

Banquet: Dale Cassidy

We love to eat and fellowship. For that reason, the banquet director will plan and coordinate a wonderful banquet in celebration of our campaign's success. She will also plan a children's party so that childcare will be provided.

Advanced Commitments: Kirk Thompson

The director will guide leadership families within the church to make their pledges before the banquet.

O LORD our God, as for all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name, it comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you.

1 Chronicles 29:16



Ground breaking ceremony.
July 20, 2008.



Calendar of Events

- Jan 29 Deadline for Poster Contest
- Feb 6-18 Prayer Visitation
- Feb 12 Church Growth Sermon and Testimonies
- Feb 15 Prayer Meeting and Testimonies
- Feb 19 Church Growth Sermon and Testimonies
- Feb 20 Advance Commitment Event
- Feb 21-24 Advance Commitment Follow-up
- Feb 22 Prayer Meeting and Testimonies
- Feb 26 Stewardship Sermon and Testimonies
- Mar 4 Special Sunday School Lessons, Testimonies, and Banquet
- Mar 5-18 Return Pledge Cards
- Mar 18 Victory Sunday

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