

# The Next Gen

## CAMPAIGN FAQ



“And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.”

2 Timothy 2:2

### **Are we continuing to see effective ministry through the presence of buildings on Washtenaw Ave?**

We celebrate the way in which God has used these physical structures and their proximity to campus to transform lives. Our buildings are not the mission themselves, but they create space for the ministry we believe God has called us to in Ann Arbor. In these spaces we continue our commitment to worship Jesus, teach Scripture, pray together, build authentic relationships, invest in the next generation, and equip people to live sent. Many alumni mark these places as the site of significant spiritual moments in their lives.

Because of their location next to the University of Michigan and in the heart of Ann Arbor, these buildings help us sustain a long-term Gospel presence in a uniquely strategic place. Investing in them is one way we support the vision of being a vibrant, reproducing, multi-generational church that lives out the Greatest Commandment and the Great Commission.

### **What specific ministry happens in these spaces that wouldn't happen otherwise?**

These spaces make possible weekly worship gatherings, student ministry, home groups, discipleship groups, leadership development, prayer, hospitality, and meaningful community connection.

The Frieze House, in particular, has become a hub of ministry. It is open from 8am to midnight every day for students and city members. Many students come throughout the day to study, spend time with friends, or meet with the Lord. For some, it has become a refuge, especially those navigating difficult living situations. The prayer room is regularly used for personal times with God as well as for rhythms like all-campus weeks of 24/7 prayer. One person recently left a note that read, “The church has historically been a sanctuary. This space was one for me through a very challenging time. Thank you. – a former Muslim.”

On Fridays, Frieze is set up as a coffee house where free lattes are served, creating a natural environment for students to invite friends and build relationships. The house also includes study spaces, student lounges, meeting rooms, a worship and prayer room, a media studio, a kitchen for retreats and hospitality, a theater room for gatherings, lawn space for events and outreach, and serves as a home base for Pancake Outreach.

These spaces provide consistency, accessibility, and a relational environment that would be very difficult to replicate in temporary or rented settings.

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### **Why are we aiming to raise funds right now?**

The urgency is rooted in both stewardship and mission. Both of our buildings are aging properties with unique maintenance needs, particularly the historically-designated Frieze House. Recent capital reserve studies indicate we need to set aside about \$100,000 per year above normal operating expenses just to maintain and repair them. Without a long-term plan, these costs could consume as much as one-third of our annual budget - dollars that currently go toward student outreach, discipleship, and our presence in Ann Arbor. Acting now allows us to address this proactively and faithfully rather than waiting until the burden becomes greater.

### **Is this the right time for a campaign given where our church is right now?**

It is a fair question, and one we have considered carefully. This year marks a significant milestone: we are celebrating 20 years in our sanctuary and concluding our current ten-year vision. This makes it a uniquely appropriate moment to reflect on our history while preparing for where the Lord is leading us next.

The physical needs of our facilities are real and the opportunity is strategic; delaying a long-term plan would only place greater financial pressure on future ministry. While no season is perfect, we believe this is a meaningful time for New Life to act with wisdom, unity, and faith for the sake of the generations to come.

### **What is the Legacy Fund and how does it work?**

The Legacy Fund is New Life Church's long-term plan for stewarding the buildings God has entrusted to us. It is structured as a Single Charity Fund, similar to an endowment. In the near term, we will draw from the principal to help cover immediate capital needs. Over time, our hope is that the fund will grow enough to generate the annual income needed for major repairs, maintenance, and improvements to both the sanctuary and the Frieze House.

Unlike regular giving, which supports ongoing ministry and operations, the Legacy Fund is focused on sustaining these physical spaces so they can continue to serve worship, discipleship, hospitality, and mission for generations to come.

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### **Why are we investing in buildings instead of people or direct community needs?**

This is not an either-or choice for New Life. We believe we are called to invest in both place and people. Our buildings enable much of the ministry we care about, including worship, discipleship, hospitality, and outreach. For example, for years our off-campus home groups struggled to gain traction, in part because of the challenge of finding consistent meeting space. Since we began regularly using the Frieze House, those groups have gained stability and have grown year over year. Investing in these spaces directly strengthens our ability to disciple people and build community.

### **Why both buildings? What is the value and role of each one?**

Each building plays a distinct and important role in New Life’s ministry. The sanctuary serves as a central space for gathered worship and the shared life of the church. The Frieze House has become a strategic ministry hub for students, youth, discipleship, hospitality, prayer, and outreach. It offers more of a home environment, which is especially significant as over thirty percent of incoming freshmen have little or no religious background. For some, walking into a sanctuary can feel intimidating, while walking into a home with a smaller group to explore faith feels more accessible. In recent years, we have seen people come to faith from atheist, Muslim, New Age, and other backgrounds, often through these more relational environments. Together, these two side by side buildings give New Life a uniquely strong and flexible ministry presence in Ann Arbor, right next to a major research university. They are a rare and God given stewardship opportunity, and both play a meaningful role in advancing our mission.

### **What is the financial goal, and how was it determined?**

Based on the extensive work of our finance committee and staff, the short term goal is to reach a Legacy Fund balance of \$1.5 million by the end of 2029, then eventually see the Legacy Fund grow to over \$2 million. We plan to continue raising funds from outside donors, and we need to fund the current expenses of both buildings, so it may take some time to reach the longer term goal. A capital reserve study by Michigan Reserve Associates helped us answer that concretely, identifying a need for approximately \$100,000 annually. While ambitious, this goal is grounded in a realistic assessment of our long-term facility needs.

Our specific goal of raising \$1 million from our congregation was informed by your honest feedback during surveys and interviews. Reaching this milestone will move the project significantly forward and provide the momentum needed to engage our New Life Alumni.

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### **How were the priorities for this initiative decided?**

The priorities for this initiative were established through a combination of professional assessment and spiritual discernment. Leadership integrated findings from two capital reserve studies by Michigan Reserve Associates with insights and prayer from the Council of Elders, Fiduciary Board, Deacons, and key outside donors.

In determining our focus, we evaluated the immediate physical needs of our properties alongside their long-term impact on our ministry. This initiative isn't about addressing every possible project; it's about being faithful stewards of the strategic role these buildings play in reaching the next generation and responding to the specific responsibilities God has placed before us.

### **What happens if we don't reach the goal? Is partial funding still meaningful?**

Absolutely. Any progress made toward our \$1 million goal significantly reduces our future risk and strengthens our ministry capacity. Crucially, every gift moves the mission forward and signals to outside donors that our church is deeply invested in its own future. We will always prioritize the most critical needs first, ensuring that every dollar given is used responsibly to steward the properties God has entrusted to us.

While every contribution helps protect our operating budget from emergency repairs, our ultimate aim is a fully funded Legacy Fund that ensures our facilities are secure for the next generation. To this end, we will continue to pursue fund raising activities beyond this campaign. Our Board and Council retain the authority to potentially sell the Frieze House if we cannot afford it in the long run, but we would exhaust all efforts to prevent that from happening.

### **Will this initiative create or require debt?**

No - the campaign will not create or require debt. Furthermore, our goal is to move forward in a financially responsible way that minimizes or avoids long-term debt whenever possible. The purpose of the Legacy Fund is to create a sustainable source of funding for capital repairs and maintenance so that future generations are not burdened by the need to take on debt for these types of costs.

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### **How will decisions be made about what gets funded first?**

We are committed to a process that is both professionally rigorous and mission-aligned. Our Fiduciary Board, leveraging their expertise in engineering and financial planning, has created a strategic, multi-year schedule based on our recent capital reserve study. This allows us to prioritize projects that have the greatest impact on our safety and ministry capacity. By balancing immediate urgency with long-term stewardship, we ensure that every dollar is used to protect the most critical assets of our church and support the next generation of ministry.

### **How will the Legacy Fund be managed and who is accountable for it?**

The Fiduciary Board, which holds the primary authority over New Life’s finances, is responsible for the oversight and management of the Legacy Fund. The fund is managed through rigorous processes and strict accountability measures that align with our church’s broader stewardship practices. Because this fund is vital to the long-term mission of New Life, our leadership is committed to handling every dollar with the utmost seriousness, wisdom, and professional care.

### **What safeguards are in place to ensure wise stewardship of these funds?**

We are committed to transparency, accountability, and wise decision-making. That includes leadership oversight, budgeting processes, regular review, and clear communication about how the funds are used. Our goal is to steward every gift with integrity and in a way that is consistent with the mission and values of New Life.

### **Will we receive regular updates on fundraising progress and impact?**

Yes. We want the church to stay informed and encouraged throughout this process. Regular updates will share both financial progress and stories that remind us why this matters, including the ministry impact these spaces make possible.

### **Will my financial commitment remain confidential?**

Yes. Individual giving and commitments will be handled with care and confidentiality.

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### **What is being asked of me, and how should I decide what to give?**

We are inviting everyone who calls New Life home to prayerfully consider how they might invest in the next generation. Because our financial situations are all unique, the amount each person gives will look different. The goal is not equal giving but equal sacrifice, thoughtful and meaningful participation as each person responds to the Lord's leading.

### **How does this commitment relate to my regular giving?**

This initiative is intended to be over and above regular giving, which continues to support New Life's ongoing ministries and operations. Both matter. Regular giving sustains present ministry, while the Legacy Fund helps secure the spaces that support that ministry for the future.

### **What does “equal sacrifice, not equal giving” mean, especially for those with financial burdens?**

This principle recognizes that generosity isn't measured by the size of a gift, but by the faith and sacrifice behind it. We know that many in our church are navigating real financial pressures, whether that's student loans, medical bills, or simply being at a different stage of life.

Because everyone's season is different, participation will look different for everyone. For some, a gift may be substantial; for others, it may be a simple or symbolic gesture of support. What matters most is a sincere, personal response to God that honors your current financial reality while still participating in our shared future.

### **What are the different ways I can give (cash, assets, etc.)?**

In addition to cash giving, some may choose to give through assets such as stocks and bonds. More information and guidance will be available for those who want to explore these options.

### **Are alumni or people no longer in Ann Arbor being invited to participate?**

The current Next Gen Campaign is specifically focused on our local congregation with a goal of \$1 million. To fully reach our longer term Legacy Fund target, we will need the partnership of New Life Alumni and friends who have moved away. Our strategy is to continue to engage these groups through a separate, dedicated effort. By reaching our congregational goal first, we create the momentum and demonstrate the commitment necessary to effectively invite alumni and others to join us in this mission.