



# SOTC Ministry Expansion Campaign FAQs:



(Revised 3/18/25)

## 1. What is the purpose of this Ministry Expansion Campaign?

Jesus tells us our goal is to make disciples. Our mission is to share the salvation of Jesus. The strength of our congregation, and our location here in Fort Lauderdale, is our superpower. With your support we can fulfill our mission and bring real hope to more people. *Building Bright Futures, Anchored in Christ.* “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” Hebrews 6:19.

Today our ministry and buildings need significant enhancements. While our School and ECC ministries are alive and well, we need to invest in these ministries to allow them to grow and continue to improve. Specifically, we have set a goal of \$600,000 to address these needs: 1) Playground improvements, 2) Roof and siding repairs, 3) Sealing/painting exterior walls, 4) Air conditioning (replacement of most of our 27 units that have reached their maximum life), 5) Upgrade security system, 6) New electronic sign along Commercial Blvd, 7) Audio/Visual updates in sanctuary, 8) Upgrade computer networks.

Additionally, we are committed to reducing our mortgage, because money that we are currently paying for interest on that mortgage could be used to enhance our mission outreach in the future.

## 2. Do we have estimates for the building repairs or air conditioning replacements or playground remodeling? Updated March 18, 2025 based on new cost estimates (and some discounted services we were able to negotiate)

1) Playground - \$250,000, 2) Roof and Siding and gutters - \$100,000, 3) Sealing and painting exterior \$60,000, 4) AC replacement - \$300,000 total for multiple units, 5) Security System - \$15,000, 6) New Frontage Sign - \$20,000, 7) A/V in Sanctuary \$60,000, 8) Computer network - \$250,000

## 3. What happens if we do not reach our goal? How will we accomplish the repairs?

We have every confidence that God will move among us in a mighty way. We will adopt a prioritized method of allocating resources for maximum impact in our ministry. All our gifts, regardless of the amount, will be dedicated to ministry enhancement and sharing the hope we have in Christ.

## 4. When does the campaign start?

We will have a launch event on Sunday, February 9, 2025. Our “sneak peek” of the campaign launch is starting NOW so that you can make a gift in the 2024 tax year if you would like. Your donations are welcome any time!

**5. Can my friends or family give? Is this campaign limited to members of Shepherd of the Coast?**

Everyone can give, because everyone has been granted gifts from God. We encourage you to ask your friends and family to make a gift, and to ask if your employer has a “matching gift” program. For our ECC and School families, your children will benefit from this campaign because the majority of the funds will be spent to improve facilities that are used by the ECC and School – that may make this campaign attractive to your friends and family.

**6. Is there a link to give online?**

Yes – you can use this QR code:

or visit our website to find the special page for the Campaign:



**7. How will this impact regular giving?**

This campaign is designed to encourage giving above and beyond regular giving. Our regular giving has not kept pace with the costs of operating our ministries. For example, our current budget was adopted with a \$176,000 deficit. It is our prayer that everyone will continue to give regular gifts, and also will search their hearts to provide additional gifts as part of this campaign. We invite you to experience the true joy of giving generously.

**8. Can I give to a specific project or does everything go into a general campaign fund?**

The Executive Team has spent a great amount of time looking at the needs and establishing goals for the campaign. From these goals the team has prioritized immediate needs. We appreciate all help, and would never turn away a gift, yet we ask you to consider allowing us to utilize your gift to accomplish the priorities established. If you still desire to give to a specific project, then please speak with a member of the Executive Team.

**9. Why can't we just borrow more money?**

We recently had to increase the amount of our mortgage so that we had enough funds to cover our operating expense shortfall. When we borrow money we pay the same fees and rates as others who are borrowing, which rates currently are near 7%. That means that we owe interest, just like others who borrow funds. The amount we pay each year just for interest on our mortgage requires us to forego ministry activities we want to pursue.

**10. What ways can I contribute?**

Givers at every level are valued and encouraged. You may choose on your commitment card to contribute in a variety of ways: an early gift, multiple gifts, a lead (large) gift, weekly or monthly gifts, a transfer directly from your retirement account (to save you from some income tax, for example, on required minimum distributions), a gift of stock or real estate or some other asset. The campaign will continue for 3 years, and you can plan for your gift as you desire. We ask that you return a commitment card so that we can thank you for your gift and celebrate the overall success of the campaign with all the members.

**11. Will someone tell me how much I should give?**

No. We Believe God will guide every member's decision and trust that everyone will pray for God's direction on their capability to give. We are lifting up our faith in a God who promises to do "immeasurably more than we can ever ask or imagine." Ephesians 3:20. *We are inviting giving that is in addition to your current offering*, trusting God to bless sacrificial gifts that are cheerfully, joyfully and generously received in response to His love.

**12. Why is it so important for ALL families and individuals to participate in the campaign?**

God has blessed our congregation with many people offering their gifts and lives to the Lord's service. Every person, every prayer, every talent, everyone's time and gift is important. The success of this campaign depends on everyone. We ask that everyone pray for people, opportunities, communities and possibilities to grow in God's grace here at Shepherd of the Coast. We also hope that each person commits to grow in faith by spending time in God's Word, in worship and at Bible Study, and being actively involved with your Church family at Shepherd of the Coast. This is not about equal giving. This campaign is about equal sacrifice. People of all ages can be blessed by learning to give generously and trusting God to provide for our needs. He does and He will! Your prayers to God and reflection will guide you to what is appropriate for you.

**13. How will we hear about our progress in achieving the goal of the campaign?**

You will hear regular updates in the weekly newsletter and at special events throughout the campaign. Contributors will receive confirmation of their gifts and annual reports from our Financial Coordinator.

**14. What if we exceed our goal? What happens to the extra funds?**

First, we will praise God for his abundance and the generosity of our supporters. Next, we will apply 50% of the extra funds to debt reduction, and the other 50% will go to additional ministry initiatives after being brought to the congregation for allocation.

**15. What happens if I cannot fulfill my commitment?**

We support your decision, which is your private decision, as to what you can commit and what you can give. If something changes or happens or you need to adjust your gift, then please let us know so we can make the adjustment. We trust and put this in God's capable hands.

**16. What if I want to have something named after me, like a memorial or honorarium?**

We love this idea for those who are making a large gift. Please contact us with your ideas and we'll discuss our needs.

**17. Is there a benefit to giving early?**

Yes! Early gifts help us get started with the most urgent needs of our building and facility, which helps us to glorify God and serve as a beacon to others to join us here and bring their children to our ECC and School.

**18. Is there a way to support this campaign even if I cannot give financially?**

Yes. There are many volunteer opportunities, and we welcome your assistance. Importantly, we ask that everyone pray for people, opportunities, communities and possibilities to grow in God's grace here at Shepherd of the Coast. You also can commit to grow in faith by spending time in God's Word, in worship and at Bible Study, and being actively involved with your Church family at Shepherd of the Coast.

**19. Can I provide in-kind gifts?**

Yes. We have many building-related projects that might be ideal for you or your employer or a friend or family member to provide services for, and your help making that contact would be valuable. Please contact us to discuss your ideas.

**20. How does this campaign promote the Gospel?**

Improving our facility. Improving the accessibility to our services makes our space more inviting and comfortable to visitors. Enhancements in technology make us more relatable to younger generations. Sharing the saving news of Christ is the center of all these efforts.

**21. When was our last campaign and what happened with the money raised then?**

Our last campaign was in 2016-2019. We set out to raise \$300,000 for operating expense deficits, capital upgrades, missions, and mortgage reduction. The \$240,000 raised during the campaign was spent as planned: \$63,000 to cover prior operating deficits, \$60,000 for Church steeple repair and school restroom remodeling and other capital upgrades, \$30,000 to missions (and the Fla/Ga Lutheran Church Missouri Synod District office), \$30,000 to mortgage reduction, and \$20,000 to the Lutheran Church Extension Fund for support of the campaign, with the remainder placed in the operating account for air conditioner replacements, etc.

**22. Are there tax benefits I should consider?**

God has granted us gifts to use for His ministry on earth. We are fortunate that there are many federal income tax benefits for making charitable contributions, and that any financial contribution to the campaign qualifies as a charitable contribution. There are reasons to make your gift soon, so that you can take advantage of deductions in this calendar year. Also, if you have “required minimum distributions” from your retirement account you can avoid income tax by having those distributions sent directly to our campaign. Please ask if you have questions.

**23. How will this campaign help us increase participation, attendance and school enrollment?**

These changes will improve access to and the overall experience of the services and events we offer. That will make participation here more possible for some, more likely for others, and therefore more fulfilling for all.