



ALL THINGS ARE
POSSIBLE



BEYOND...
PRAYER CALENDAR

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This November, as we begin the public portion of our church's Capital Campaign, we are embarking on a journey that requires faith, trust, and obedience. Scripture tells us that God is pleased with our giving, but more than that, Scripture tells us that God is pleased with a heart that is aligned with His. Participation in this Capital Campaign goes beyond simply writing a check or filling out a pledge card; we believe that God is inviting each of us to join Him on a journey of sacrifice and obedience. This journey begins with turning our attention to Him.

For the next 21 days, we invite you to commit to praying for our church's Capital Campaign. We have provided a daily Scripture passage, along with a prayer prompt written by Dr. Dortch, leading up to our Celebration Sunday on Sunday, November 24. We have also provided small tiles for you to take home as a reminder to pray for the Capital Campaign. These tiles are available in the Narthex and outside of Heritage Hall. Leave your tile on your office desk or in another prominent place where you will see it each day, or put it in your pocket each morning, and as you notice the tile throughout your day, let it serve as your reminder to pray for the Capital Campaign.

On Sunday, November 24, we will bring our pledge cards and these tiles to the Combined Worship Service, where you will have an opportunity to offer your pledge and bring your tile forward. These tiles are a symbolic picture showing us that each person in our church body is valuable and has a part to play in our Capital Campaign. The tiles will be used to create a mosaic somewhere within our new construction, where they will serve as a continual reminder of how the Lord truly "is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us" (Ephesians 3:20 NIV).

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 3

BEYOND . . . THIS GENERATION

JUDGES 2:10-15

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3 | JUDGES 2:10-15

I believe as much as the next person that faith in God can be “caught.” We’ve all been around contagious people in terms of their spiritual fervor, who have made us want to know God more. But passing on faith is not an automatic thing. It requires concerted effort and structured witness. As we pray about passing on our devotion to those who come after us, let’s ask God to show us how our facilities might “facilitate” an ongoing witness to His kingdom purposes. Then those who come after us will not only know Jesus as we do: they will have all that they need perhaps to know Him even better.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4 | EXODUS 12:21-27

God’s deliverance is always costly. The Passover story reminds us of that fact. If the people had not been willing to make an “out of the ordinary” sacrifice they might never have made it out of Egypt. But because they did, God’s Death Angel “passed over” them, sparing their lives. It was a salvation that the nation never forgot, so much so that they came up with a way to convey it to the generations that would come after them. We, too, have a story of how God has worked wonders in our church’s midst. Pray that God would inspire us to “pass over” these words of witness to those who follow us. Pray that every lintel and door-frame in our church would speak to how the heart of our church must never take God’s mercy in our midst for granted.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5 | DEUTERONOMY 6:20-25

Children often ask the very questions that are on everyone's heart but no one is willing to speak them. Moses certainly recognized that trait among the younger members of Israel, and he wanted the elders to be ready for it. Everything the people were to say was to center around their obedience to God. "Do what God commands and be blessed; reject God's guidance and suffer the consequences." So goes the argument of Deuteronomy, a logic that holds true even to our day. What is God asking us to do as a church? That's the question that is before us at this time. Pray that God will show you how to express your obedience to the movement of His Spirit among us. Inquiring minds will in the days to come want to know about this very hour, and we should be ready to tell them and to show them.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6 | PSALM 102:18-22

The Psalmist is all about praise in the book that was to become the worship book of God's people. In fact, most of the Psalms contained therein are intended to be sung and chanted in the house of the LORD. While every place is an appropriate venue for praising God, there does seem to be something special about doing so in a space set aside for experiencing God. As you pray today for our "Beyond" effort, ask God to inspire us to treat every part of our church facilities as sacred space so that anything that goes on at any time will result in praise to God.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7 | PSALM 145:1-13

We tend to restrict our worship of God to one day a week. But when you look at the Psalms, worship is something that happens continuously. "Every day I will praise You," the Psalmist sings. MBBC is most definitely not a "one day a week" church. Few days go by without some meaningful ministry activity either happening within our walls or emanating from them. Pray that we will do much to advance God's purposes through each one of our church's ministries and that this proposed building plan will enable us to do more each day to these holy ends.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8 | 1 PETER 1:10-12

Peter's first letter was written to a group of believers that had never laid eyes on Jesus, but who had professed faith in Him. Their profession was only possible because of the faithful witnesses who had gone before them, like Peter himself. As Peter describes the transmission of faith, everyone would like to know Jesus firsthand, but only those on the receiving end of such testimony can bring people closer to the Messiah. Ask God today to put people in your life with whom you can share your faith in Christ. Pray that we might do that together as a church so that even the walls of our church will reveal not ourselves, but the Christ everyone needs to see.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9 | 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19

Where do we lay up our hope? Paul's counsel to Timothy warns us against placing it in things that can be so uncertain. It is better for us to see everything in life as a vehicle for grounding our hope in Jesus Christ. As we think about our church's proposed building campaign, consider prayerfully how it might be just the means we need to convey hope to a new generation. Pray that we will see it as a chance to lay up "a firm foundation for the coming age" that will enable people to take hold of Jesus—"the life that is truly life."

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 10

BEYOND . . . THEIR ABILITY

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-4

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10 | 2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-4

“I can only do so much.” That’s the lie we tell ourselves, which keeps us from experiencing the remarkable things God is capable of doing in and through us. After all, in a grace-based faith we don’t put any stock in human effort. Everything hinges on God’s faithfulness and our response. Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians highlights a church that understood this principle of devotion. As you read this text, ask God to give MBBC a “Macedonian” generosity that will enable us to move beyond what we think is possible to that which only God can do in our midst.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11 | 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-15

So much of the Bible reflects an agrarian culture. At one time they may have been something to which many of us who grew up in rural surroundings could relate. But as our times have become more urban industrialized, the Bible world seems far more remote. Nonetheless, Paul’s appeal to the “law of reciprocity” is very much where most of us live, regardless of our background. Consequently, we should be able to appreciate Paul’s challenge to the Corinthians to trust in God’s abundance to the point that they might be able to go “beyond” what they perceived they could do in meeting the needs that were before them. Pray that as we reflect upon what God has entrusted to us, we too might be inspired to be extravagantly generous on this occasion before us that our proposed project might reflect our deep appreciation for all God has done for us, and especially His “inexpressible gift.”

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12 | LUKE 21:1-4

How easy it is for some of us to assume that our gifts won't "move the needle" in terms of reaching a goal toward which God has inspired us to strive. Our gift seems so small that we easily could tell ourselves that we're just as better off not offering it. However, when you read the gospel accounts of the poor widow's offering, it appears that while her gift didn't necessarily "moved the needle" as far as the Temple treasury was concerned, it most definitely moved Jesus. So, which matters most, the "needle" or Jesus? Pray then that your gift (and the gift of everyone in our church) might move Jesus, as we emphasize what Jesus will surely appreciate—not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13 | MATTHEW 26:6-13

It's the small soul that sees extravagance as waste. Jesus, on the other hand, sees it as devotion. That's why He promised that what this anonymous woman did in anointing Him for His burial was her witness to His devotion, and something to be memorialized. Our discomfort with extravagance may well hint at our reluctance to sell out to Jesus. Pray that as we move forward in our Beyond campaign that we won't look for excuses to give extravagantly to what we believe, but rather that our giving will be something that points others to Jesus and something that moves Jesus to remember us.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14 | PROVERBS 11:24-28

The book of Proverbs offers us wise counsel for everyday life. The aim of each proverb is to provide faithful folk a path they might walk that will lead them to the fullest life. How interesting then that the writer gives so much attention to the importance of a generous heart. The size of a person's heart inevitably dictates the abundance that will come his or her way. Pray today that God will enable you to live by the principle of abundance instead of the principle of scarcity. Pray the same for the rest of our church; because if we do, our future will be a most hopeful one so that our church "will thrive like a green leaf."

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15 | 1 KINGS 17:8-16

People live by either the principle of scarcity or the principle of abundance. There is no middle ground. While the former creates fear and hopelessness, the latter breeds courage and hope. The story of Elijah and the widow at Zarephath reminds us of what God can do with what we make available to Him. Our needs are always met. Our futures are made secure. Ask God to deliver our church from the “narrative of decline” that affects too many of our sister congregations so that we might put at His disposal what God calls us to give in order to claim and not miss the good future He has for our church to know.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16 | MARK 8:1-10

The miracle of the Feeding of the 4,000 is not just a repetition of the more familiar miracle of how Jesus on one occasion fed a thousand more. Like its better known counterpart, this miracle involves people simply making available to Jesus that which they had brought with them to the occasion. What differs however is the surplus of the miracle Jesus performed. In this instance the seven basketfuls of broken pieces points the multitude to how Jesus had just done something that only God could have done. Pray that God would do the same as we participate together in our Beyond campaign and that at the end of the project we might all lift up our hearts in praise for what only God alone could have done.

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 17

BEYOND . . . WHATEVER ELSE IS EXPECTED

NUMBERS 6:21

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17 | NUMBERS 6:21

Is there any more unsettling word for people in our community than the word “average?” That word may be an aspiration for folk who live elsewhere, but for people in Mountain Brook it suggests a lack of effort at best and an ingrained deficiency at worse. We live in a community that demands excellence in everything, even from their church. The Old Testament mentions a group that embraced high expectations as their way of faith. The Nazirites were “holy to God” and voluntarily took vows to order their lives accordingly. Not many of their neighbors lived by such vows, but they held the Nazirites in high esteem for their willingness to do so. Pray that we will see our vows to the Beyond campaign as something more than just our contribution to a number. Pray that it will be something that will show us as “holy unto God” and an exemplary witness to a community that will not give notice to anything less than an exemplary church.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18 | 1 SAMUEL 1:21-28

Desperation will make people go beyond what anyone might expect them to do. But when you come to the end of your rope, what choice do you have? You go deeper into your soul than you ever have gone before in the hopes that God will see your dedication and honor it. Such was the soul of Hannah, mother of Samuel, who suffered from barrenness until in her desperation she promised God what she never thought possible—her son would be “lent unto the LORD” for all of his life. Once her son was born,

it would have been easy for Hannah to back out of her vow, but she didn't. She brought Samuel to Eli, the Shiloh priest, just as she had promised, and found great fulfillment in knowing something remarkable that God had done both in her life and through her life. Ask God to do the same in us as we make vows as a part of this Beyond campaign. Our level of desperation may not quite reach Hannah's, but our faithfulness will surely position us to experience the same joy as she when we put ourselves entirely at God's disposal.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19 | 2 CORINTHIANS 8:8-15

You can't force people to give what God hasn't compelled them to do. All you can do is remind them that every work God calls us to undertake is worth supporting and God has already made possible every provision for our accomplishing it. That's the approach Paul took in encouraging the Corinthians to receive an offering for the Jerusalem saints. Others had made their contribution to the effort, but Paul did not want to deprive the believers in as strategic a city as Corinth to not have the opportunity to join in. It wasn't the amount they might give; it was the willingness that mattered most to Paul. Pray that in our Beyond campaign we might show a willingness to give of what God has enabled us to gather so that we might make much of Jesus, who at Calvary gave His all for us.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20 | EXODUS 36:1-7

When have you ever heard a preacher tell people to quit giving? That was the situation Moses found himself in as the people he was called to lead gave so much that it was "beyond" the amount needed for constructing the tabernacle, the place of meeting God commanded the people to build. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had that same problem as a part of our campaign? While I'm not so naïve as to expect that we will exceed our ambitious goal to a degree that I will have to ask everyone to stop giving, I am confident that we can show a staggering level of willingness, one that will enable us to do all of the work we have heard God giving us to do. Ask God today to make you so willing.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21 | EZRA 2:68-69

The book of Ezra deals with the experience of the exiles who returned to Jerusalem from their time in Babylon. Everything they had once known was in shambles, requiring the faithful response of the entire nation to recapture anything of the glory the city of Zion had once known. That's why the book goes into such detail to enumerate tribe by tribe, family by family. Each was important to the rebuilding effort. And they came through. What the heads of the families gave was a breathtaking amount that reflected their hopes and their dreams for the Holy City. The place meant that much to them. Pray that God will cause us to reflect on how much this church means to us so that as we bring our freewill offerings to the Beyond campaign they will give witness to the hopes and dreams for our future ministries.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22 | MATTHEW 6:1-4

“When you give,” says Jesus. Notice that He did not say to His disciples, “If you give.” Clearly, His expectation was that His disciples contribute to God’s kingdom purposes, which was the central theme of his Sermon on the Mount. Sadly, most churches have an alarmingly high number of members who contribute nothing to their church’s ministries. Fortunately, our church exceeds the average percentage, as an exemplary church should. Pray that we will show similar generosity in this Beyond campaign. Though what we give will be done in secret, God will know, and will surely reward us with further opportunities to do His will.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23 | EPHESIANS 3:13-21

There is a thin line between confidence and conceit. However, the line is broadened when people locate their confidence in a source beyond themselves. That was Paul's counsel to the Ephesians in the prayer he offered to God on their behalf. Paul wanted the Ephesians to know that as long as they opened themselves to God they would be able to do "incredibly more than they might ask or imagine." Left to their own devices, their conceit would most likely result in their downfall. As we move forward in our Beyond campaign, pray that our church will look to God and not ourselves. Pray specifically for God to strengthen you so that through the power of the Holy Spirit, God might do something in you that would glorify Him not just in your lifetime, but beyond.