



# STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE



# Pastor's Letter

Everything that we do at New Community, the point of every gathering, every ministry, every decision, is to make disciples of Christ. We define a "disciple" as someone who passionately loves Jesus CHRIST, engages in authentic COMMUNITY, and radically advances the CAUSE of Jesus.

From day one, the mission of New Community wasn't to build a great church for ourselves. It was to see the entire city of Chicago be transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus, before we purchased this building we asked this question: "Will owning a building better equip us to TRANSFORM the city of Chicago with the gospel of Jesus Christ?"

And the answer is an EMPHATIC "YES!" We know that biblically speaking, a church has very little to do with a physical structure. The church of Jesus Christ is made of PEOPLE: passionate Jesus-followers who are committed to following their Lord and embracing His Kingdom agenda throughout their lives.



Peter Hong - Lead Pastor

BUT there are specific things that we can do with this building that will INCREASE OUR IMPACT in this community and the larger city.

In the first century, a small group of marginalized, persecuted people began a movement that eventually won over the most powerful empire. The book of Acts chronicles the story of this first century REVOLUTION. When you read its account, you realize something right away. It says repeatedly, "They ALL JOINED TOGETHER constantly in prayer. ALL of them were filled with the Holy Spirit. EVERYONE was filled with awe. ALL the believers were together and had everything in common. ALL the believers WERE ONE in heart and mind. ALL the believers used to meet together."

At significant times and places in Acts, the only way to describe what was happening was through the word "ALL." This was a movement of "ALL." Not "SOME" or "FEW," but "ALL." They changed the world because EVERYONE realized that a mission as expansive as this had no room for spectators, and they understood that they ALL had a part to play in God's mission! When we planted New Community 14 years ago, we believed that a movement of ALL could change this city, change the world, and in the process, change us.

Can you IMAGINE what would happen if a critical MASS of Christ-followers in this city lived their lives in ways that expressed the gospel? We could change the FABRIC of this city, and maybe even change the world.

The goal of any Christian should never be to find a church you like and sit in the back row. The goal should be to fully ENGAGE in the mission.

So embrace the IMAGINE Stewardship Challenge! WILL YOU move from just ATTENDING to COMMITTING, move from just WATCHING to PARTICIPATING, move from just RECEIVING to CONTRIBUTING, move from just CONSUMING to INVESTING, move from a life of INDIFFERENCE to making a concrete and tangible DIFFERENCE in your world for Jesus and the gospel? Will you, church, BE THE CHURCH?

# IMAGINE Directors' Letter

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As we embark upon this IMAGINE Stewardship Challenge, we reflect upon what it means for New Community to be a church. What is the church made of? Obviously, until recently, we did not have our own building, but that didn't mean that New Com wasn't a vibrant church that united a diverse group of brothers and sisters in our love for Christ and His cause in Chicago. What this new church building does provide for us is a brick and mortar commitment to remain in the city and the ability to utilize our church home to minister to Chicago in ways we couldn't before.

With our mission in mind, in faith we launch the IMAGINE Stewardship Challenge, believing that our church is going to achieve new growth in stewardship and spirituality.

The theme of this stewardship campaign, "Equal Sacrifice, Not Equal Gifts," is a call to search deep into our hearts and look for God's challenge to each of us. Jenny and I realized that as we did this, God challenged us to our core, and we reached greater levels of what it meant to give sacrificially. In turn, God blessed our spiritual growth as we realized how abundantly He has provided as we sought Him with all our hearts.

The commitments that each of us make during this campaign will be important to the vitality of our church. With these commitments and God's will, we will grow together as a church in CHRIST, engage in authentic COMMUNITY, and advance the CAUSE of Jesus. We pray that you will take this opportunity to join in this journey as we seek to fulfill our Lord's commission for our church.

In Christ,  
Ed and Jenny Gong  
IMAGINE Stewardship Challenge Directors



Ed and Jenny Gong - IMAGINE Directors

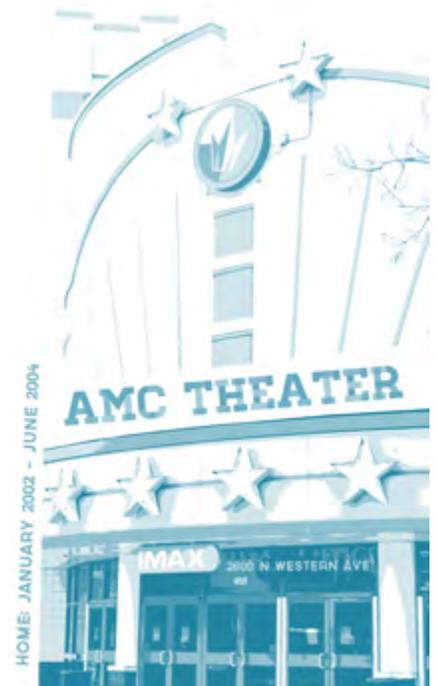
# Heritage of Our Church

In June of 2001, Pastor Peter and a small handful of other believers began meeting, praying, and casting a vision for New Community. Many of the connections came through North Park University where Pastor Peter and several other founding members were studying and engaged in ministry. The initial three groups that met in each other's homes that summer grew to five groups by fall with about 40 to 50 people meeting once a month at St. Sylvester's in Palmer Square to worship, share food, and pray together. From the beginning, the group prayed that God would build the community, bringing believers from diverse backgrounds who felt a strong connection with the vision of New Community to serve the city of Chicago.

The official launch of New Community came in January of 2002 when the group rented out theater 8 at the AMC Theater on Western Avenue. All the equipment and worship items were loaded and unloaded weekly into theater 8 using a trailer kept in a member's garage during the week. New Community rented the space per hour, and occasionally the movie manager would stand at the back gently reminding Pastor Peter to wrap it up in a timely fashion so that the theater would be clear for the showing of the day's first feature at noon.

The strict time limits on the worship space not only meant that Pastor Peter had to be conscious of the length of his messages, but also that the group needed a home during the week where ministry could happen. During this first year, the space at Francisco and Diversey opened for ministry. Staff offices, core group gatherings, worship team rehearsals and sometimes small groups were held in this space. The space became a place of outreach to the community where children stopped in after school for hot chocolate and homework help, where community dance parties were organized, and where ESL (English as a Second Language) classes were held. Next door to that space became the first iteration of the Warming Center, now called "Open Arms," where New Community members and homeless community members could share food, stories, and resources to help address some of the material challenges they were facing. The Warming Center was a hub of connection, but New Community also reached out to where homeless neighbors were living near the highway viaducts. Building relationships with neighbors out in the community has been the life of the church and the center of all the ministries.

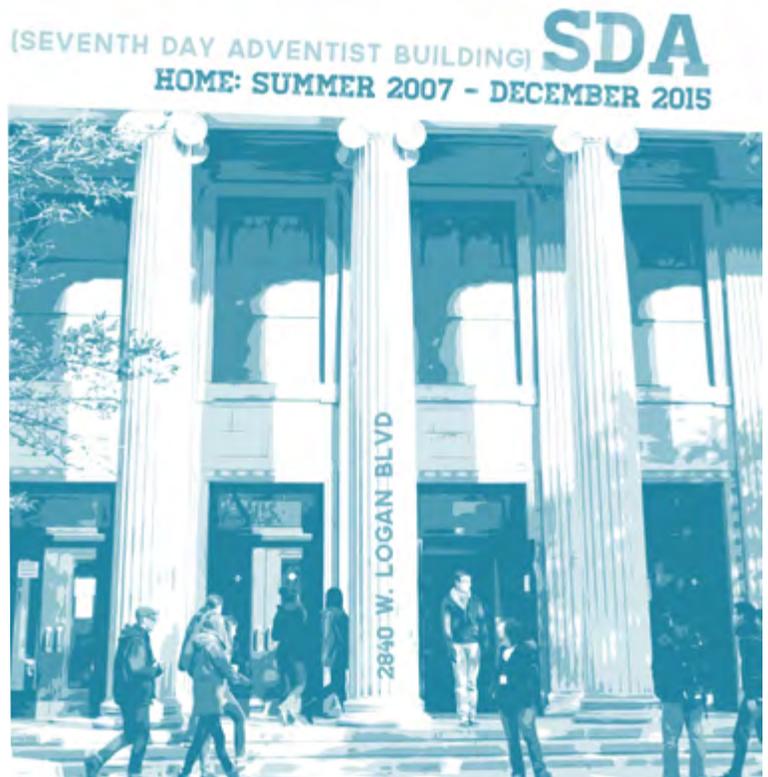
As New Community continued to grow with up to 190 to 200 attendees on Sundays, the need for more space became evident. Pastor Peter recalled how every time the church community prayed to find more space, someone would call out of the blue with just that. This happened around June of 2004, when the church moved Sunday worship to Inner City Impact (ICI).



During the next three years, the congregation grew to around 300 people with two services. In the interim, the church offices moved to Belmont and California and ICI also served as the site for ministry activities during the week.

Another transition came in 2007 when Easter services were held at the sanctuary at the Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) on Logan Boulevard. SDA was looking for someone to rent its space on Sundays, so several months later New Community moved worship from ICI.

A pattern at New Community has always been welcoming newcomers, equipping believers, and sending out disciples throughout and beyond Chicago. This happened in 2009/2010 when a group from New Community envisioned a church plant in Bronzeville. On Easter of 2010, New Community planted the Bronzeville church and regular services commenced.



During the next five years, families in the church grew rapidly with as many as 60 children in Kid City. Ministries also grew, with Open Arms moving to The Church of the Advent in 2014.

Ongoing efforts over the past ten years to locate and purchase a new building resulted in many opportunities, but just as many closed doors. It was not until the summer of 2015 that New Community learned of the sale of St. Luke's Lutheran Church just around the corner from SDA. After entertaining multiple bids, the owners of St. Luke's decided to sell the building to New Community, recognizing our mutual commitment to serving our neighbors. The building was purchased in October of 2015, and the first services were held at our new home in December of 2015.



# Advancing the CAUSE through Ministry

We want our church building to be a place where we're doing ministry throughout the week. As a renter, this has been difficult! Sunday worship celebration is an important part of our life together, but it goes much further. Ministry is not relegated to a "worship service," it is rather about meeting the holistic needs of the people throughout this city.

During the week, the following ministries meet in our church building:



- **ELIJAH'S FOOD PANTRY** (Tuesday, Thursday) – 500 families per month, 1,000 pounds of food per week, 15 volunteers
- **COMMUNITY DINNERS** (Wednesday) – 80 guests per week, 5 volunteers
- **OPEN ARMS** (Tuesday-Thursday) – 80 guests per week, 15 volunteers
- **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS** (AA/NA; 3 days per week) – 100 people per week

All these vital ministries are already meeting the physical, emotional, social, and psychological needs of our neighbors. These efforts are about following the footsteps of Jesus; He made it clear that He wasn't just about saving souls, but rather, redeeming every aspect of an individual. All of these services allow people to see a God who cares about all of a person's needs, not just their souls.

## Engaging in Authentic COMMUNITY

Being a "city within a city" means that we engage in authentic community. Although homes will always be some of the primary spaces for our church family to build community, we're so thankful that we have this space as another viable option for various groups to spend time in fellowship!



Another ministry door that opened because of the building will be the launching of our youth group! We had over 90 kids in church over the two services on Easter weekend. That's the average size of a church in America! Some of you know that we've had families leave the church over the years because we didn't have a viable youth ministry for the kids who got older (7-12th grade). As much as we hated to admit it, the reality was that a lack of a viable space played a factor in our inability to launch a healthy, sustainable youth ministry. Praise God for the gift of our church building!

We are launching another critical ministry this fall. One of the most powerful ways that we live as an alternate city is by showing the city out there how people of different races and ethnicities are breaking down walls that separate us and are actually living life together. We have plans to launch a sermon series in the fall called “Race Matters.”



The follow-up to that sermon series is the launching of monthly conversational gatherings around the issue of racial righteousness. IMAGINE folks from around the city gathering in this place to pray, worship, enjoy fellowship, and converse to help our church take active steps towards addressing issues of racial injustice in our city and country!

## Passionately Love Jesus CHRIST

Sunday service is our “front door.” It’s the place where people get “connected” to the mission of New Community. Everything that we’re doing to meet the social, emotional, and physical needs is critically important to the mission. However, the fundamental starting point is a vital relationship with Jesus! We’re excited about the fact that in this building, hundreds and eventually thousands of people from all over the city will come and hear God’s word, engage in passionate worship, and be empowered and challenged to live out the gospel in their mission fields.



Remember why we’re doing this. We’re doing it for the thousands who don’t know Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior. We’re doing it for the thousands at the brink of giving up on church because they’ve never experienced life-giving community. We’re doing it for the thousands who are hurting, broken, marginalized, and forgotten. We’re doing it for them.

## Building Renovations: IMAGINE the Possibilities

When we purchased the new church building, we knew significant renovations would be required to deal with a structure that was built in three phases over the last 110 years. In 1906, the initial sanctuary in the back of the church (including the kitchen) was built. In 1926, the current sanctuary was built, and in 1954 the fellowship hall and classroom wing were built. Since the building purchase, the church staff and building committee have been working with the architects and contractors to develop a renovation plan. They have been working to best address the structural needs as well as redesign the space to make it fit the culture of our church family. They have identified three key phases for remodeling our church building.

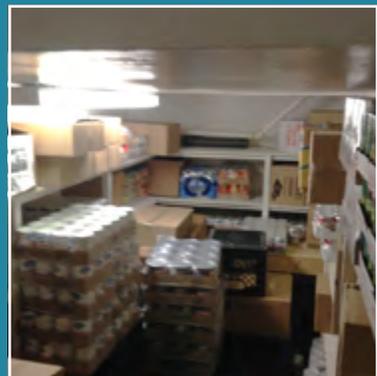
**Phase I** is what one of the architects referred to as the “non-glamorous” phase because it involves a significant amount of structural repairs to the west ends of the two main buildings (the Francisco street side). This work will stabilize the buildings, mend the leaky walls, and correct foundational faults. There will also be important electrical upgrades completed at this time. Although incredibly necessary, this work won't be easily seen. The aspects of Phase I that will be obvious are new bathrooms, a redesigned chancel (stage and altar) to accommodate our worship needs, redesigned offices, new windows in the fellowship hall and Kid City, new ‘circulation routes’ between the sanctuary and the classroom wing (no more creepy halls and stairs!), and repurposing some of the space near Kid City. The hope is to have this phase done by the end of 2016.

**Phase II** is a little more “glamorous.” This will involve the redesign/remodeling of the fellowship hall and the basement of the 1906 building. Most of us have not seen that space, but it includes a very old kitchen. The goal is to provide a functional space to expand current ministries.

Along with a building that needs repairs, New Community inherited two important ministries that nicely complement the Open Arms (OA) ministry. These are Community Dinners (CD) and Elijah's Pantry (EP). CD is just that, a free dinner on Wednesday nights at 5:00 p.m. that is open to the Logan Square neighborhood. EP is a food pantry that has been serving the community for over 30 years. It serves up to 500 families each month and is open every Tuesday and Thursday from 10-11:30 a.m. It is important to note that we also host various AA (Alcoholics Anonymous) and NA (Narcotics Anonymous) meetings throughout the week that currently meet in the lounge.

These programs (as well as OA) currently operate out of small, cramped spaces. All of them need a safe, working commercial kitchen with a walk-in cooler. EP needs adequate space to provide a smooth delivery system, including rolling racks so that clients can easily “shop” for their groceries. OA also needs space for its weekly clothing distribution (think big walk-in closet). As we bring our standards in line with that of the Greater Chicago Food Depository, we will have greater access to resources that will allow us to expand these ministries for our neighbors who are in need.

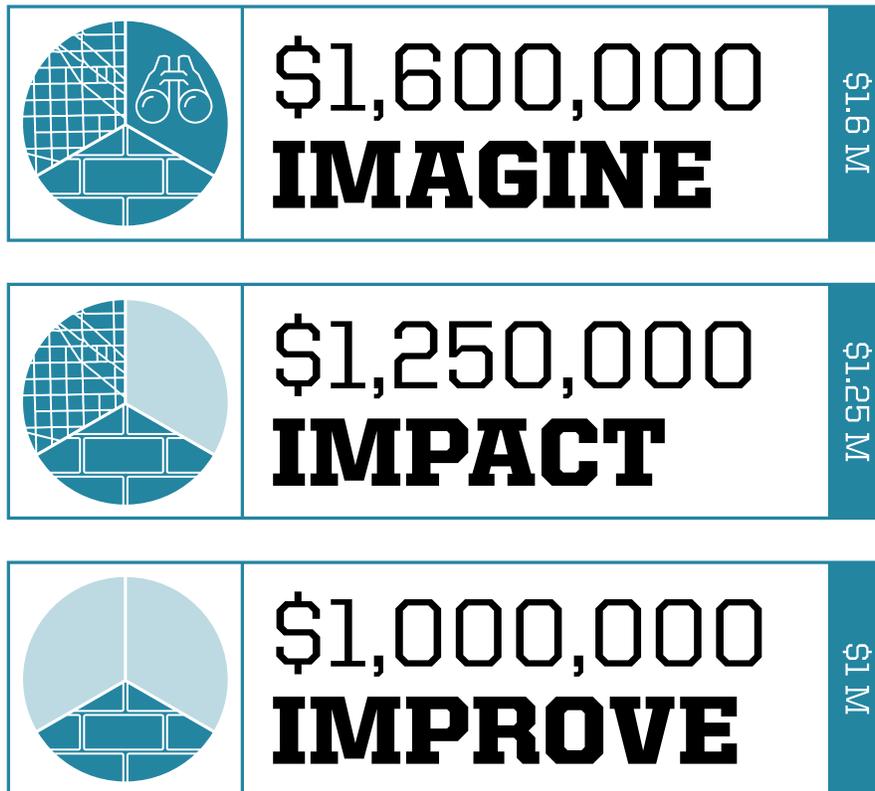
**Phase III** is the real “glamorous” part of the building program. There are two whole floors of the original 1906 church building to be redesigned – but only after the building itself is made safe and sound. There is already much excitement surrounding the launch of the youth ministry, and we can only IMAGINE the possibilities that are in store for that space. As we turn to Ephesians 3:20, we are reminded that “God can do anything you know - far more than you could ever IMAGINE or guess or request in your wildest dreams!” We look forward to all three phases of the building renovations, eagerly anticipating what God will do, in and through New Community.



Note: Phases II and III may be combined based on IMAGINE funding and further analysis by the architect. Their initial impression is that because the two buildings blend together, it would be difficult to rehab individual sections without completing everything at once.

# Financial Goals

Reaching \$1 million will allow for building improvements to make our church building more functional. \$1.25 million will allow greater impact for the community and the city of Chicago. Finally, IMAGINE what the future could bring with \$1.6 million! Imagine the lives that will be transformed by the Good News of Jesus CHRIST. Imagine the lives that will be transformed because of deep, authentic, reconciled COMMUNITY.



## My Personal Journey to a Sacrificial Commitment

In arriving at my decision to give to my Lord, and in support of the IMAGINE Stewardship Challenge, I will honestly consider and answer these questions:

1. Have I really prayed about my giving until I have received an answer from God?
2. Will this be truly sacrificial for me in my circumstances?
  - How will it change my lifestyle?
  - Will it rearrange my priorities?
  - What will I give up for my Lord?
3. Am I willing to be obedient to the known will of God, accepting this major challenge to my faith, and rising to the higher standard of giving sacrificially?
4. Does my heart respond with joy to my giving sacrificially at this level?

*“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” II Corinthians 9:7*

# Commitment Card

At the church-wide Celebration Event on Sunday, June 12, you will have the opportunity to make your commitment to sacrificial giving for the IMAGINE Stewardship Challenge. At this event, you will be given a commitment card like the one below to record your pledge.

The amount you pledge is for you to prayerfully consider. You can pledge a one-time gift, or you can pledge to give over a span of one to three years. We encourage you to ask God to give you wisdom and discernment, so that you may give sacrificially and joyfully, without compulsion, above and beyond your current "tithing" to New Community.

Your gift will make an impact on the future of New Community and the city of Chicago for generations to come!



## IMAGINE STEWARDSHIP CHALLENGE - COMMITMENT CARD

Because we believe in the building of God's Kingdom and want to be part of its ministry, we will endeavor to support the Building Fund of New Community by giving as noted below. We also commit ourselves to prayer, and to a continued openness to God's leading in this matter.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly for 156 weeks to Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly for 36 months to Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

For a combined 3-year **TOTAL of \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**IMAGINE Legacy Sunday, June 26, 2016**

*This "Statement of Intention" may be revised or cancelled should circumstances make it necessary.*

**"Equal Sacrifice, Not Equal Gifts"**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Member Participating In Giving: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

New Community Covenant Church | 2649 N Francisco Ave, Chicago, IL 60647

# Typical Contribution Chart

Weekly	Monthly	Annually	3 Year Total
\$10	\$43	\$520	\$1,560
\$15	\$65	\$780	\$2,340
\$20	\$86	\$1,040	\$3,120
\$25	\$108	\$1,300	\$3,900
\$30	\$129	\$1,560	\$4,680
\$50	\$215	\$2,600	\$7,800
\$75	\$323	\$3,900	\$11,700
\$80	\$344	\$4,160	\$12,480
\$100	\$430	\$5,200	\$15,600
\$125	\$538	\$6,500	\$19,500

Weekly	Monthly	Annually	3 Year Total
\$150	\$645	\$7,800	\$23,400
\$175	\$753	\$9,100	\$27,300
\$200	\$860	\$10,400	\$31,200
\$250	\$1,075	\$13,000	\$39,000
\$300	\$1,290	\$15,600	\$46,800
\$350	\$1,505	\$18,200	\$54,600
\$400	\$1,720	\$20,800	\$62,400
\$500	\$2,150	\$26,000	\$78,000
\$600	\$2,600	\$31,200	\$93,600
\$1,000	\$4,300	\$52,000	\$156,000

## Pastoral Staff



Lead Pastor:  
Peter Hong



Executive Pastor of  
Strategic Implementation:  
Kaitlin Kim-Sobeck



Pastor of Spiritual  
Formation:  
Michael Washington

## IMAGINE Cabinet



Campaign Directors:  
Edward and Jenny Gong

Follow-Up Managers:  
Mark and Emily DeLew

Support Services Directors:  
Sora Lim  
Daniel Jackson

Graphics Directors:  
Doug and Mara Vander Meulen  
Josh and Heidi Laabs

Publicity Directors:  
Arielle Deane  
Isabella Wang

Special Projects Directors:  
Michael and Sherri Horton  
Matthew and Tina Taube

Ministry Directors:  
Kenneth and Susan Lee  
Olivia Pan

Prayer Vigil Director:  
Lisa Choi

Stewardship Lesson Directors:  
Michael and Joni Emerson

Hospitality Directors:  
Andy and Stefanie Wang  
Michael and Shannon Krabill

Celebration Event Directors:  
Anthony and Sherene Pistotti  
Justice Pettigrew

Rally Directors:  
Teresa Gamble  
Mia St. Clair



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