

Fall 2023



# Gaining ↑ Ground

A VISION BOOK FOR YOUR JOURNEY





This book belongs to:

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You can reach me to return at:

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# A Note from Pastor Ronn

*Dear Church,*

I'm so thankful for you and the journey we are on. I'm grateful that Compass has been a people of adventure and faith for decades. In 1999 Compass Church purchased 10 acres of land. When we purchased the land, the mission was to see a church impacting the West Valley and helping people find their way to God. The hope was to raise up followers of Jesus who are loving God and loving people.

For the last 20 years, five of the 10 acres has been used to live out that vision. We have seen hundreds of people put their faith in Jesus and get baptized to declare their love for God. We have seen children, youth students and adults take steps of faith to follow Jesus. We have seen broken families and marriages restored. We have seen people move into the area and find a community of people who help them to mature in their faith. We have seen addicts get free and people who felt outside of the church finally find a place and a people where they belong.

The additional five acres of land has laid dormant and has been waiting for what is next. Gaining Ground is the next step to help people find their way to God. Gaining Ground is the catalyst for continuing ministry as we build a new auditorium, large indoor lobby and coffee house. Not only will our current church body be impacted by Gaining Ground, but so will many others that we don't even know yet! Expanding our building expands our reach, and will allow more people to experience our loving God through relevant Bible teaching, lively worship and comfortable spaces to create meaningful relationships with others. It propels us forward to continue our mission to reach the West Valley and beyond, and sets up a firm foundation of ministry for generations to come.

## Gaining Ground

This booklet provides a basic outline of the two-year discipleship journey set before each and every one of us. I am praying that every person who calls Compass Church “home” will engage in Gaining Ground as we impact our community for generations to come.

I need you to know this, church: Gaining Ground is just the beginning. Gaining Ground is the seed for the next season of ministry at Compass. I see the mission that Compass has had for decades continue to become a reality as we reach beyond Goodyear and plant campuses and churches in the cities and the world around us. I see people rising up after us to lead the church into the next generation. We are just pushing through the surface! Join us on this incredible adventure as we trust in our all-powerful and loving God to do something in us and through us. My heart and desire is for us - and others that we do not know yet - to know how wide, how long, how high and how deep God's love is.

**Let's gain some ground for God and for generations.**

Together,

*Ronn Smith, Lead Pastor*







1.

# Our History

# 1. A Promising Start

The church officially launched and began to meet in a school cafeteria.

1992

The Bible study began to accidentally become a church as it continued growing rapidly over the next few years.

1996

2003

Now known as Estrella Community Church, they moved into Palm Valley Theatre for services.

A small Bible study that began between friends in the West Valley became something that no one planned or predicted. It was in a living room that Compass found its beginning.





# 2. Challenges & Growth

Compass Community Church moved into its new building!

2005

2006

2007

Estrella Community Church changed its name to Compass Community Church and construction began at 16060 W Van Buren Street.

Building costs, internal debt and other difficulties began to spring up in the church. These challenges lead to the resignation of the lead pastor.

As Estrella Community Church continued to grow, the need for their own building became clear. In 2006 ground broke on what would become their own church campus.

# 3. Steps of Faith

A new vision is launched,  
creating a time of spiritual and  
financial healing for the church.

2007

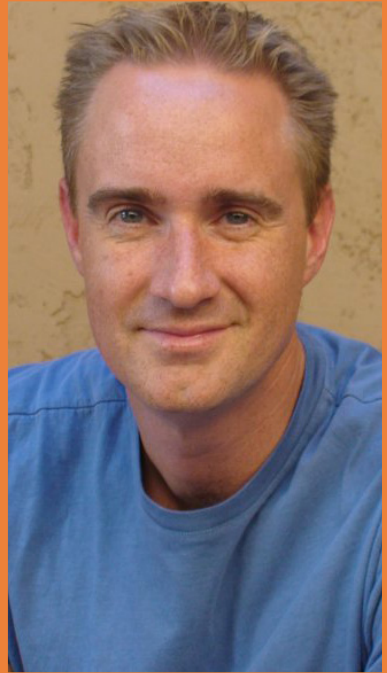
2008

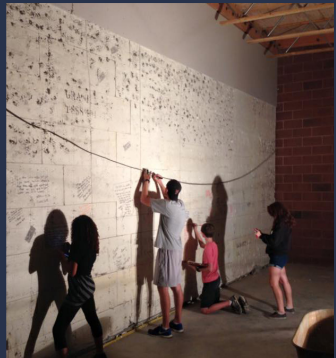
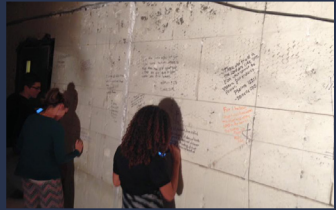
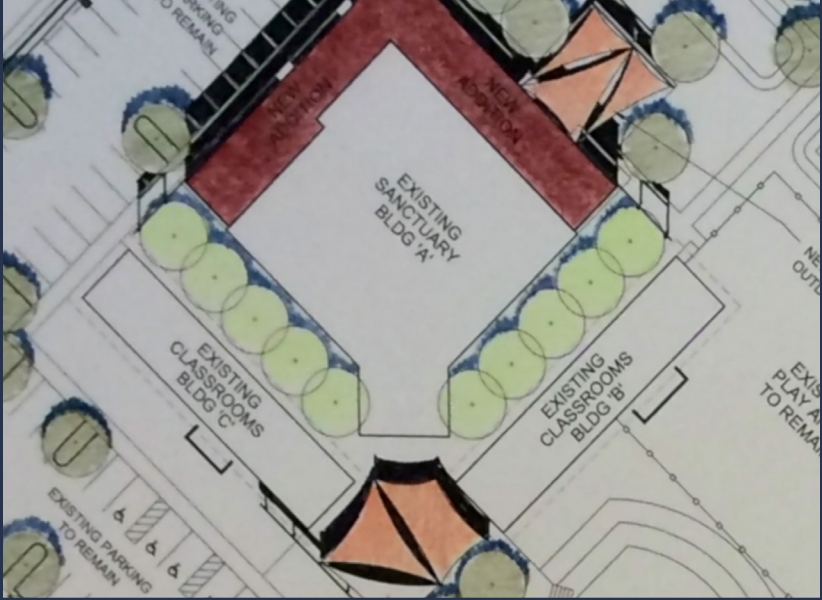
2010

In August, Pastor Tim Jacobs  
stepped in as the new lead  
pastor of Compass Church.

With a new lead pastor, Compass entered a season of renewed energy and purpose. 'Helping people find their way to God' became the mission of Compass. This time wasn't easy, but it was a necessary step to move toward health and unity as a church.

Tim led the church to begin giving 10% of the church's tithes to missions, even though Compass was not meeting its financial goals. This was also a period of significant growth. Average attendance grew from 250 to 700 people each weekend.







# 4. Growing Beyond

2014

The NEXT initiative  
was launched.

2015

The NEXT initiative  
was completed with  
\$1.1 million raised.

2016

Children and Student  
Ministries moved into  
their new building.

This season of Compass was defined by the NEXT initiative, a campaign to raise \$1 million for new Children and Student Ministries spaces.

# 5. Trusting for What's Next

Despite COVID, online services and uncertain times, Ronn Smith was hired as the new lead pastor.

2019

2020

2021

Pastor Tim stepped down as lead pastor. The church began a search for its next lead pastor.

Compass began to grow again as the world re-opened. Ronn called the church to *Arise* and pray for what God wants to do in and through the church. New staff was also brought on to help lead including the Condons and Scott Williams.

In December 2019, Tim Jacobs took a new role in our denomination as the District Superintendent of the EFCA West, leading Compass to a time of prayer and trust.





2.

# Where We Are Now

## Our People

1000+

Adults, children and students ministered to every Sunday.

95+

Volunteers serving each week at Compass across many ministries.

425+

People in Life Groups across 44 different groups, meeting in four cities.





## Outreach

12+

Yards helped by **Code Busters**, the leaders of which won Goodyear Citizens of the Year award in 2022.

350+

Volunteers at Inside Out across 36 projects around our city.

260+

Children in our city received gifts because of the Toys & More drive.



## Gospel Impact

125+

Baptisms across the last three years, with nearly 50 this year alone.

330+

New believers that have put their faith in Jesus in the last three years.

15+

Leaders raised up and sent out for ministry around the world.



## **Our Vision**

# Helping people find their way to God

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## **Our Values**

Leaving safety for

# Adventure

Leaving isolation for

# Community

Leaving complacency for

# Commitment

Leaving comfort for

# Compassion

Leaving greed for

# Generosity



3.

# Where We Are Going

# Gaining ↑ Ground

For God, For Generations

Our Gaining Ground cornerstone passage from Ephesians is a prayer. It's a prayer for you and me. At the heart of this prayer is that as we trust God, we would experience and know more of God's love. That our faith would increase as our roots grow down into God's love and keep us strong. As we trust in God, Christ will make His home in our hearts.

Gaining Ground is an incredible opportunity for us to trust. To trust God in ways we may never have before. To trust in His provision, to trust in His love, to strengthen our relationship with Him and to deepen our roots as we sacrifice the things of this world for the people of this world. As our roots of faith grow deeper, we will experience and know how wide, how long and how deep the love of God is for us and for those around us.



Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.

Eph. 3:17-18 NLT



# Primary Goal: 100% Engagement



At its core, Gaining Grounds is a personal journey between each person in our congregation and God. And while commitments have to be made individually, we want to be on this journey together. This is a significant time for Compass Church to make tangible changes and leaps of faith as a community of believers.

If we want the West Valley to be loved and impacted by Jesus, it will take all of us. We do that in two ways – **by growing our ability to reach others and by growing our space to welcome them when they come.** Staying as we are is not a loving or viable option with the number of new people visiting Compass each week. We simply don't have enough room.

As the Church, we can practice generosity by intentionally preparing to make space for more people to find their way to God. For Compass Church to invest in the future of the West Valley, we ask you to invest in Gaining Ground.



# Secondary Goal: \$6 Million



We are trusting God with a secondary goal of **\$6 Million over the next two years**. We believe God is calling us to trust Him as we remain on mission with Him and gain ground for God and for generations. We believe God is calling us to advance the mission that God has called us to in these three areas:

**\$2.7M** - Everyday Mission

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**\$3M** - Gaining Our Ground

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**\$300K** - Going Beyond



# \$2.7M Everyday Mission

This covers the lifeblood of what we do daily. It represents our two-year operating budget for all our ministries and facility expenses.

**Our Community** – We will remain invested in our core mission to help people find their way to God.

**Our Life Groups** – Groups are at the core of what we do and who we are. We will continue to strengthen relationships with one another and with God as we pursue Him.

**Our Kids and Students** – We will continue to invest in our families and in the lives of the next generation.





# \$300K Going Beyond

We care for our community and want to continue to be a place where people are loved. We will continue to serve our community through events like Inside Out and our Halloween Block Party. We will also continue to invest in ministry partners who are serving the West Valley and the world such as Dee Cook with Indigenous Ministries and the O'Bannons with Wycliffe Ministries. This will also be the catalyst for our future as we begin to pray and seek the Lord on launching campuses throughout the West Valley.



# \$3M

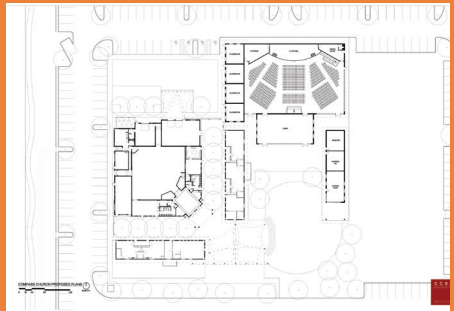
# Gaining Our Ground

God is moving at Compass. We are running out of space. Our seats are filling up in the auditorium, our kids rooms are at capacity, we have limited space for adult electives and discipleship and the West Valley continues to grow.

God has brought us together at this time to do something that we cannot do alone. God has called us to step into the mess of life and bring the good news of Jesus to the West Valley and beyond. It's time for us to build on those five acres of open land. It's time for us to gain some ground!

- **Build a community hub**
- **700-800 seat auditorium**
- **Large lobby**
- **Coffee house**
- **Renovate our current space for Children and Student Ministries**

On the next page we have some initial drawings and renderings that show what the new buildings could look like. Our hope is that seeing these renderings will create excitement and give you a vision for what could be as we move forward with Gaining Ground.





4.

# How We're Doing It

# Prayer Guide

As we enter this season of Gaining Ground, it is important that we become a people of prayer. As it says in the book of James, "The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." We can accomplish so much more when we are praying for God's will to be done.

**We invite you to pray for our Gaining Ground journey. In fact, people have been praying for Gaining Ground for months. Here are some of their prayers:**

- 1.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that we would move forward with urgency, and that the Lord would blow us away with what He provides!
- 2.** Lord, I pray for the Spirit to guide the steps of this project. I pray for open hearts to turn to your leading and discernment. I pray for your command to love to remain central to this initiative.
- 3.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that it does not just end with a successful campaign, but an opportunity through the process for us to serve and grow, and to magnify you, Lord.
- 4.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that everyone who attends Compass know that they play a part no matter how big or small as He moves in their hearts.
- 5.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is significant growth in generational impact. Not just numbers, but lives and families transformed.
- 6.** My prayer is that the name of Jesus will be proclaimed, many people will come to know Him, and that we might become less so Jesus can become more.

- 7.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that the process stays focused on God and that the congregation sees the expanding of God's Word to our community, embracing the process with open hearts and minds.
- 8.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that we would keep this vision and big picture at the top of our minds as we endeavor to expand and build a place that is on fire for Jesus. Where people in the community feel seen, heard and loved, growing in their love and knowledge of who God is and all that He can do.
- 9.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is for me and others to walk willingly with humility, and obedient with the Spirit during this journey.
- 10.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that more of the congregation get involved in serving God by serving Compass Church. Let's reverse the 80/20 rule.
- 11.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that throughout this process God's will and His plan is for the body will grow further in His Kingdom.
- 12.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that Jesus be known and loved, and followed beyond our lifetime in the West Valley at Compass Church.
- 13.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that we would have godly wisdom, that we would proceed in dependence on God, not rushing ahead or falling behind where God wants us to be. "Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit says the lord."
- 14.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that strength and endurance for the church leadership to stay firm in the faith and in the decision the Holy Spirit has brought them to. Patience for them in the long road ahead.

# Prayer Guide

- 15.** Lord bring to Compass the people who need to join us in this journey, and those who can add their maturity of faith to the 20% already serving.
- 16.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is the growth of our church would not just be a number, but we would grow in depth of relationship with Jesus and understanding, seeing how He sees the people of our community.
- 17.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that as we start this journey we would have God first in our hearts, and that we listen carefully to what He is telling us!
- 18.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that God would give us the direction and resources needed to take Compass to where He wants us to be, and that it will bring more people to know Him and give Him glory.
- 19.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that the church would remain rooted and grounded in Christ. To be protected from any attack. And to speak through us as we grow.
- 20.** Father, please do not allow Gaining Ground to be merely a project, but rather make it a means by which Compass Church sees what you are doing and joins you.
- 21.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that it is an environment created for God fully filled with God's presence, a place where people can feel God's peace and rest.



- 22.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that faith would grow in our church so that the season will be a “rock” we can look back on for future initiatives and projects.
  
- 23.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that throughout this journey we keep our eyes on Jesus and we listen to His Spirit, trusting in what He provides.
  
- 24.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that lives will be touched, architects construction workers, city workers and people driving by and seeing what you provide. That the execution itself is a ministry to everyone who is involved.
  
- 25.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is that we seek the will of God in every decision, listen to the voice of the Spirit, obey God’s will and love our neighbors and our community.
  
- 26.** My prayer for Gaining Ground is for God to move in people’s hearts and see giving not as a sacrifice, but thinking about future generations and the legacy they want to leave for their children and grandchildren.

## **My personal prayers for Gaining Ground:**

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# The Giving Journey

Giving is not just one thing; it is not a one-size fits all process. Each and every one of us is called, challenged and blessed in different ways. Here we want to outline various stages in a believer's giving journey that might resonate with you. **None of these are wrong.** In fact, God uses each one of these stages to work within us and make us more like Him. See if any of these stages of giving resonate with you, and reflect on where God might be calling you next.

## An Initial Giver

is someone who decides to give for the first time, out of a response to God's Word about giving. This is someone who decides to give something and trust God and the leaders of the Church with this gift. They experience the initial joy of putting Jesus' words into action (Matthew 7:24).

## A Consistent Giver

is someone who decides to give something and to give it on a consistent basis to exercise the discipline of giving as a disciple of Jesus. Often, someone who decides to make a recurring gift online will be someone who is learning the joy of consistency. Non-online givers can be consistent givers as well; it just requires more discipline. They experience the joy of excelling in this grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7).

## A Priority Giver

is someone who understands the pre-eminence of Christ and that He is before all things – that all things were created by Him, for Him, through Him and to Him. This giver places such a significant priority on their giving that it drives their spending and their saving, as opposed to their spending and saving driving their giving. They experience the freedom of serving “one master” and declaring Jesus is first (Matthew 6:19-24 and Colossians 1:15-20).

## A Surrendered Giver

is someone who recognizes that Christ surrendered His whole self for us, and therefore we desire to surrender our whole selves to Him, in love (Ephesians 5:1-2). This giver would say, “My giving is not just changing my spending and saving. It’s also changing me!” They also look at what they’re not giving away and ask, “Is it surrendered too?” This informs how they use everything they’ve been blessed and entrusted with – whether that be through direct monetary giving or through a God-honoring use of an existing resource (i.e. honoring God with the use of your home, etc.).

## An Eternal Giver

is someone who sees the eternal impact of their giving – on them and on others – not just the immediate programs and ministries it helps accomplish. This giver has been captivated by the knowledge that the more they are led to “do good, to be generous and ready to share,” the more they “take hold of that which is truly life” (1 Timothy 6:19). This encourages them to keep growing! They make all decisions (big purchases, savings, giving, relationships, areas of service) in light of how it will affect their eternal impact.

# “One Fund” Initiative?

What is a “one fund” initiative?

You may have been a part of church campaigns in the past during which you were asked to give a second gift ‘above and beyond’ your usual gifts to make special initiatives like new buildings and new ministries possible.

Normally, you gave that gift to the ‘Building Fund’ and you also continued to give offerings to the ‘General Fund.’ This type of giving is potentially confusing to people who either don’t have a baseline for their “usual giving” or who aren’t able to really celebrate the total giving they are engaging in at Compass in one single number. We believe that it’s all **ONE MISSION** that we’re on at Compass. So we as a leadership have decided that our gifts to Compass go into one fund, even in these seasons of ministry expansion – to celebrate the totality of our generosity growth as disciples of Jesus.

The Gaining Ground initiative will last for two years. In those two years, every gift that is given to Compass will go to the key components of this initiative – to “gain ground in our ministry” through our regular ministry budget; to “gain mission on our ground” through a significant investment towards our facility expansion and to “gain ground in our mission beyond” through laying the foundation for going multi-site and beginning to explore an additional location in the West Valley. These areas are explained in detail in the pages of this booklet.

We’ve included a sample commitment card so you can begin to pray about your commitment and what that will mean for your journey with God. Please take time to think and pray through this, and then we will provide you with a new hard copy on Commitment Sunday, November 12.

**General  
Ministry Funds**

**Significant  
Investment to  
Facility**



**Gaining  
↑ Ground**

**Foundation  
for Growing  
Beyond**

# Commitment Card

This calculation is meant to be a way to see how much you could give to the Gaining Ground initiative. This is meant to be a starting point, and intentional prayer and conversations are needed to know what God is calling you to do.

|                                    |                      |   |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| \$                                 | <input type="text"/> | What I/we would normally give in a year<br>(regular giving, special projects, missions, etc.) |
| +\$                                | <input type="text"/> | My/our expanded annual generosity<br>as part of the Gaining Ground initiative                 |
| =\$                                | <input type="text"/> | x 2 years   |
|                                    |                      | ↓   |
|                                    | \$                   | <input type="text"/>  |
| Gifts from my/our stored resources | +\$                  | <input type="text"/>  |

## My/Our Total 2-Year Gaining Ground Commitment

\$

December 2023 - December 2025

# Two-Year Gift Chart



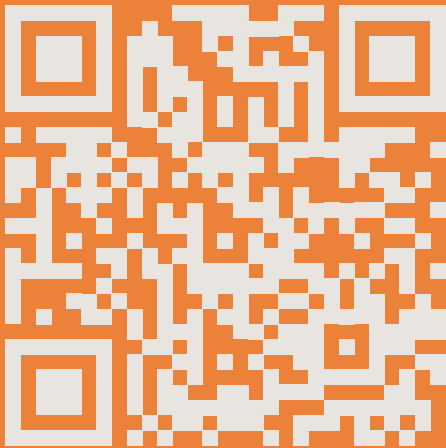
As you pray and discern how God would ask you to give during this time, use this gift chart as a discipleship tool. Let it be something that inspires and challenges you towards greater generosity as we seek to gain ground for God and gain ground for generations.

| Gifts Needed           | Two Year Gift Level | Annual Gift | Monthly Gift | Gift Level Total   |
|------------------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 1                      | <b>\$500,000</b>    | \$250,000   | \$20,833     | \$500,000          |
| 2                      | <b>\$250,000</b>    | \$125,000   | \$10,417     | \$500,000          |
| 3                      | <b>\$150,000</b>    | \$75,000    | \$6,250      | \$450,000          |
| 4                      | <b>\$100,000</b>    | \$50,000    | \$4,167      | \$400,000          |
| 7                      | <b>\$75,000</b>     | \$37,500    | \$3,125      | \$525,000          |
| 9                      | <b>\$65,000</b>     | \$32,500    | \$2,708      | \$585,000          |
| 12                     | <b>\$50,000</b>     | \$25,000    | \$2,083      | \$600,000          |
| 15                     | <b>\$35,000</b>     | \$17,500    | \$1,458      | \$525,000          |
| 20                     | <b>\$25,000</b>     | \$12,500    | \$1,042      | \$500,000          |
| 25                     | <b>\$15,000</b>     | \$7,500     | \$625        | \$375,000          |
| 30                     | <b>\$10,000</b>     | \$5,000     | \$417        | \$300,000          |
| 40                     | <b>\$7,500</b>      | \$3,750     | \$313        | \$300,000          |
| 45                     | <b>\$5,000</b>      | \$2,500     | \$208        | \$225,000          |
| Many                   | <b>\$2,500</b>      | \$1,250     | \$104        | \$215,000          |
| <b>Total Gift Goal</b> |                     |             |              | <b>\$6,000,000</b> |

5.

# FAQs





For all of your potential questions scan the QR code above, or go to **[gg.compasschurchaz.com](http://gg.compasschurchaz.com)**. Alternatively, you can also email **[office@compasschurchaz.com](mailto:office@compasschurchaz.com)** if your question is not online.



# 6. Sermon Notes & Questions

# October 15

**The Promise of Presence**

**Joshua 1:1-9**

## Sermon Notes

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## Quick Review

1. Reread Joshua 1:1-9. What did God tell Joshua to do? What promises did God make to him?
2. Were God's promises for Joshua's success conditional?
3. God calls Joshua to be "strong and courageous." Why could Joshua be strong and courageous – what reason does God give him (verse 9)?

## My Story

4. What did you find most challenging about the message this week?
5. The call on Joshua's life was tremendous – he was being asked to fill some pretty big sandals! Have you ever found yourself stepping into a role or a situation that seemed much bigger than you or that you thought might be beyond your capabilities? How did you handle that?
6. Looking back at God's instructions to Joshua (see question 2 above) which of these things (if any) do you find most difficult? Which of God's promises here are most encouraging?

7. Where do you typically look for your confidence, strength and courage in difficult situations? Do you look to your past successes? Your own talent or ability? Your preparedness? What do we learn about the source of those things from this passage? Does this change how you might answer this question in the future?
  
8. How might our trusting in God's presence as the source of our strength and courage impact our commitment to prayer and generosity as we consider Gaining Ground?

## Digging Deeper

### Read Isaiah 41:10

9. Compare this verse to the Joshua passage – what are the similarities? What else do you notice?

### Read 2 Timothy 1:7

10. Does your life and your approach to challenges and struggle reflect the truth of this verse? If not, how might embracing this verse change the way you face uncertainty or challenges in your life? Have you ever prayed for God to grow your faith so that you can believe this truth?

# October 22

**You Go, We Go**

**Joshua 1:10-18**

## Sermon Notes

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## Quick Review

1. Reread Joshua 1:10-18. Did God's promise that He would give Israel the land mean that they didn't need to do anything?
2. Each tribe of Israel had been given (by God) a specific area of land as their own. The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh were already in the land God promised them, and yet here we see Joshua calling them in to help the other tribes take possession of their land. Why do you think that was? What do the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh promise in response to Joshua's call?
3. What were the tribal leaders' expectations of Joshua (see verses 17-18)?

## My Story

4. What struck you the most about this week's message?
5. What challenges are you facing in your life right now? Who can you call on to come alongside you and help you as you face that challenge? Why is it important to face challenges together?
6. God had promised this land to Israel, yet we see in verse 14 that Joshua called the strong warriors, fully armed, to help them take possession of the land. Have you ever found yourself in a position where you had to "fight" through a situation, even though you knew you were following God's will? How can we know the difference between God's will and our own will?

## Gaining Ground

7. There is a definite connection here between the people's faith in God's promises and their obedience to Joshua. Does your faith prompt your obedience to God? Do you have specific examples you can share?
8. How might this idea of coming alongside one another and fighting for one another be important for Gaining Ground?

## Digging Deeper

### Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

9. What are the benefits of working alongside one another? Do you ever find it difficult to ask for help when you need it? How do you feel if someone calls on YOU for help?

### Read Galatians 6:2

10. In what ways can we bear one another's burdens? Why is this so important as a follower of Jesus? (note: for the "law of Christ," see John 13:34)

# October 29

**Assurance Along the Way**

**Joshua 2**

## Sermon Notes

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## Quick Review

1. Reread Joshua 2. Why did Rahab risk her safety to hide the Israelite spies? What did she think about God?
2. Rahab not only hid the spies and helped them escape, she gave them something else in verses 9-12 – what was it?
3. What did the people of Jericho think of/feel about the Israelites? Why?
4. What does the Israelites' willingness to spare someone like Rahab teach us about the grace of God?

## My Story

5. How were you encouraged by this week's message? How were you challenged?
6. God used Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute, to both encourage the Israelite spies (and Israel) and to accomplish his purposes. Have you ever felt that your own past failures or sin would prevent God from using you in His kingdom? What does this passage tell us about that mindset?
7. Rahab knew the mighty works of God, and she believed in His power because of what she'd heard about Him. How have stories of God's work in other people's lives encouraged you? Do you share what God has done in your life with others to encourage them?

## Gaining Ground

8. Rahab's faith would spare not only her life, but the life of her family. How might your faith have a similar impact on your family?
  
9. Whatever our past, through Christ we have an opportunity to be a part of what God is doing to build His Kingdom. Gaining Ground is intended to be a part of building that kingdom – it's not just a building. It's a building that will impact the people in our community for Jesus! What will you pray for God to do, both in our church and in our community, through Gaining Ground?

## Digging Deeper

### Read Psalm 121:1-2

10. Take a few moments and meditate on these verses. Which part of this passage do you find most encouraging?

### Read 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11

11. Why is it so important to encourage each other? Have you ever been encouraged in your faith at a time when you really needed it? How can you be an encouragement to others?

# November 5

**Pure Hearts**

**Joshua 3:1-13**

## Sermon Notes

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## Quick Review

1. Reread Joshua 3:1-13. What did the ark represent and why did they need to follow it?
2. Why did Joshua tell the people to consecrate themselves?
3. When Moses first led the Israelites out of Egypt and God miraculously parted the Red Sea (Exodus 14), He had Moses raise his staff and the water parted before the Israelites walked across. But this time, God told the priests to step into the Jordan river first, before He would stop the water from flowing – why do you think He did that?

## My Story

4. What in Sunday's message can you act on and apply to your life this week?
5. Are you intentional about following God in your day-to-day life, or would you say you keep your faith and your daily life responsibilities (job, family, finances, etc.) somewhat separate? What would happen if you looked to God for ALL your decisions?
6. To consecrate oneself means to dedicate ourselves to a divine purpose – we repent of our sin and devote ourselves to God's will and God's plan. What does that look like for you? Are you willing to do that? If not, what causes your hesitation? Why would this be such an important step in the life of our church right now?

7. Many times we want God to act before we step out in faith. Can you think of a time when you had to step first before God moved? Is there something you're waiting for God to do right now? Is it possible you need to step out in faith – or obedience – first, before He acts?
  
8. Gaining Ground may be challenging many of us to step out in faith first, before God moves. Some of us have seen God move so many times, we jump in without hesitation! Others of us may be more hesitant. How can you encourage others to step out in faith with the Gaining Ground initiative? And if you have hesitations, how can we be praying for you?

## Digging Deeper

### Read Psalm 51:10

9. A “clean heart” doesn't come from our trying harder to follow Christian “rules,” it comes from God himself. Have you ever prayed a prayer like this? What would be different about allowing God to “renew a right spirit” within us rather than just trying harder to “be good”?

### Read Romans 12:1-2

10. What does it mean to “present ourselves as a living sacrifice”? Why is the renewal of our mind so important? Can we really follow Jesus without sacrifice? What does that look like in your life right now?

# November 12

God is Mighty

Joshua 3:14-4:24

## Sermon Notes

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## Quick Review

1. Reread Joshua 3:14-4:24. Why did Joshua choose 12 men to create the memorials? From where did Joshua tell the men to get their stones? Why was this significant?
2. Who led the Israelites across the Jordan? What do we know about them from verse 13?
3. What was the purpose of the memorials according to verses 21-24? What were the Israelites supposed to do (verse 22)?

## My Story

4. As Pastor Ronn preached about Joshua this week, what stood out to you?
5. God performed a dramatic miracle for the nation of Israel – and yet, they had to be ready for battle (verse 13). Have you ever experienced a dramatic act of God (maybe even a miracle!) only to find yourself in battle right afterward? Were you prepared or did it catch you off guard? Why do you think battles often follow powerful acts of God? Are you battle-ready?
6. What do you do to remember the things God has done in your life? Are you good at memorializing those things so that you can remember them later? How can you do a better job of making sure you don't forget?

7. The point of creating these memorials was to not only remember, but also to talk about it! He wanted everyone to know His power! Are you intentional about sharing the stories of God's work in your life? Have you ever been deeply impacted by another's testimony about what God has done in their life?
  
8. Envision the other side of the Gaining Ground initiative – when it's done! How might that provide testimonies of what God has done in us as individuals and in the life of our church?

## Digging Deeper

### Read Psalm 143:5

9. The psalmist says that he not only remembers, he meditates on all that God has done. What is the difference between remembering and meditating? What might be the value of meditating on what God has done?

### Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

10. Why did Jesus command that we take communion (the Lord's supper)? When we have communion, do you take the time to truly contemplate Christ's sacrifice and what it means to you...or has it just become a ritual or tradition that you don't think much about? How can you be more intentional about truly remembering what Christ did for you on the cross?

