

A word from our rector

Dear Friend of The River,

Exciting things are happening at The River Anglican Church!

About three years ago, River leadership came to realize that our lack of a permanent home and our facility dependence is impacting our ministries. To that end, we formed a Facilities Team to seek God's leading, to define our facility needs, and to research options for a permanent home for our congregation.

It quickly became apparent that whatever opportunity God provided for The River would require a substantial financial commitment.

In 2022, we underwent a Generosity Assessment and Feasibility Study to assist leadership with determining the congregation's readiness and ability to support a campaign to raise approximately \$500,000 for securing a future location. After much prayer and in consideration of the results of this study, leadership of The River decided that the timing was right to move forward with a capital campaign.

Imagine is The River's three-year initiative to prepare spiritually and financially for our future. It is not merely a capital campaign, but a movement to encourage faith, right-size our priorities, and prepare for a permanent home.

Our inspiration for this initiative is Ephesians 3:20: *"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us..."*

The River Anglican Church desires to be a place where youth and adults find mentorship, education, safety, and a relationship with Jesus. A place of fellowship and growth for adults and families; where people's lives are healed, minds renewed, marriages restored, and addictions put to the cross.

We are asking and imagining for our facility to be both a resource for, and witness to, the New River Valley community.

As a friend of The River Anglican Church, I invite you to journey with us as we step out in faith and prepare to secure a permanent home.

Jonathan Tagg
Rector



When is the Imagine initiative?



January 22

- January Kickoff Sunday and Launch of *Imagine*, The River's capital campaign - A potluck lunch will follow in the Fellowship Hall.
- 5-week *Ask or Imagine* sermon series begins

January 24-26

- *Imagine* Home Gatherings - Participate in a special one-evening Home Gathering to study scripture, for a time of prayer, and for fellowship with other members of The River congregation.

January 29-30

- *Imagine* Advance Gifts Meetings - Meetings to hear more about early commitment to the *Imagine* capital campaign.

February 19 - *Imagine* Challenge Sunday

- Final week of the 5-week *Imagine* sermon series - We will be challenged to seek how God is leading us to participate in the *Imagine* initiative. Commitment cards will be mailed to each household for your response.
- Challenge Sunday Celebration - Plan now to participate in a special brunch that will be provided in the Fellowship Hall following the service.

February 20

- Commitment cards will arrive by mail. Instructions for returning the cards will be included.

March 12

- First Fruits Sunday - On this Sunday, we will offer our "first fruit" gifts - the first of our commitments to the three-year *Imagine* initiative.

How we got here

The River Anglican Church began as a church plant of the Church of the Holy Spirit in Roanoke, Virginia, meeting in the basement of Jim Sallie's home. Jim served as the church pastor until he and his wife, Becci, moved on to plant an Anglican Church in Parkersburg, West Virginia.

The River congregation continued to grow, becoming a self-supporting, independent church in 2008. Jonathan Tagg accepted the call to serve as Rector (lead pastor) in 2009 and continues to serve in this position.

Over the years, The River met in a variety of borrowed spaces - Kipps Elementary School, the now-razed Days Inn, and the Custom Catering building - until moving in 2015 to the current location on Roanoke Street, sharing the facility owned by the Blacksburg First Church of God.

The River has had our share of "bends" - moving from one sacred, yet borrowed, space to another. But at every bend, we have welcomed people from many different backgrounds, perspectives and situations and they have felt the movement and power of the Holy Spirit in and through the community at The River.

At a leadership retreat several years ago, multiple attendees indicated that they were concerned that our lack of a permanent home and our facility dependence was impacting The River's ministries.

Following that retreat, a team was formed to assess our facility needs and available options and to estimate the cost needed to obtain and renovate a future facility. After a brief pause during the height of Covid, the team regrouped and determined the next step was to engage a professional to conduct a Generosity and Feasibility Study to determine the readiness of the congregation to support moving forward.

Based on the results of that study, the decision was made to step out in faith and proceed with a capital campaign as we seek God's direction and provision for a permanent home for The River Anglican Church.

We don't yet know what is around the next bend for The River, but we are confident that God will provide a permanent home for our congregation.



The *Imagine* initiative



Imagine is a three-year generosity initiative of The River Anglican Church. After much prayer, thought, and planning, the leadership believes that the time is right for us to begin the search for a permanent home for our congregation.

Our Challenges

For the past seven years, The River has been blessed to share the First Church of God's facility in Blacksburg. While we have a good relationship with the First Church of God, it is a borrowed space.

As comfortable as we have become in this borrowed space, we are challenged by what we can do and when we can do it in a shared facility. This affects our ability to minister as we feel called.

Imagining the Potential

A permanent space would allow The River the freedom to use the space for expanding our ministry, in ways that fit our wants and needs:

- An inviting and secure Nursery for the youngest of our church family
- A dedicated Children's Ministry area and classrooms
- A Welcome Center for greeting newcomers and visitors
- A community space for groups, from both inside and outside The River congregation, to gather

While we do not yet know where our permanent home will be, we believe that God is "able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine." We will continue to *Imagine* and anticipate that God will provide the "when" and "how" at just the right time.

Planning for Permanence

- *Imagine* is about planning for a permanent home for the The River to create a ministry hub to better serve people in our community.
- A permanent facility communicates a stability in the community that renting does not.
- This initiative will provide funds toward acquiring or renovating a permanent facility.



Why and why now?

Why?

- We desire to own our own space so that our ministries will not be disrupted by rental agreements or building restrictions that we cannot control.
- We want to be prepared to move when God moves. Wherever God leads The River or whatever facility He provides for us will require a substantial financial investment.
- The most important reason is that we have felt God calling us to do this for several years. We feel compelled to step out in faith, knowing that God is faithful to those who are willing to heed His call.



Why do we need to raise money now since we haven't identified a specific facility?

When a family decides to purchase a new home, they make a list of features they want in a home, prepare financially, and engage in a search for a property. When they find the property that meets their needs - even though it might not meet all their 'wants,' they can't reasonably expect the seller to wait for years while they save the money for a downpayment. They need to be ready to move forward when they find their new home.

Similarly, The River needs to be prepared to move forward when God reveals the facility he has for us. The *Imagine* initiative is our preparation.

As we prepare financially, we are also preparing our "wish list" so that we can evaluate options for our permanent home. At the recent Leadership Retreat, attendees were asked to dream about what we would want in a facility. There was great unity among leadership as we began to make our wish list and to imagine what our permanent home could be.

Why now?

- Our Generosity Assessment and Feasibility Study in 2022 confirmed support and that the timing was right for moving ahead now.
- Available space in Blacksburg is getting increasingly difficult to find - and more expensive.
- Construction costs continue to rise. Every year we delay means the cost of building or renovating increases.
- Renting is not good stewardship of our resources over the long term.
- Our situation is tenuous. We are grateful for a good relationship with our current landlord, the Blacksburg First Church of God, but a change of circumstances could mean that with only 60 days notice we could be looking for a new place to worship.



Is a giving campaign biblical?

Imagine, The River's capital campaign, is not merely a campaign to raise funds. While it *is* an initiative to prepare financially for The River's permanent home, it is more importantly an initiative to prepare our congregation spiritually - to encourage our faith, right-size our priorities, and prepare us for the future.

Who you are, what you do, and what you believe - even before what you give - is the priority of the *Imagine* initiative. It is in essence a "faith campaign" before it is ever a capital campaign.

While "capital campaign" is not explicitly named in scripture, the Bible provides us with wonderful examples that offer a sound basis for church capital campaigns through as many as four successful giving campaigns.

- Exodus 35 - THE BUILDING OF THE TABERNACLE: The Israelite people were freed from Egyptian bondage and began the journey to the Promised Land. They were told to build a place of worship, the Tabernacle. When provided the opportunity to give, these former slaves gave so freely and abundantly that they were eventually asked to stop giving. They had completely met the needs for their place of worship.
- I Chronicles 29- THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE: King David began preparing for this magnificent building that his son, Solomon, would actually construct. Beginning with his own sacrificial gift and challenging the leaders and people to give, he raised a great sum of money to provide for this temple.
- Acts 4 - EARLY CHURCH EXPERIENCES THE SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY: At Pentecost, a spirit of generosity swept through the church to such an extent that it was reported in Acts 4 that "no one claimed private ownership of any possessions." Barnabas personified the spirit of giving by selling his personal property and giving the receipts to the church in order to meet the needs of other Christians.
- II Corinthians 8-9 - A SPECIAL OFFERING FOR JERUSALEM CHRISTIANS: Paul instructed the first known donor consultant, Titus, to lead the Corinthian church in a giving campaign for the poverty-stricken Christians in Jerusalem. Using the example of the Macedonian Christians, these members of the Corinthian church were challenged to give joyfully and intentionally.



What is our goal?

Imagine Initiative Goal:

\$500,000

Raising \$500,000 over the next three years of the *Imagine* initiative will allow The River to actively pursue opportunities for a permanent facility.

The River's capital fund currently totals just under \$150,000 due to early and generous giving as a demonstration of support for moving forward with the *Imagine* initiative. Through the *Imagine* initiative, we are prayerfully anticipating an additional \$500,000 for the capital fund.

What type of a facility are we looking for?

At this time, God has not led us to a specific property, so we do not have a rendering of a building or a list of renovations we require.

But we believe that God is leading this process and that God has a place chosen for us. While we have identified some wants and desires in a permanent home - dedicated children's ministry area, ability to use our facility to reach the community - we want to remain open to God's leading.

2 Cor 9:8 says *"And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."*

We believe that God has a facility that will not only be adequate for our needs, but will advance the Kingdom through The River, strategically placing us where we will have an impact, blessing children, youth, young adults and families. We believe our mission now is to be prepared and to have the funds so that when the right place is available, we are ready.

At a recent Leadership Retreat, attendees were asked to dream - to list "wants" and "needs" for a permanent home for The River.

Many of the dreams, some of which are listed below, were repeated by multiple attendees, :

- A worshipful aesthetic that complements our ancient-future worship style and is separate from other multi-purpose areas
- Dedicated spaces for age-related ministries - nursery, children, youth, university and young adults
- Classroom space for smaller group Bible studies and meetings
- Foyer/gathering space for welcoming visitors and newcomers before and after services
- Location convenient to Virginia Tech and easily accessible by car and public transportation
- Adequate parking on Sundays and during the week
- Storage space
- Outdoor space for kids and adults
- Space for fellowship and events with an equipped kitchen

This list will be refined and used to evaluate properties and facilities as they become available while remaining open to being surprised and delighted by God *"who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us..."*



What is God calling you to do?

Your participation, - both praying and giving - is important to the success of the *Imagine* initiative.

We can't all give the same amount, but we can all give sacrificially. It's not about the quantity; it is about faith and sacrifice.

The tables below and at right are provided for reference and inspiration as you consider what God is calling you do.



CREATIVE STRATEGIES FOR SACRIFICIAL GIVING

Activity	Weekly	Yearly	Three Years
Eliminate 1 Meal Dining Out	\$30	\$1,560	\$4,680
Reduce Christmas Budget		\$500	\$1,500
Reduce Vacation Budget		\$250	\$750
Eliminate Season Tickets		\$300	\$900
Eliminate Coffee	\$10	\$520	\$1,560
Delay Car Purchase for 1 Year		\$3,600	\$3,600

Would you be able to sacrifice a typical extra expense in order to give to *Imagine*? Take time to pray about what God wants your family to give.

Consistent giving compounds into a dramatic impact over three years

EXAMPLE GIFT SCHEDULE

Weekly	Monthly	12-Month Gift	3 Year Total
5.00	21.67	260.00	780.00
10.00	43.33	520.00	1,560.00
15.00	65.00	780.0	2,340.00
20.00	86.67	1,040.00	3,120.00
25.00	108.33	1,300.00	3,900.00
30.00	130.00	1,560.00	4,680.00
40.00	173.33	2,080.00	6,240.00
50.00	216.67	2,600.00	7,800.00
60.00	260.00	3,120.00	9,360.00
75.00	325.00	3,900.00	11,700.00
100.00	433.33	5,200.00	15,600.00
150.00	650.00	7,800.00	23,400.00
200.00	866.67	10,400.00	31,200.00
300.00	1,300.00	15,600.00	46,800.00
400.00	1,733.00	20,000.00	60,000.00
500.00	2,166.67	26,000.00	78,000.00



Gifts other than cash

Many times, gifts in the form of investment securities, real estate or other assets are committed in a campaign like the *Imagine* initiative. You may benefit from favorable tax treatment for the contribution of appreciable assets.

To give a gift other than cash, contact The River's Treasurer, Danita Bowman (treasurer@therivernrv.org)

How do I give?

Ways to give to *Imagine*

Three-year Commitment

Give over a 3-year period by:

- Online automatic withdrawal from bank account or card
- Cash or Check each week or month in-person or by mail.

One Time Gift

Give a one-time gift:

- Online
- By Cash or Check in-person or by mail

Non-Cash Gift

- Give a non-cash gift (examples: stocks, deed to land or property, and estate planning)

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Making your commitment

Return your commitment card by March 1:

By mail

- Return your commitment card in the enclosed return envelope.

Mailing Address:

The River Anglican Church
PO Box 924
Blacksburg, VA 24063

Online

- Make a one-time gift or submit your commitment card online at <https://therivernrv.churchcenter.com/giving>

In-Person

- Place the sealed envelope containing your commitment card in the offering box on Sunday.

Please note:

Your financial commitment is between you and God. Although we ask you to fill out a commitment card indicating the amount you are trusting God to provide through you, this information is kept strictly confidential. The amount we individually give to *Imagine* will only be known to the Treasurer. Only total giving amounts will be announced over the course of the campaign.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Total three-year pledge amount \$ _____

I/We plan to give:

- \$ _____ Weekly for 156 weeks (3 years)
- \$ _____ Monthly for 36 months (3 years)
- \$ _____ Annually for 3 years
- _____ Other

Sample

I/We wish to give to the *Imagine* initiative by a means of a gift other than cash.

Description: _____



Two ways to submit your commitment card:

- Return this card in the Sunday offering
- Return this card by mail in the envelope provided
- Scan the QR code to complete the commitment card online or visit therivernrv.org/imagine/commit.

I/We prayerfully commit to step out in faith and pledge the above amount in addition to my/our regular giving.

Signature _____ Date _____

Donations to the *Imagine* initiative are tax-deductible, charitable contributions. Statements of giving are mailed each January for the previous year.

Frequently asked questions

What is the Scriptural basis for a capital campaign?

Exodus 35 is an amazing chapter. In that chapter, God is the one raising funds, through Moses, to build the tabernacle. God does this again to build Solomon's temple, then again to rebuild it. God raises funds through believers, and even through people who are NOT (see Exodus 12:33-36). He has always been the great protector and provider who equips and funds what He desires to accomplish (see also Nehemiah 2:9).

Why not just keep renting?

Our current lease, while it allows for broad use of the facilities, has limitations. We maintain a good relationship with leadership of the Blacksburg First Church of God but, nevertheless, the facility belongs to their congregation and our usage is secondary to their usage of the buildings. We need space and time for our ministries including midweek Bible studies and Life Group meetings, fellowship meals, children's ministry, and events and programs to expand our outreach to the community.

Are we in a position to undertake a capital campaign?

In 2022, we received a grant that was designated to be used to conduct a Generosity Assessment and Feasibility Study. This study aimed to determine the congregation's readiness and ability to support a down payment, totalling approximately \$500,000, towards a future location.

During the course of the study, thirty-five individuals from our congregation were either interviewed or participated in an online survey. The study showed that The River is well-positioned for a successful capital campaign based on the gifts projected. There is reasonable expectancy to raise between \$500,000 and \$600,000 through a capital campaign.

How much have we raised thus far?

Earlier this year, a family offered to make a donation toward a permanent space for The River if we could find other like-minded families willing to also make a one-time donation. Several families participated in this "seed" phase to indicate their support for moving forward. Additionally, the Parish Council designated a portion of the 2021 revenue surplus to the capital fund, underscoring the support leadership has for this vision. With God's help and the generosity of several River families, we currently have just under \$150,000 toward our permanent home.

What is the anticipated cost of building or renovating?

In today's economy, \$500,000 will not be sufficient to fully acquire and/or renovate a new facility to serve as The River's home. The total cost is dependent on various factors: building vs. renovating, cost for land to build upon, cost of materials, etc. Suitably-sized facilities in this area range from \$1.5-\$2.0 million. We are trusting God to supply our need and we know that He can do amazing things beyond our imagination through His people.

Why have we engaged a consultant?

Although we have committed volunteers as part of our *Imagine* steering team, The River's leadership realized that a major undertaking like this would benefit from guidance provided by a consultant with expertise and experience in assisting other congregations with similar projects. We all consult with experts for home building projects, work projects, counseling, etc. They know what to do and what NOT to do. Consultants not only help us avoid mistakes, but they help us do things more effectively. Don Linscott, from the consulting firm Generis, is working with our steering team to provide this guidance. He has done this countless times. Rather than being "secular," Don specializes in helping pastors and congregations understand the biblical foundations for giving and raising money.

I would like to support the *Imagine* initiative but my family doesn't have extra to give. How can I participate?

There are many ways to support God's work. Prayer support is vital. Providing encouragement to others or sharing what God has done in your life through The River is invaluable. We simply ask you to pray and ask God to show you how He can use you. We are often amazed at what God can do through us when we allow Him to speak to us.

Should I redirect my normal tithe or offering to the *Imagine* initiative?

Our first priority is supporting our current ministries through our general fund giving. *Imagine* is about making an "over and above" gift. That gift will be different for each person or family. It may mean finding a way to prioritize our personal spending to begin giving or to increase our giving sacrificially.

When will financial commitments be received and for what time period will we be asked to commit?

Commitment cards will begin to be received after Celebration Sunday, February 19, 2023. Commitments are made for a three-year period beginning on March 12, First Fruits Sunday.

Will my financial commitment be made public?

No. Your commitment is between you and God. While total amounts raised from all will be made public, the only person who will know what you pledge to give will be the River's treasurer.

May I contribute gifts other than cash?

The River will accept appreciated assets (stocks, bonds, and real estate, etc.) and non-cash gifts such as IRA Charitable Distributions and Planned Giving. Other non-cash gifts or gifts of personal property may be accepted with prior approval of the Parish Council. For assistance with a non-cash gift, contact treasurer@therivernrv.org.

Who can I contact for more information about *Imagine*?

If you have a question about the *Imagine* initiative that is not answered, contact Ron Bowman (rebow54@gmail.com).