



**A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ENGAGING
IN THE BEYOND INITIATIVE**

// This is a vision of spiritual formation, a vision of Christ being formed in us, a vision where people are committing to create environments where biblical training of all ages can occur with excellence and with effectiveness so that children, young adults, and older adults can grow closer to God and, as they do, as they go deeper in God’s Word, they’ll go deeper in God’s world. **//**

- CHARLIE BARHAM, ELDER

■ DISCERNING YOUR ROLE

To pursue the vision God has given us, we’re encouraging all the people of God to engage in the work of God. It is our hope that you desire to be a part of advancing this vision, but perhaps you’re wrestling with “how” or “what” this might require. Below you will find three questions designed to help you make a thoughtful, heart-felt, God-honoring decision related to a three-year faith commitment. This is both a spiritual and a financial exercise that we’d encourage you to undertake as a united household. For parents, this can be a valuable opportunity to help your children grow in their faith as they observe the practical outworking of your faith.

■ QUESTION 1: WHAT CAN I REASONABLY GIVE?

Most of us have a sense for what we might be able to give beyond our current, regular level of giving. Chances are this number comes to mind quickly. Pencil it into the first line below. The second line will illustrate how quickly that can add up over three years.

I could give \$ _____ a month from my discretionary household budget.

At this level of giving, my three-year gift would be _____ x 12 _____ x 3 = _____

May this be a starting point for the prayerful consideration of how you will join in God’s work.

QUESTION 2: WHAT WOULD I BE WILLING TO SACRIFICE?

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
MATTHEW 6:21

This is a question about choices and priorities. On the one hand, it is a math question—“If I went out to eat at a restaurant one less time per week, what else might I be able to give to God?” On the other hand, it involves probing our hearts and asking ourselves what we might be willing to do in order to realize something greater and more enduring. In fact, regardless of this initiative, this is an exercise we would do well to undertake regularly as a way to ensure our spending habits align with our priorities.

If you and I resemble the average American household, we have approximately \$20,000 of discretionary income per year. What might happen if we redirected some of that discretionary income to purposes that can change lives? We’re not saying eliminate all recreation, but perhaps there are temporal pleasures we might forgo to make an eternal investment. When done deliberately, the spiritual discipline of self-denial can be a truly transformative practice.

Take a moment to review the chart: *One Family’s Plan for Creative Giving*. What stands out to you? Might there be similar areas of sacrifice in your household?

ONE FAMILY’S PLAN FOR CREATIVE GIVING

Potential Resources	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	3 Years
Eliminate 1 meal out per week	\$35	\$140	\$1,680	\$5,040
Eliminate 2 coffees per week	\$6	\$24	\$288	\$864
Cancel 1 subscription (e.g., Hulu, Netflix)		\$8	\$96	\$288
Reduce entertainment/shopping		\$40	\$480	\$1,440
Reduce Christmas budget			\$100	\$300
Reduce vacation budget			\$300	\$900
Scale back cable/internet or cell phone package		\$10	\$120	\$360
Gift 20 shares of stock				\$2,000
Gift a portion of income tax refund			\$400	\$1,200
THREE YEAR TOTAL			\$3,464	\$12,392*

*This number is not intended to communicate a sense of expectation relative to your amount. It is simply an illustration designed to facilitate brainstorming.

We encourage everyone to work through *Our Family’s Plan for Creative Giving* on the next page. This is a great opportunity to include children to aid in their fiscal and spiritual growth.

OUR FAMILY'S PLAN FOR CREATIVE GIVING

Potential Resources	Weekly	Monthly	Yearly	3 Years
Eliminate ___ meal(s) out per week				
Eliminate ___ coffee(s) per week				
Cancel ___ subscription (e.g., Hulu, Netflix)				
Reduce entertainment/shopping				
Reduce Christmas budget				
Reduce vacation budget				
Scale back cable/internet or cell phone package				
Gift stock shares from portfolio				
Gift a portion of income tax refund				
Other				
Other				
Other				
THREE YEAR TOTAL				

QUESTION 3: WHAT CAN I GIVE THROUGH GREATER RELIANCE UPON GOD?

If the first question was about reason and the second question about priorities, then this question is more focused on faith. What if your three-year commitment was a step of faith? What would it look like if your commitment caused you to rely on God in a greater capacity? When asked with humility and a genuine spirit, this question positions us to experience God's faithfulness in new ways. How can you exercise faith as you consider your pledge? Don't miss the blessing of asking this question.

Faith Factor:

\$ _____

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER



CASH FLOW (Question 1)

What can I reasonably give (above my regular tithe)?



REPRIORITIZE (Question 2)

What can I give up for a priority I love more?

+



FAITH FACTOR (Question 3)

What positions me to rely on God in a greater capacity?

+

Pray about these numbers. Pray that God will give you great clarity and peace about them, that they may be gifted with open hands, and that God will guide you to adjust these figures—in either direction—if they are not aligned with His will. If married, pray over this with your spouse or family as you prepare for Commitment Sunday, November 4, 2018.

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Beyond Initiative Pledge Card Sample

Pledge cards are available at the Resource Center.

River Oaks Community Church

BEYOND INITIATIVE PLEDGE

November 2018 - November 2021

After prayerful consideration, I/we pledge to support River Oaks Community Church's *Beyond Initiative* with a gift totaling \$ _____ over three years.

I/we plan to make this gift:

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

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

(please print clearly)

I/we understand that I/we can change this estimate of giving at any time by contacting the church office.

WAYS TO SUPPORT



Prayer. We're asking everyone to pray for our church. We know that: "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" (Psalm 127:1). Pray that the Lord will continue to build His church and guide us.



Cash or check. If giving by check, you can give to the general fund and the *Beyond Initiative* on the same check. Just indicate the amount designated for each on the memo line.



Electronically. Online at riveroakschurch.org/give.



Stock transfer. Instead of liquidating appreciated stock and paying capital gains, the stock can be directly donated from your account to a brokerage account set up by River Oaks. The donor avoids tax and, at the same time, can count the transfer as a charitable donation. River Oaks will sell the stock and use the proceeds to fund the *Beyond Initiative*.



Other assets. Surprisingly, 90% of the world's wealth is in material goods. Many of us have collectibles, coins, annuities, vehicles, IRA distributions, land, and other valuable assets. If you would like to explore giving an "in-kind" donation that would result in a full tax write-off, please call our Business Administrator, Shay Heckard, at 336-766-0033.



ANNUITIES



VEHICLES



LAND



IRA DIST.



COINS



COLLECTIBLES

TOGETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE THE VISION

We believe our goal is achievable if every person in our church will prayerfully consider what God would want them to give. Each one of us will receive a different answer to that question. The graphic below is not intended to suggest various giving tiers, but rather to demonstrate how our goal might be realized as God speaks to each one of us individually. What is important to note is that every gift matters and—collectively—we can reach our goal. The empty blank at the bottom represents the fact that you might feel called to give a figure not represented on this graph. We may not give equally, but we can sacrifice equally. If each of us makes a prayerful, heartfelt commitment to God's work, the cumulative results will be amazing!



OUR GOAL IS THAT
EVERY PERSON
IN OUR CHURCH WILL
PRAYERFULLY
ASK GOD WHAT HE
WANTS THEM TO
GIVE TO THIS VISION