



Foundation for the Future

Prayer Guide

April 26-May 17, 2026

Developed by Cindy Walter, FUMC Austin Member

Thank You and Welcome!

Thank you for saying *Yes* to praying for our church's Foundation for the Future campaign. By saying *Yes*, you have taken the first step on a contemplative walk with God.

Step 1: Show Up!

God is always inviting us, never demanding. We always have a choice with God. After showing up, the next step is to pay attention.

Step 2: Pay Attention

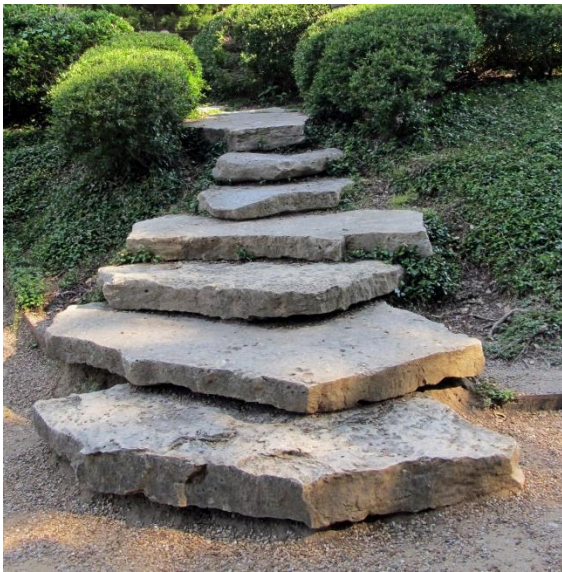
Be mindful in this time of prayer for our church. Notice how you are feeling about this project. Are you excited, worried about what the future will hold, confused, contented? Notice your surroundings and the others who may be with you. As you settle in and make space in your mind for prayer, turn your thoughts toward cooperation with God.

Step 3: Cooperate with God

We want to cooperate with God in every aspect of our Foundation for the Future campaign. Our prayers enable us to align our efforts with God's plan for God's creation at the corner of 12th and Lavaca. This prayer guide can be used in any way that you find helpful as you cooperate with God in this endeavor. The final step in this contemplative walk can be the most challenging of all.

Step 4: Release the Outcome

Release the outcome of this project into God's hands. It is, after all, God's project. We are the instruments. God is the conductor. How wonderful that we have been invited to join God in this new creation!



What Is It About These Stones?

You are part of a prayer team who will be praying for the Foundation for the Future every day of the campaign. Some of us will pray on one specific day, and others may be able to pray on many days, or even every day. Feel free to pray in any way that seems right to you. This guide is meant to offer suggestions that you may find helpful.

As a church family, many of us have taken a stone with a person's name on it to pray for them as we begin to lay the foundation for the future. These stones represent foundation stones and also stepping stones into the future.

Each week of the campaign, we'll be praying for different groups of people who are vital to its completion. We can think of these groups as foundation stones.

1. **Planners:** architects, Building Committee members, Trustees, church staff
2. **Enablers:** church family committing to help fund the project, fund raisers
3. **Implementers:** work crews, project managers, inspectors
4. **Beneficiaries:** we who will worship in this welcoming space, the community who will use the space, the people who will be married, baptized, blessed, and remembered here...for generations to come.

A Plan for Our Prayers

Week 1: April 26-May 2

Pray for the planners and the beneficiaries

Week 2: May 3-9

Pray for the enablers and the beneficiaries

Week 3: May 10-16

Pray for the implementers and the beneficiaries

Closing prayers – May 17

Take part in a closing ritual to release this project into God's hands.

Ideas for Your Day of Prayer

Think about how you will fulfill your commitment to pray for our Foundation for the Future campaign. How will you set aside time and allow yourself to focus? Here are some ideas to spur your imagination.

1. **Walk and pray in the Sanctuary** – come to the Sanctuary and pray in the space that will be the focus of the campaign.*
2. **Walk and pray with the labyrinth** in Murchison Chapel.*
3. **Use the labyrinth picture** to “walk the labyrinth” with your fingers.
4. **Make this a day of fasting** – Fast for the day, a meal, from snacks, or from a regular pastime and use the cravings you notice throughout the day as a reminder to pray.
5. **Pray the Psalms** – Here are some suggestions you can use: Psalm 20, Psalm 121, Psalm 37, Psalm 32.

**The Sanctuary and Murchison Chapel labyrinth are available during church office hours, Monday-Thursday, 9:30AM-3:00PM, or Sunday mornings.*

**What other ideas can you discover to help you set
this day aside for focused prayer?**



Finding a Space for Prayer

A labyrinth can be a wonderful aid for prayer. There are many twists and turns as you walk along the pathway. It's not always clear if you are heading in the right direction. One major difference between a labyrinth and a maze is that you cannot get lost in a

labyrinth. There is only one way in and one way out.

There will be a labyrinth available for you to use in Murchison Chapel during the Foundation for the Future campaign. If that won't work for you, look for another space that will make room for your prayers. You can also use the larger image of a labyrinth on the next page to trace the path to the center and then out again.

As You Enter the Labyrinth

Breathe deeply and calm your mind. Notice thoughts and feelings you bring to your prayer. Gently invite yourself to be fully present where your feet are planted.

As You Move Toward the Center of the Labyrinth

Pray for one or more of the groups who are our foundation stones. Pray for their creativity, safety, joy in their work, diligence, honesty, pleasure in a job well done. How else can you pray for their support in this effort?

When You Reach the Center of the Labyrinth

Pause and breathe deeply. Abide here a while in the Center with God. Release the outcome of this project to God. Allow it to remain in God's hands as you start to start to move out of the center.

As You Move Out from the Center of the Labyrinth

Focus your thoughts on the beneficiaries of this project. Think of the many ways that people will be blessed when they enter our worship space once it's complete.

When You Reach the End of the Labyrinth

Pause one more time. Breathe deeply. Once more release this project into God's hands.

Praying the Psalms

How to Pray through the Psalms (borrowed with permission from Melanie Hauser – Final Paper Integrating the Psalms)

- 1. Find a quiet place without distractions.** It is hard to pray when there are other things fighting for your attention. This place doesn't have to be fancy or "holy"—you can pray in a closet, the bathroom, or your car. Any place you can find a space to be alone is a good place to pray.
- 2. Find a psalm where the author is going through what you are or has the same feelings as you.** Find a Bible translation in your first language. There are 150 psalms to choose from, so it is possible to find one that works for you, right here, and now. As you pray more of them you will get a feel for what kind of Psalms show up in what part of the book, but you can use a search engine to help you find a psalm that sounds like what you need right now. Don't be afraid to try a few!
- 3. Imagine yourself speaking these words to God.** Use your own first language, or the one that is comfortable for you. Use words that you would normally use—God understands every language and word, so don't feel like you must speak in a stiff, formal way. Praying is a two-way conversation just like you might have with a friend.
- 4. Borrow the faith of the original author.** Sometimes we come defeated and dejected and don't have any faith that our prayers are being answered. Remember how we said you aren't alone? Look at how the original writer of the psalm had faith in God even when things were tough. Use that to help you have faith in the same circumstances!

An Example

Here is how you might pray through Psalm 121.

“I raise my eyes toward the mountains. Where will my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth...”

This project we are undertaking seems so huge, how will we ever accomplish it? We don't need to worry about it. We can rest easy because our Beloved Companion is right here in the midst of it with us!

“God won't let your foot slip. Your protector won't fall asleep on the job. No! Israel's protector never sleeps or rests! ...”

We can have confidence in the outcome because God is even in the nitty gritty details.

“The LORD is your protector; the LORD is your shade right beside you. The sun won't strike you during the day; neither will the moon at night. The LORD will protect you from all evil; God will protect your very life. The LORD will protect you on your journeys- whether going or coming – from now until forever from now.”

The LORD has protected us from the falling stones from our building. No one was injured by those stones, God guided us to put up the scaffolding, do the hard work to keep everyone safe, and to restore the building so that it will last for generations to come. God guides us now through the wisdom of stonemasons and the skill of engineers and builders. God will continue to protect and guide us, even into this next step along our path, and even into the future forever and forever!

Closing Prayer Ritual

It can be challenging to take that fourth step on the contemplative walk with God. The more invested we are in the outcome we want to see, the more tightly we hold on. Consider this practice to enable us to release the outcome to God.



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Take a few minutes to go to a nearby body of water. Maybe there is a pond in a park nearby, or a lake, stream, or a creek. Find a rock or bring one that you are willing to release with you. With the rock in your hand, take a few moments to notice its uniqueness. What does it look like? How does it feel? How light or heavy is it? What color(s) does it have? Does the color change when it is wet?

Turn your thoughts to the prayers you have for our church community and for this campaign. Give these prayers to the rock to hold.

When you are ready, throw the rock into the water. Notice the ever-widening ripples it makes on the surface. Imagine the impact this act of throwing the rock into the water is having on the environment.

What about the impact our Foundation for the Future campaign will have?

We cannot know, but we can imagine.

Now consider the path the rock is taking down to the bottom. It will settle down with the mud and the other rocks, abiding with God. Allow your prayers and your hopes and your worries to remain with the rock, abiding with God.