

In the CITY *For the*
CITY

A Note from the Senior Pastor

The next chapter in a great story

First Methodist has a great story, one that goes back 120 years. The years since 1995 have been especially telling as we have become one of the top 25 attended Methodist churches in the nation with an expansive impact upon each other, our community and our world. We have much to celebrate. But in the last two years, we feel God has been leading us to a new chapter in this great story, where as a church family we will allow God to use us even more to shape and build the communities we live in.

We believe our changing community represents a season of tremendous opportunity.

Our question is, “What place does the church – First Methodist – have in this season?”

I hope you will review this brochure closely, celebrate with me what God is doing, and even more, join me in writing the next chapter for a great church.

For all our pastors,



Pastor Mike Ramsdell



Pastor Mike Ramsdell with (l to r), grandson Codie, daughter Kelly, wife Rhonda and granddaughter Kylie.

Changing lives

**The core of our mission statement is:
Making disciples of Jesus Christ who will love God, love others and serve the world.**

Nothing is more important than the impact we make upon the lives of our children, our youth, our families — the new and long-term people who walk through our doors every week. Day by day, many come into a relationship with Christ, discover our big-enough God and grow into followers of our *Amazing Grace* savior. Day by day, week by week, *The Journey* continues as thousands grow in their relationship with Christ. Lives and families are changed every day by the church's good news.





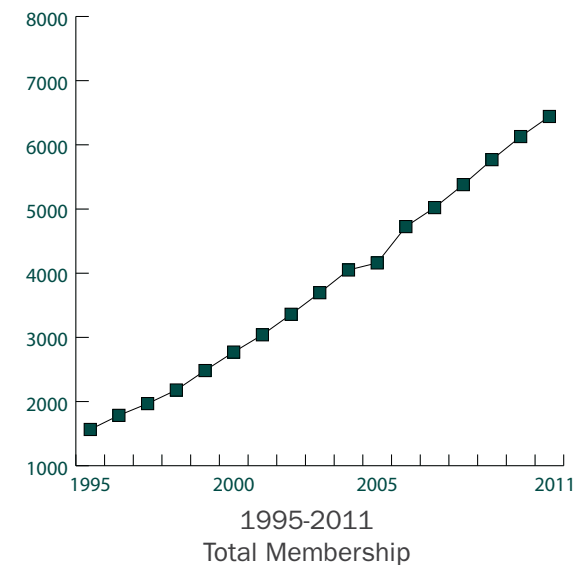
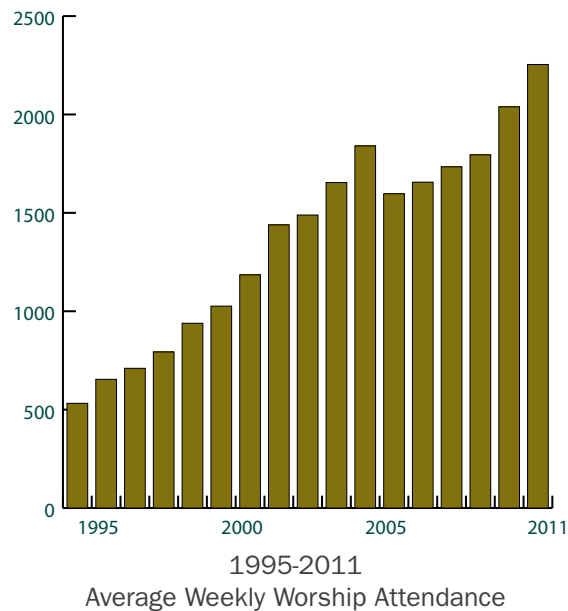
From a community with one high school, Mansfield has grown to a school district with an expected enrollment this year of 33,049 students. The fifth high school, Lake Ridge, opened this fall. The Mansfield Independent School District, which covers an area of 94.5 square miles, is also the largest employer in our community with 4,078 staff members. God has planted First Methodist squarely in the middle of this dynamic area.



Growing the church

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The Book of Acts describes a church that is constantly growing — growing in faith, growing in numbers, growing in groups and growing in life and mission. In the last 16 years, First Methodist has grown in all these ways, extraordinarily so. We now have eight worship services, a tremendous youth and children's program and hundreds of small groups. Together we have expanded our campus with three major and two smaller building programs. We have a multi-layered program that touches people in almost every area of life situations. First Methodist Church has become one of the greatest Methodist churches in the nation, modeling church the way church can be.





5 Building programs since 1995:

- New Sanctuary
- A&E Building (music, children, youth)
- Expanded Sanctuary and Atrium
- Wesley Mission Center
- Chapel Renovation

5 New worship services since 1995:

- Saturday night
- The Well
- Celebrate Recovery
- Spanish-speaking
- Sunday 5:00 p.m.

Top 25 of United Methodist churches in worship attendance

In 2012, we completed a multi-year goal of launching five new worship services. In recent years, we completed three major building programs and two smaller ones. With our expanded campus and new services, the reach of our church has grown by creating new places for new people to experience God's amazing love.

Building the community

We want to be a key player in shaping the communities we live in.

First Methodist has long taken seriously the commands of Jesus to reach out into our community and world, from pastoral care to Africa. Our outreach and mission touches almost every area of need in our communities — schools, hospitals, areas of poverty. The hungry, hurting and lost find help through our many programs. When we add the heart and life of the many in our church family who are salt and light throughout this area, daily we are forming and shaping a wonderful place to live and raise our families. Our intention is to step this up a notch, to see ourselves as a church and people God has placed “in the city for the city.” We intend to be a key player in shaping the communities we live in.





Our “city” extends well beyond the city limits of Mansfield. It can best be understood by the diversity of the Mansfield Independent School District. Fifty-five percent of MISD students reside outside of the Mansfield city limits, primarily in the communities of Arlington, Grand Prairie and Burseson. This broader picture is the “city” we believe God has led our church to bless and serve. God has poised us for “such a time as this.”



Industry growth in our area has led to the introduction of new services and support to accommodate an expanded demographic in the greater Mansfield community. We believe the rapid growth of Methodist Mansfield Medical Center and other necessary health services will lead to a larger, active senior community in our future. At the same time, young families continue to make Mansfield their home. In many ways, we see our faith community growing rapidly in both of these areas in the coming years. We expect our church family to grow as we work to serve these two communities.



Photo courtesy of A# Image Marketing & Photography



Photo courtesy of Methodist Mansfield Medical Center

Life & Mission Budget Estimate 2013

A little theology of giving:

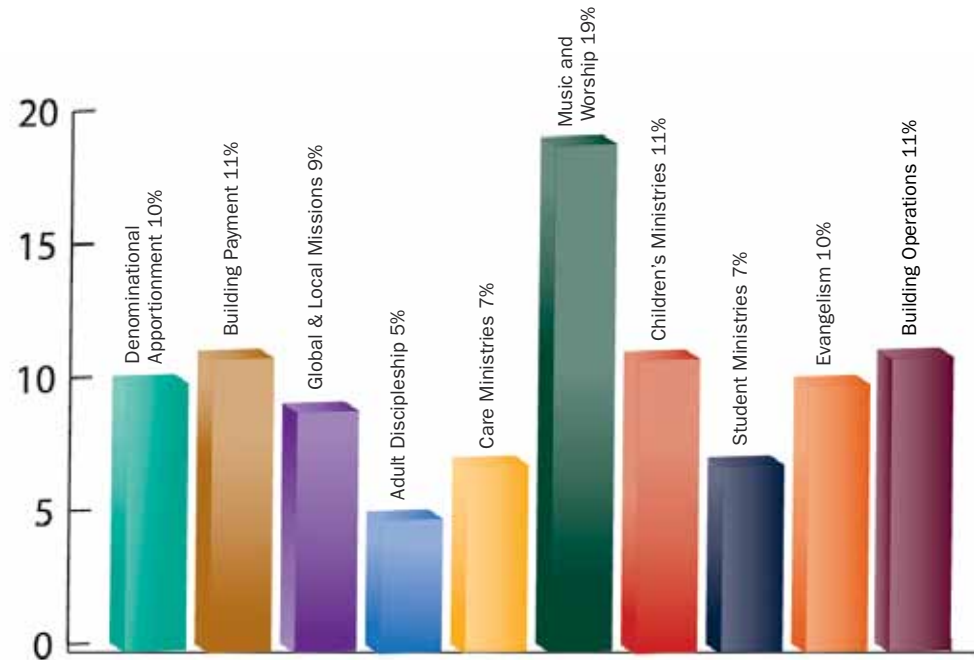
- Jesus said to give as we have received.
- Jesus was the most generous person whoever lived.
- Generosity of all we have and are is distinctly Christian.

“Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.” (Luke 6:38)

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and test me now in this . . . if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows.” (Malachi 3:10)

“Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)

Our 2013 Life and Mission Budget will be presented in detail to the church family in January after our giving campaign is completed and the year is ended. Our typical budget is divided as follows:



If you would like a copy of the detailed budget, it is available to all our our members and will be presented at Church Conference. Contact Becky Grimes or Penny Voss at (817)477-2287.

We are asking our church family to do a number of things.

During our *In the City for the City* fall stewardship campaign, we are asking for our church family to do a number of things. First, pray for your church and join us in worship each week. What we will be emphasizing will guide the life of First Methodist for many years to come. We want to change lives, grow the church and build the community!

Then we ask for you to pray about what God would have you do financially, and fill out the *In the City for the City* Commitment Card for 2013. The card explains the ways you can make your commitment — place the Commitment Card in the offering plate in any worship service, mail it in, go online at fmc.org or bring it by the church office during the week. The commitments of our church family allow us to plan our life and mission budget, aligning our God-given resources with God's vision for First Methodist.

Our Commitment Weekend is set for November 17/18. Celebration Weekend, when our totals are announced, is December 5/6. We are having a wonderful 2012 in almost every way; we anticipate 2013 to be even better.

In what ways can I give?

- Automatic Withdrawal Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) — This is the easiest, most cost-effective option for you and your church. Simply complete the EFT authorization form on the back of your Commitment Card and follow the instructions there. To learn more, contact Becky Grimes or Penny Voss at (817)477 2287.
- You may give by check or cash in any service you attend.
- You may mail your offering in.
- You may talk to your bank, and they can arrange for your offering to be mailed to your church.
- You may use your debit/credit card.

Final Thoughts

Help write the next chapter.

Here is the exciting challenge: help us write the next chapter — a chapter we are framing with *In the City for the City* — why our church exists, the season of opportunity God has placed before us, the great story that has been written by a great church and the exciting story still to be written.

Changing lives, growing the church, building the community.

We believe it is our job to help shape and build the changing and growing community God has planted us in. Together, what seems impossible becomes very possible. How can you help? Through the traditional commitments of our church — pray, join us in worship, serve others, help tell Christ's story — and in this campaign, you are being asked to make a financial commitment that will transform 2013 as First Methodist commits to being *In the City for the City*. And yes, God is big enough.

If you would like to learn more, join us for the *In the City for the City* Gathering on Sunday, November 4, at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Our pastors, staff and lay leadership will be present to answer any questions you may have as we focus together on the exciting 2013 and beyond that we believe God has in front of us.



Pastor Mike Ramsdell

STEWARDSHIP 2013

Changing lives

Growing the church

Building the community

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