



PAID IN FULL

FREED FOR NEW LIFE



LENT GUIDE 2022

PULASKI HEIGHTS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

PAID IN FULL

FREED FOR NEW LIFE



At the end of 2021, six families reduced PHUMC's debt from \$955,000 to \$317,000. Our congregation has been in debt since 2014 and in that time has paid over \$300,000 in interest alone. As we prepare for the season of Lent, which begins Ash Wednesday, March 2nd, we have set a new and easily attainable goal to be debt-free by Easter. For that to happen, we need the full participation of our membership. If at least 635 giving units (families, couples, individuals) give on average \$500 by Easter, we will have Paid in Full our debt for the One who Paid our Debt in Full.

Our intent is for all of us to make a sacrifice during Lent for the One who made the greatest sacrifice for all of us. We are asking that every family, couple, or individual prayerfully consider what they can sacrifice during this time leading up to Easter. Our goal is two-fold:

- Have our whole congregation participate in a unified spiritual practice of sacrifice for the One who Paid in Full for our sins. This communal effort can bring us together in so many ways, particularly since this pandemic has kept us apart for so long.
- Give your sacrificial funds enabling us to Pay in Full our \$317,000 debt.

For example, if you give up chocolate for Lent, please contribute what you would have spent on your favorite treat to our Paid in Full cause. If you are a teenager who babysits, please consider donating your earnings to our church-wide effort. We would like to publicize the creative ways in which you are being sacrificial. Let us know at phumc.com/paid-in-full or share on social media with #phpaidinfull. We will highlight your offerings every way we have available to us, including in worship.

If we have Paid in Full our debt by Easter, PHUMC can save our debt and interest payments and use it instead to start innovative ministries, maintain our existing facilities, feed more hungry people, and find new and creative ways to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with even more people.

Thank you for being a special part of our church-wide Paid in Full spiritual discipline. The One who Paid in Full for our sins will be very pleased with our desire to make a sacrifice in return that enables the Body of Christ called Pulaski Heights United Methodist Church to achieve even greater things together. I can't wait to see how creative and sacrificial we can be together!

Dr. John Robbins, Senior Pastor

IN THIS BOOKLET...

Contained in this booklet are tools to help you in this spiritual journey, along with our **Lenten Calendar**. You'll find devotionals and resources for all ages to learn about debt and freedom together, and space for you to set goals for your own spiritual journey this Lenten season.

Together, let us discover the power of being freed for new life by the One who has **Paid in Full** for us.

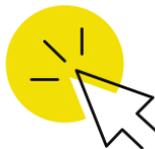
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WE INVITE YOU TO SHARE YOUR JOURNEYS WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA USING THE HASHTAG **#PHPAIDINFULL** OR SUBMIT ONLINE AT **PHUMC.COM/PAID-IN-FULL**

A LENTEN GUIDE

FROM CONNECTING MINISTRIES

You may find yourself wondering, isn't Lent supposed to be about spiritual discipline? How is debt reduction actually a spiritual discipline issue? Hopefully, here in this booklet, you can grow more deeply in your faith during this journey of Lent and discover what freedom can be found when our debt is **Paid in Full**.

- In worship during Lent, we will be sharing a sermon series on Jesus' seven last words from the cross. Here in this devotional booklet you'll find a weekly devotional that invites us to consider those words and what they might mean when looked at within the context of **Paid In Full**.
- In this booklet, you'll also find a goal sheet for you to fill out so you can write down what you might be called to do in this season to contribute to our church's **Paid In Full** campaign.
- AND... we invite you to consider as well what dreams you have for the church that could be achieved once our debt is **Paid in Full**. What can God do with our freedom to bring new life to our mission of loving God, loving neighbor and changing the world?



I believe strongly that the way we handle our money is a matter of spiritual discipline. If we want to be able to live generously for God in the freedom God provides us, then we are called to turn our whole lives towards God, including our money. Because Christ gave his whole life for us.

So as I begin the journey of Lent, in order to make contribution to the Paid In Full Campaign above my tithe, I am deleting delivery food apps from my phone. I am also joining with other staff in a lunch bunch at the church to bring our lunches and eat together at the office instead of going out for lunch during the week. Cooking instead of eating out or ordering delivery will enable me to give above and beyond my tithe.

Saving money to share with the church for our **Paid In Full** Campaign excites me. There are so many amazing things I know our church can do when we don't have debt, and I want to be a part of helping to make that happen.

I hope you'll join me in this journey through worship and through the discipleship opportunities in the pages that follow. Christ gave his life for us. And Christ will do amazing things when we give our whole lives to God!

Pastor Kathleen



FREED AND FORGIVEN

LUKE 23:34

“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”

Sin is translated from the Greek word "hamartia" meaning missing the mark. Sin is when we miss the mark on loving God and loving our neighbor. Sin is what we do or leave undone that does harm, individually or collectively, to God and others. Not only does sin hurt us and our relationships but it limits our lives. Sin hurts our relationships because it hurts others, but it also hurts us. Sin holds us back from living the best, fullest life possible, the lives we were created for - lives of healing and wholeness and goodness in God. Jesus was killed because of sin. His message of love and acceptance and healing was feared by those in power and viewed as a threat to the empire. But... even as he was killed, he offered forgiveness. And his death itself - a full sacrifice of love - is forgiveness for us all.

Sin is often compared to debt because debt because when we sin we must reconcile. We owe something to make things right. AND debt, like sin, keeps us bound to the past rather than freed for the future. How can we be free to live out fullness of life if we are constantly paying for something that happened in the past?

Forgiveness of sin and forgiveness of debt free us from the past for a better future, a future that God wants for us!

What do you feel like you may need forgiveness for?

What about someone to whom you might need to offer forgiveness?

What might that forgiveness mean for your life? For the life of others? For God?

How does it change things that Christ **Paid In Full** our debt and freed us from sin?

FREED FOR POSSIBILITY

LUKE 23:43

“Today you will be with me in paradise.”

Freedom from sin, freedom in Christ means that we are not only freed from something but freed for something, for new life, for paradise.

What dreams do you have for your life that could be possible without debt?

What dreams do you have for the church that could be possible if our debt is **Paid in Full**?

FREED FOR CARING

JOHN 19:26-27

“Behold thy Son”... “Behold thy mother”

Jesus taught that the greatest commandment was that of love, for God and neighbor. Here, from the cross, he is providing care for his mother, who would need the care of a man when he was gone because of the economics of the day that limited what women could do to provide for themselves. He is also providing care for the beloved disciple, who was a faithful part of Jesus' own life. These words remind me that in his ministry, Jesus brought people together in community and instructed them to heal and to care for the vulnerable, even at great personal risk and expense (like the cross!) Part of participating in Christ's work is a personal sacrifice for the greater good of others.

One thing that being debt-free means for PHUMC is that it will enable us to better care for those around us with the money not used on debt!

What can we do together to care for one another?

What care could we offer to our community for the money that has previously gone towards debt?

What could you give up or sacrifice to contribute towards **Paid in Full** that would enable us to better care for one another and our community?



FREED FOR CONNECTION

MARK 15:34

"My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"

Christ experienced loneliness and isolation on the cross. God knows the pain of loneliness and freed us from it by empowering us with connection and love with one another.

What can we do together when we are **Paid in Full** so that no one feels lonely and forsaken by God ever again?

FREED FOR SERVICE

JOHN 19:28

"I am Thirsty"

Christ knows what it is to hunger and thirst, knows the pain of those who hunger and thirst for something more in their lives, and he calls us to help serve and heal pain in the world around us.

When we are **Paid in Full**, what can we as a church do to serve our community better? To better be in mission to our hurting world?

PAID IN FULL

JOHN 19:30

"It is Finished"

When Jesus' sacrifice was complete, we are told in Mark's gospel that the curtain in the Temple that symbolically separated the presence of God from the people was torn in two. In Christ, God's presence was forever with the world in a way it never had been before, life conquered death in a way it never had before.

When our debt is **Paid In Full**, how can we be Christ's presence for our world In ways we never have before?



PLAN

In this season of Lent I am going to :

This will save me: \$

I will be able to give: \$

My prayer for the church after our debt is **paid in full** is:



PRAYER

Holy God, we give you thanks that through your son Jesus Christ we are freed from sin and we are freed for life.

We pray that in this season of Lent you may work in our hearts that we may know more deeply the power of life in Christ and the possibilities for our lives and the life of our church in the freedom you offer.

As we seek new spiritual disciplines to save money so that we are able to give money, may you open our hearts and minds to your endless possibilities for our lives and the life of our church with the freedom you give.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

A LENTEN GUIDE

FROM FAMILY MINISTRIES

In the following pages, our family ministries team has created age-appropriate approaches for contributing to this Lenten project as a family. These intentional conversations are constructed for a dinner table setting, and we encourage adults to set aside about an hour for dinner, conversation, and planning together as a family.

No matter the age, children and teens are more likely to participate when they are included in the planning as much as possible. This conversation can model not only how to make a family plan together, but also how your family chooses to communicate plans, boundaries, and problem solving processes together. Most importantly, this resource allows families to dream together about new ways God is using our church to change the world!

Families with mixed ages (both children and teens) can use a combination of both the child and teen resources as their conversation needs. We encourage the bulk of conversation to be geared towards the youngest in the room.

- The Guide for Families with Children (5th grade and under) is found on Page 13.
- The Guide for Families with Teens (6th-12th grades) is found on Pages 14-16.
- The Lent Family Plan page for all families is found on Page 17.

FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

WAYS TO INCLUDE YOUNG CHILDREN IN PAID IN FULL

We encourage parents to include younger children in your devotional time. While the concept of debt may be too advanced for younger children, they do understand giving to help others. Children are often the best givers. The activities below can be used throughout the season of Lent with your child.



Wants and Needs Activity

Helping children understand the difference between wants and needs teaches them to save and to give from their abundance.

- When your child asks for candy or a toy while shopping, you can ask 'Is that a want or a need?'
- When you are serving water with a meal, you can ask 'Is that a want or a need?'

As you play this game over the next few weeks, your child can begin to see how the extra things can be saved to give toward helping other.



Stone Soup Folktale

The story of Stone Soup is a great way to help children learn that each person's little gift can be added to make a big gift that everyone can enjoy.

You can watch the story at phumc.com/stonesoup.

The story is also available in several book versions at Amazon.com.

FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUTH

2 MIN: PRAY TOGETHER

Dear God, we thank you for all the ways you have blessed our family through our church. At this time, we ask that you open our hearts to the ways we can bless others and dream of new possibilities together.



10 MIN: CHECK IN AS A FAMILY

Each person takes a turn talking about their "High, Low and Hero"

- High point of the week
- Low point of the week
- Hero of the week (could be a person, animal or object, be creative!)

15 MIN: WHAT IS DEBT?

- Parents take this time to explain debt, and how interest works for teens that are unfamiliar with the process of loans and interest. If you have loans or mortgages you pay on, these might be helpful examples
- The Church owes \$317,000, to put that in perspective, the youth annual budget (the money that it takes to do EVERYTHING we do at youth) is \$24,000.
- If we pay off the debt completely this year we will save \$100,000. What are some new things you would love to see the church do with this money? What ministries can you imagine Pulaski Heights UMC doing more of if our church was free from debt?



20 MIN: HOW CAN WE BLESS THE CHURCH?

- Take a moment to think of expenses you pay that absolutely **HAVE** to be paid. Parents have the option to reveal some of the amounts they pay monthly for:
 - Phone bills
 - Electricity
 - Water
 - Trash collection
 - Gas
 - Rent or Mortgage
 - Groceries
- Next, think through some expenses that are not essential. Parents have the option here to reveal how much the family spends on:
 - Fast food/restaurants
 - New clothing/sports gear
 - Subscription costs for streaming/subscription boxes
 - Anything else unique to your family spending patterns!
- What are some things in the non-essential spending category we are willing to cut back on for Lent to give the money towards the **Paid in Full** project?
- How much are we willing to cut back?
- If we cut back on certain things, how will we replace their experience? (Less fast food, replace with family dinner at home, etc.)



Sometimes making these changes will feel really challenging. What will we do when we are tempted to give up on our family **Paid in Full** plan? If the youth in the household make their own money, how could they contribute towards the family goal?

- Use the space below to write down family goals and individual responsibilities--if a family member is giving some of their own money, how much? If a family member is contributing out of a personal hobby, how much? Etc.
- Once you have drawn it out here, make sure every person in the family feels comfortable with the plan, then use the next page to make a formal plan for the family.



LENT FAMILY PLAN

This Lent, our family's plan is:



These sacrifices will save us (dollar amount):

Our dream for the church once our debt is Paid in Full is:



**Let us know about your plan by
scanning the QR code or going to
phumc.com/paid-in-full**

WAYS TO GIVE TO PAID IN FULL



SCAN ME

ONLINE

phumc.com/paid-in-full

ONLINE

phumc.com/giveonline

CHECK

4823 Woodlawn
Little Rock, AR 72205

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

HOLY THURSDAY

A Service of the Last Supper

APRIL 14 | 6:00 PM
WESLEY HALL

GOOD FRIDAY

Stations of the Cross

APRIL 15 | 6:00 PM
SANCTUARY

EASTER *with* PULASKI HEIGHTS



COMMUNITY EASTER SUNRISE

Apr 17 | 7am | River Market Amphitheatre
DR. JOHN ROBBINS PREACHING

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

DR. JOHN ROBBINS PREACHING

8:30, 9:45, 11:00 | Sanctuary

8:30 | Facebook, YouTube

10:30 | KATV

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

REV. KATHLEEN MCMURRAY PREACHING

9:45 and 11:00 | Wesley Hall

11:00 | Facebook, YouTube

LEARN MORE
phumc.com/easter



**PULASKI
HEIGHTS**
United Methodist Church

Love God, Love Neighbor, Change the World