



November 2018

Are you prepared to Defy Gravity?

When I think about the word gravity, I think about astronauts and outer space—and maybe the movie with Sandra Bullock and George Clooney. Real and imagined astronauts escaping Earth discover the tremendous force required to defy gravity.

In Matthew 19:16-22 the rich young man asks Jesus, “What must I do to have eternal life?” He is saddened to learn he must sell all he owns and give to the poor, because he realizes just how much that requires of him: breaking free from the gravity of his time. Are we prepared for the energy required to leave the world behind us and follow Jesus? Finding the strength to resist the “culture of more” around us frees us to experience God’s grace and love in all its weightlessness. By defying gravity in our own lives, we can follow Jesus, and lay the foundation for future generations to Defy Gravity and do even greater things.

Defying financial gravity helps more than just your household. You can make a tremendous difference through Ankeny First by your generosity. On the reverse of this letter, we have listed several ways to give to Ankeny First and a general breakdown of the gifts that are funding Ankeny First’s local budget this year. We challenge you to commit to giving to the local budget for the first time, or to increase your giving to the next level in 2019.

Enclosed with this letter is a summary of our narrative budget, describing how your gifts to Ankeny First make a difference to our members, as well as to the people we will reach. In addition, we have enclosed an Estimate of Giving card, which is an essential tool for our congregation’s leadership; it helps to ensure the feasibility of the budget we believe God has called us to meet. Please complete the card and bring it with you to Celebration Weekend on **November 10 and 11**. You may also mail it to the office, or fill out an on-line estimate of giving at www.AnkenyFirst.org/give.htm.

Thank you for your generosity to Ankeny First. It is our prayer that your giving to Ankeny First is as much a blessing to you and your family as it is to your church family and to those we serve!

In Christ,

Phil Sherman
Finance Committee



2018 YTD Contribution Totals for Ankeny First's Local Budget

Annual Gift	Number of Givers	Sum of Giving
\$1-2,000	687	\$429,899
\$2,000-4,000	128	\$351,879
\$4,000-6,000	45	\$215,471
\$6,000-8,000	19	\$123,606
\$8,000-10,000	6	\$53,208
\$10,000-15,000	6	\$66,125
\$15,000+	8	\$205,266
Grand Total	899	\$1,445,454

Giving Options

Online/Recurring Giving through PushPay – With automatic withdrawal from your checking/saving accounts or credit cards, you can reinforce your commitment to give your tithes and offerings to God first, before anything else. One easy step each year guarantees that the church will receive your gifts on a regular basis, even if you are out of town or forget one week.

Cash or Check – Please make sure you identify yourself on the envelope or on your check so Ankeny First can provide you a record for tax purposes. Your gifts can then be placed in the weekly worship offering plate or they can be mailed to: Ankeny First UMC, 206 SW Walnut St., Ankeny, IA 50023. (*Envelopes are provided in the pew penholders, or numbered yearly giving envelopes are available by indicating on the front on your commitment card or by notifying the church office.*)

Appreciated Investments – Stocks, bonds, physical property, Qualified Charitable Distributions, and other securities are a welcome gift. Many members have found the tax savings make this an ideal way to fulfill their commitment, as contributions are equal to the fair market value, while tax liability on capital gains is avoided.

Direct IRA Minimum Distribution – Donors who are 70 ½ or older can give their gifts directly from their individual retirement accounts tax-free. By avoiding federal and state taxes on the amount, donors can increase their support to Ankeny First at no additional cost.

For questions concerning contributions or pledges, please contact:

Alicia Ver Huel, Financial Officer, at 515.964.4249 or Alicia.VerHuel@AnkenyFirst.org.