

Capital Campaign FAQs

FCUCC 2025 Capital Campaign

Why are we having a Capital Campaign?

A successful Capital Campaign will make it possible for our church to live into our mantra of “no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.” We need critically important improvements and updates to support our congregation and the community that uses our facility. The Capital Campaign will allow us to address our accessibility challenges, making our facility more modern and user-friendly.

In 2020, we embarked on a discernment journey. We identified four pillars of our community: worship, fellowship, mission and outreach, and faith formation. To support these four pillars, we must continue to address our aging facility. This Capital Campaign will allow us to do this.

Why are we having a Capital Campaign now?

This is another step in our journey. In 2023/2024, the team participated in training and grant awards in the Sacred Places initiative through Indiana Landmarks. Upon completion of this training, we received a grant to provide us with a full assessment of our current buildings and properties. Based on this work, accessibility and longevity emerged as our top priorities. We interviewed several contractors and then engaged JICI (Jim Ingledue Construction, Inc.) to help us fully plan and scope the work needed. We now know what work to be completed and the cost to do it. Our next step is to fund the work.

What are the details of the work planned?

Accessibility remains our first priority. This includes the addition of an elevator, addressing the entrance into the sanctuary (ramp and push button entry,) and handicap parking. These projects are estimated to cost \$400,000. Longevity of the facility is our second priority. We have an aging boiler system that needs to be replaced. The estimated cost is \$50,000. The usefulness and friendliness of our facility is our third priority. This includes Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary accessibility improvements and modernization. If funds are still available, all of our bathrooms will be improved. As we continue to grow and our reach continues to expand beyond our brick and mortar, we must address technology issues, as well as ensure appropriate facilities for those in the community who use our buildings. While specific details of the follow-on projects are still in the planning stage, our goal is to raise \$800,000.

What is our campaign goal?

The goal of the campaign is to raise \$800,000. Our ability to accomplish these renovations is directly tied to the amount of money we raise. First up will be the Accessibility projects which are planned to be completed sometime in the 1st Quarter of 2026.

How can I support the campaign?

You can support the campaign by completing a Letter of Intent. This can be found in the packet you will receive in our mailing or receive in person in the coming weeks. There is also information regarding the Letter of Intent on the bulletin board in the office wing. The Letter of Intent is your pledge to donate funds, including cash, stock, retirement, or other funds. More details can be found in the “Ways to Give” information.

How much should I give?

We ask that you prayerfully consider making your best gift. Traditionally, a gift of this nature comes from accumulated assets and is a multiple of your annual gift. It will take all of us working together to fund this work. No amount is too small!

When will I need to make my pledge?

Our goal is to receive Letters of Intent from all supporters by October 17, 2025.

How do I make a pledge?

You can make a pledge by returning your Letter of Intent, received by mail or in person, on or before 10/17/25. You can also fill out electronically by visiting our website at angolaucc.org.

How much time do I have to fulfill my commitment?

You can fulfill your commitment in one up-front donation or spread out your donations over the next three years to accommodate your budget. If additional time is needed for you to complete your commitment, please contact John French (Campaign Chair). All Letters of Intent (that is, pledges to pay) need to be mailed in or personally delivered before 10/17/2025. It would be beneficial to the campaign for your first payment to be provided to the church before the end of 2025.

What happens if the project requires money that is committed but not yet paid?

Cash flow is an important part of any renovation project. That is why it is important to understand the commitment amount and timing of each donation. The Letter of Intent helps us capture this information. At this time, we expect that we will receive up front donations to cover our initial cash outlays. However, if we find this is not the case, our first option is to “borrow from ourselves.” We have monies in investment accounts that could be used to pay up front costs, and once donations are received, we would pay those monies back into those investment accounts. If we find ourselves in a situation where these funds are not sufficient, we have been in discussions with the staff of the Cornerstone Fund (a non-profit lending organization for churches) regarding a potential low-interest rate short term loan.

Is a Capital Campaign contribution separate from our regular, annual stewardship pledge?

Yes, it is a separate financial campaign and does not affect your annual pledge. Our annual pledges are crucial to support the church's ongoing operating costs and missions. We are blessed to have strong yearly donors and we operate our church within our budget. As stewards of your yearly contributions, we intend to continue to do this. Your contribution to the Capital Campaign is to support these specific facility needs in support of our continued growth and missional goals. Your Capital Campaign contribution may offer tax advantages. It is always a good idea to consult your tax accountant or financial planner for details on your personal situation.

**What will happen if funds given to the Capital Campaign exceed our \$800k goal?
What happens if we do not make our goal?**

Exceeding our goal would be a wonderful outcome! Until the project is completed, there is still the possibility that related issues needing funding may arise. In the event that we exceed our Campaign goal, the excess amount will be used to fund Capital projects into the future. There will always be needs to be addressed with the age of our properties. This will prepare us to fulfill those needs without an additional appeal for funds. If we do not raise funds to cover all the projects currently identified, the money will first be used to address our accessibility challenges, and then the facility's longevity issues.

What if my situation changes and I am unable to completely fulfill my commitment?
Should your situation change at any time, please contact John French, the Campaign Chair, to discuss further.

Who has access to the campaign giving records?

As with annual pledges, this information is considered confidential. Only those required to record or process the contributions will have access to these records.

How will we select the contractors who do the work?

We interviewed several contractors and then engaged JICI to help us fully plan and scope the work needed. JICI was selected due to their strong ties to the community and exceptional work in the Steuben County area. As we begin specific work, such as the boilers, we will discuss with JICI as well as other contractors and select the best option for each project.

Are there other sources of funding available, aside from our pledges?

There may be limited grant money available for some of our specific projects, although we have not found many opportunities. However, many grants are awarded only after other funding sources have been fully pledged. The amount we raise among our members and friends can demonstrate our commitment and generosity, which can help us be approved for grant funding.

Can funds given to the campaign be used for anything else?

Campaign funds will primarily be used on projects as presented to the congregation; however, a small percentage of the funds may be reserved to address future unanticipated Capital needs. This will prevent the need for additional requests for funds in the foreseeable future.

Didn't we just have a capital campaign?

The last capital campaign for First Congregational United Church of Christ was conducted in 2012, over 13 years ago. During that campaign, about \$400,000 was raised. This money was used to address several projects - a new metal roof, air conditioning of the education wing, a new concrete parking lot, the east vestibule, landscaping, drainage improvements, paying off the Mason house mortgage and more.

Will I be asked to give again soon?

Similar to the last campaign this is a generational gift. A portion of the funds raised will be reserved to address capital expense needs in the coming years.

Who is heading up the Capital Campaign?

John French is our Campaign Chair. He is heading up our efforts and he leads the Campaign Executive Team (CET), which consists of Pastor Nikki Shaw, Claudia Camargo, Jeff Every, Jef Fish, Jason Held, Erin Johnson, Rod Lewis, and Babbett Ruby. A UCC consulting team has been hired to guide us through the process.