



**MORE
THAN
ALIVE**



VISION GUIDE

MORE
THAN
ALIVE



2020: THE YEAR OF THE UNEXPECTED



This year has been a roller coaster to say the least. COVID-19 has reshaped the world. Economic, social, and political divides have become more and more apparent. In the midst of the most unexpected year in recent history, the CHURCH HAS REMAINED STRONG! People at Vox have continued to give generously. The work of Jesus has continued to move forward! We are not simply surviving. Rather, we are fulfilling the call of God to be **MORE THAN ALIVE.**

*“The blameless spend their days under the Lord’s care...
In times of disaster they will not wither.”*
Psalm 37:18–19

In December of 2019, Vox Church went through one of the most important seasons in our history. During this time, as a family of God, we were challenged to reprioritize our lives in light of our eternal purpose: to reach New England with the gospel. We called this nine-week journey *Wake My Heart.*

The *Wake My Heart* campaign invited our church to wrestle with one life-altering question: **What does God care about most?**



The life of Jesus provides an answer: His heart breaks for **people.** “*One human soul is worth more than all the treasure of this world put together*” (Mark 8:36). There are 14 million people living in New England, and it is widely considered the least-churched region in the United States. Last year, we outlined our plan to reach more people with the gospel through three priorities.

**PRIORITY 1:
STRENGTHEN OUR CURRENT MINISTRIES**

**PRIORITY 2:
SECURE OUR FIRST ANCHOR LOCATION AND
LAUNCH NEW CHURCHES**

**PRIORITY 3:
ESTABLISH A SITE ACQUISITION FUND**



We challenged the church to make a two-year generosity commitment with the goal of reaching \$17 million dollars over two years to advance the mission. **In a miraculous move of God, our church committed \$19,586,454 over two years!**

By God's amazing grace, all three of our major priorities have continued to take ground!

PRIORITY 1: STRENGTHEN OUR CURRENT MINISTRIES

The time during COVID-19 has allowed our Vox staff to make countless adjustments to improve the quality and structure of our teams. After nine years of rapid growth, the last nine months have provided a strategic pause to restructure. We have overhauled all central systems, created a church online strategy, and stabilized and strengthened VoxKids and VoxYouth. **Our online and social media footprint has grown more in nine months than it did in the first nine years!**



Here are just a few of our new 2020 staff team members at Vox:

MARIA CONRAD CENTRAL VOX KIDS DIRECTOR



For the last four years, Maria and her husband Jesse, have attended Vox MDS with their two children, Giuliana and Gemma. Maria comes to Vox from a career in education as both a school psychologist and school administrator working with children having a wide range of needs: learning, behavioral, and social-emotional. For Maria, being able to work full-time toward transforming New England for Jesus, while guiding her VoxKids' staff and volunteers, is a perfect pairing. She has a deep passion to see families grow deeper together in relationship with Christ and to provide support to our Vox parents.



**WAKE MY HEART TESTIMONIES :
WHAT DOES THIS WMH COMMITMENT MEAN TO YOU?**

"It means everything. I feel like it's like a seed in the immense picture that will be played out over the next few years. The commitment we made will cause a ripple effect."

-Amarachi

**DAMOLA ONAKADE
VOX STAFF ACCOUNTANT**



We are delighted to welcome Damola Onakade to our Vox Staff Family! Damola serves at Vox as a Staff Accountant. Damola is a finance professional with an MBA from Lagos Business School and an MAM from Yale School of Management. Damola grew up in Nigeria and now makes his home in New Haven with his wife Ayomide and son Tofunmi. They are expecting their second child in December.

MIKE SIENA
VOX YOUTH COORDINATOR



After growing up in Connecticut, Mike moved to Springfield, Missouri to attend James River College. In Missouri, he served in both youth and outreach ministries and also had the opportunity to lead the youth ministry of a small church. Upon returning to Connecticut, he began pursuing his undergrad in Church Ministries online at Evangel University. Mike has a vision to see New England become the most spiritually vibrant place in the world. He wholeheartedly believes that we will see this generation of middle and high schoolers radically changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ!

Along with this restructuring, we've added **hundreds of CORE groups** to our small group model, strengthening the discipleship process at Vox. Our outreach ministries have been constantly serving, partnering with local organizations across New England giving **\$200,000 to COVID-19 relief efforts**. This past spring, we wrote over **10,000 letters** to encourage first responders and those affected most by COVID-19.

God has used this unexpected time to produce unprecedented health in our church ministries!



Response team volunteers delivering food prepared in bundles to seniors and those considered "at-risk" throughout several of our communities.

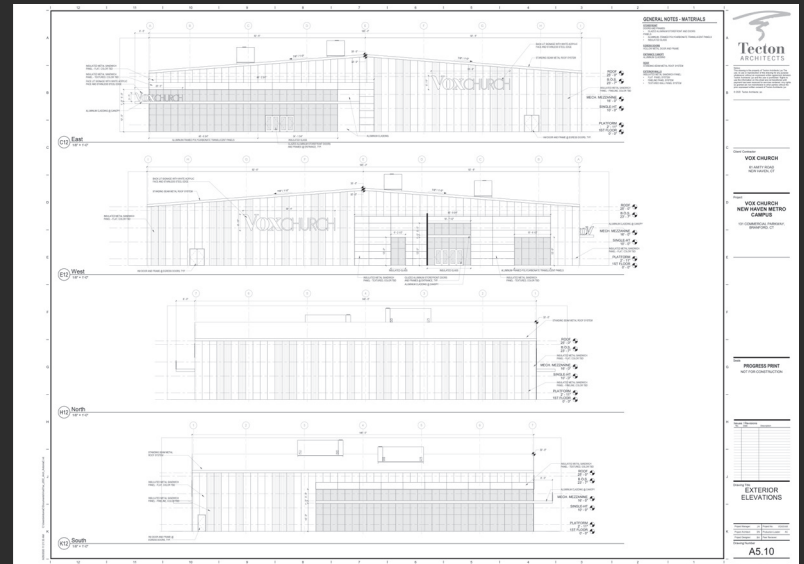
PRIORITY 2: SECURE OUR FIRST ANCHOR LOCATION AND LAUNCH NEW CHURCHES

Renovations are complete at our new Vox Central Offices and our team moved in this past summer! The space is nearly 4x the size of our previous central offices, allowing for a dramatic increase in productivity. Our first anchor location is also moving ahead, in the midst of the application process with planning and zoning. Our construction committee has been working tirelessly with architects and builders finalizing plans. We are hopeful to begin construction this year!



VOX CENTRAL OFFICES

ANCHOR LOCATION PLANS



WAKE MY HEART TESTIMONIES :
WHAT DOES THIS WMH COMMITMENT MEAN TO YOU?

*"It means living out my faith in ways
I never thought imaginable."*

-Damian

"We are honored to partner and sow into what God is doing here and stretch. It's been a stretch for us. But being all in is the only place to be."

-Mike



In the midst of a pandemic, our New Britain and Worcester launch teams have continued to meet, hosting outreaches in their cities and building momentum towards weekly services. Rocky and Kirsten Hedrick, our leaders for Vox Worcester, sold their home, had their first baby, and moved to the Worcester area in the midst of COVID!

ROCKY & KIRSTEN HEDRICK



Rocky Hedrick joined the Vox Church pastoral staff in January of 2020 as the Worcester Campus Pastor. Rocky moved to New England in January of 2017 for a job in engineering at Callaway Golf in Chicopee, MA. He found Vox Church on his second Sunday in Massachusetts and has been a part of the worship team at both the Hartford and Springfield campuses. He and his wife, Kirsten, recently moved to the Worcester area with their daughter, Remy.



**PRIORITY 3:
ESTABLISH A SITE ACQUISITION FUND**

As the economy goes through ups and downs, and many struggle to pay the bills, the Vox team has cut thousands of dollars in expenses to keep our church financially healthy. Moving into 2021, our church is on solid financial footing. As our first two priorities continue to take shape we are looking for opportunities to wisely expand in the Hartford area. We've more than doubled our Hartford office footprint this year.

**THE SECOND YEAR OF THE
WAKE MY HEART FULFILLMENT PHASE**

The end of 2020 will mark the half-way point of our two-year faith commitments to see the mission move forward. Our primary goal as a church remains the same: 100 percent participation. That is, that every person who calls Vox Church home makes a personal sacrifice to see this mission advance. We will not be equal in the amount we give, but we can be equal in our sacrifice. Through this ONE FUND campaign, every dollar that is given to Vox moves the mission forward.



**WAKE MY HEART TESTIMONIES :
WHAT DOES THIS WMH COMMITMENT MEAN TO YOU?**

"Comforts aren't a bad thing—but I want God to rule. I want his presence, his Holy Spirit—I want his love and passion for people to rule my life."

-Ann Marie



UNDERSTANDING "ONE FUND"

You may have participated in a traditional capital campaign in the past where you were asked to give both to a general fund for normal operating costs, and a project-focused fund, such as a new building. Our vision for *Wake My Heart* applies a different approach.

Wake My Heart is a two-year generosity campaign where all giving is focused around one unified vision and is directed into ONE FUND. Rather than being project focused, a one-fund campaign is priorities focused. With three specific priorities, the goal of this campaign goes beyond raising funds for a single project. The goal is to mature as a church in the grace of giving, and as we grow as disciples of Jesus, the mission advances into new arenas. We are ONE CHURCH, with ONE VISION that unites us, with ONE FUND that resources that vision.

YOUR NEXT STEP

At this half-way point of our journey together, consider your next step:

I am new to *Wake My Heart*:

I would like to make a 12-month financial commitment to advance the mission of Vox.

I am already committed to *Wake My Heart*:

At this mid-point, I would like to confirm my commitment to finish strong or increase my commitment.

December 13th is **VISION SUNDAY** at Vox Church where you will be invited to make a one-year commitment to move the mission forward at Vox. We believe God will reveal to you the ONE number that will represent sacrificial generosity to the kingdom over 12 months.

Together, we will end 2020 with our end-of-year offering that goes towards your faith commitment. In the midst of one of the most challenging years of our lives, this is a profound opportunity to express our love and trust to God.

“For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers... They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do.”

2 Corinthians 8:3-5

COMMITMENT GUIDE

Over the past nine years, Vox Church has been marked by generous people who were willing to sacrifice their resources so that others could discover the love of God. We know God hasn't given everyone the ability to give the same dollar amount, but he does call us to bring what we have, mix it with faith, and be part of something bigger than ourselves. Even if you've never given to God's work before, this is a good time to begin. Everyone can participate in some way!



HOW MUCH SHOULD I COMMIT TO GIVE?

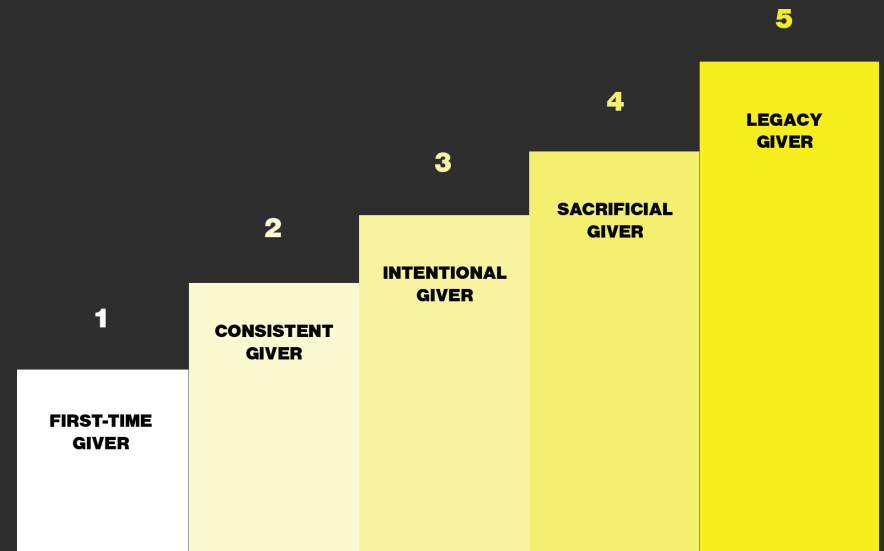
Growing in generosity is a vital part of following Jesus.
Identify your next step.

- 1. FIRST-TIME GIVER:** *I've never significantly given to Vox Church, but I feel called to take that step.*
This is a step of faith both in God and in the leaders of the church.
- 2. CONSISTENT GIVER:** *I've given to Vox occasionally, but today I am going to begin regularly giving a set amount.*
This step requires planning and may include signing up for recurring giving on the church website or through your bank.

3. INTENTIONAL GIVER: *I've wrestled with the bigger questions of what I value most and have decided to give a substantial percentage of my income.* This step requires that you ask questions like, "Why am I giving more to my cell phone bill than to God?" You must wrestle with your choices in light of eternity and reprioritize your budget and your giving by percentage.

4. SACRIFICIAL GIVER: *I'm going to stretch my percentage of giving outside my comfort zone.* This step asks questions like, "Am I giving in a way that changes me?" Rather than your lifestyle governing your giving, now your giving governs your lifestyle. You commit to give in a way that's larger than your current capacity.

5. LEGACY GIVER: *I'm giving audaciously to shape future generations and make an impact that outlives me.* This step requires that you no longer ask, "God, how much are You asking me to give?" but rather, "God, how much are You asking me to keep?" You don't just consider the monthly or annual implications of your giving, but you rearrange retirement, property, and long-term assets in order to change the course of the future for the gospel.





Whether you are a first-time giver at Vox or a legacy giver, on **December 13th, VISION SUNDAY**, we will receive our annual end-of-year offering. In the midst of the challenges of 2020, this is our collective opportunity to set our hope on God and express our trust in him. Please pray and prepare for this important offering. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.

If you have fallen behind in your *Wake My Heart* commitment, this is a great opportunity to re-affirm that commitment. If you have never made a financial commitment to God, this is an opportunity to take a step of faith. God will work miracles as we step out and trust him.

JUSTIN KENDRICK
LEAD PASTOR, VOX CHURCH
VOXCHURCH.ORG

**WAKE MY HEART TESTIMONIES :
WHAT DOES THIS WMH COMMITMENT MEAN TO YOU?**

"This mean reprioritizing my life for Jesus. How am I making all my decisions? How am I living for him and for eternity?"

-Meredith

"This has nothing to do with my money – although that's important – it's about giving my whole life to God."

-Stacey



FAQ

In this season of rapid change, our church is providing ministry in profound ways each day as we pursue our vision to see New England transformed into the most spiritually vibrant place on earth. **Our ministry to the world around us has never been more important and urgent.** The leaders at Vox are committed during this season of uncertainty to keep God’s mission as our highest priority. We encourage you to join us in this same commitment to prayer, faithful participation in virtual ministry, and to consistent and prioritized giving to Vox. God is and will be faithful to you! Remember the words of Galatians 6:9, “Do not grow weary in well doing, for in time you will reap a harvest.”



WITH SO MANY SURPRISES IN 2020, HOW SHOULD I THINK ABOUT COVID-19 IN LIGHT OF MY COMMITMENT TO VOX?

- Oftentimes, when we trust God, we go through times that test our faith. Certainly, 2020 has been a test. The apostle Paul celebrated the church in Macedonia, who “in the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity” (2 Corinthians 8:2). Sometimes God does the greatest work in our hearts through circumstances that seem impossible to our minds. Our encouragement during this challenging time of COVID-19 is to learn to trust God in the trial. This looks different for each of us. And we each have the opportunity to grow during this time.

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AS I CONTINUE TO BE CONSISTENT WITH MY WAKE MY HEART COMMITMENT?

- You should expect to have great joy in knowing that thousands of people will be hearing the gospel, coming to faith in Jesus, and being built up in the body of Christ.
- You should expect God to bless your obedience. The blessing in the life of a giver can often be seen in the tangible—promotions, savings on purchases, unexpected income, opportunities for increase, etc. However, the real blessing

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AS I CONTINUE TO BE CONSISTENT WITH MY WAKE MY HEART COMMITMENT? (CONTINUED)

(continued) in the life of a giver is often seen in the intangibles: things like peace of mind, strength in relationships, living with a sense of purpose, and leaving a legacy of impact.

- You should also expect temptation to come and try to get you to rethink, if not abandon, your decision to give generously and sacrificially. What you are experiencing is your rational mind trying to silence your faith. Remember, you were led by God to trust him with your finances, and now you have to walk that journey of stewardship out by faith.

I AM EXCITED ABOUT MY WMH COMMITMENT BUT AM HAVING DIFFICULTY WITH CONSISTENCY. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- One way to develop consistency is to apply the “principle of the first.” At Vox, we believe in applying this biblical practice to our time, talents, and resources. The heart of this habit says that everything we have and we are, belong to God. He is first in all things. This means we spend the first hour of our day alone with God. We use our talents, gifts, and skills to advance his church and his kingdom. And we put God first with our financial resources.

WE MADE A COMMITMENT TO WMH, BUT IN LIGHT OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE WORLD, I AM MORE WORRIED ABOUT MONEY THAN EVER. HOW DO I DEAL WITH THAT?

- Proverbs 3:9–10 tells us to honor the Lord with our first fruits. This means when we receive income, our first action is to give to the Lord, which keeps our hearts centered on him. We give first, then pay bills and spend second. Making “giving” the first category in your budget means it is a priority rather than an afterthought. So, sit down and determine the fixed amount God wants you to give and then follow through consistently.

- Worry doesn't usually come from not having enough money. It often comes from an improper relationship with money. You can have all the money in the world and still not experience freedom from worry. As a follower of Jesus, your true security comes from him. Consider Matthew 6:24, “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.” As you set your heart on serving God, he's going to teach you to handle your money differently. He'll teach you to put needs over wants. He'll teach you how to be a generous giver. He'll show you how to sacrifice now so that you can secure

WE MADE A COMMITMENT TO WMH, BUT IN LIGHT OF WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE WORLD, I AM MORE WORRIED ABOUT MONEY THAN EVER. HOW DO I DEAL WITH THAT? (CONTINUED)

(continued) a future later. He'll also teach you that you do not need to worry about tomorrow because he is a good Father who knows how to take care of his children.

- Also, renew your mind by reflecting on specific Bible verses about trusting, not worrying and God's provision.

COVID-19 HAS IMPACTED MY EMPLOYMENT AND MY FINANCIAL SITUATION HAS CHANGED. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

- The first step during tough times is to always turn to the Lord in prayer and in worship. It's always his grace, love, and your love for him that motivates any sacrificial giving. You may want to revisit both the *Wake My Heart* sermons and your Journey Guide. Listen again to what God spoke to you through that season. Bring your needs and concerns to him in prayer. If you are married, do this with your spouse. James tells us that "if any lack wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously without reproach and it will be given to him" (James 1:5). Trust that your heavenly Father wants to guide you.

I RECENTLY EXPERIENCED A FINANCIAL EMERGENCY AND THE ONLY WAY I SEE TO MEET THAT NEED IS TO USE THE MONEY I'VE COMMITTED TO THE WMH CAMPAIGN. ONCE THE NEED IS MET, THEN I PLAN ON GOING BACK TO GIVING. IS THIS THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION FOR ME?

- Community is a core value here at Vox. During times of struggle, we need one another even more. It's important that you invite your community and leaders in the church to walk with you during difficult times. Reach out to your campus pastor and ask to meet with him. Be honest about your concerns. Pray together.

- We certainly understand emergencies and crises occur in life. If you are struggling with substantial debt because of an imminent need, we are here for you. Our pastors and leaders would love to meet with you to discuss your current situation. *Wake My Heart* is fundamentally about heart change—one that is only accomplished as we surrender our lives completely to God. As your church family, we would love the opportunity to pray with you for God's wisdom on how to move forward. Our heart is to stand with you through every season of life.

I HAVE BEEN GIVING TO CHURCH, BUT MY SPOUSE WHO DOES NOT ATTEND CHURCH ISN'T ALL THAT HAPPY ABOUT IT AND WANTS ME TO STOP. SHOULD I IGNORE MY SPOUSE AND HONOR GOD ANYWAY?

• We believe God desires unity in your home and ultimately, if your spouse insists on this issue, you should honor the request. However, we suggest you take this issue to God in prayer. Remember your approach to your spouse is everything. We encourage you to appeal humbly—sharing your desire to give and honor God and see how it goes. Listen to your spouse carefully and trust God as you pray for him/her. When all is said and done, strive for unity in the home. If you can't come to a place of agreement, honor your spouse, and continue to pray.



**WAKE MY HEART TESTIMONIES :
WHAT DOES THIS WMH COMMITMENT MEAN TO YOU?**

"It means full reliance on what Jesus is going to do. Radically watching how he is going to shift my life and that starts with where I put my treasure."

-Victoria

"It means reordering our lives to a place of discomfort so we can prioritize what really matters in the long run. In the process believing God for some really big things in our lives and our community."

-Alicia and Adam

MORE
THAN
ALIVE

The text 'MORE THAN ALIVE' is rendered in a bold, sans-serif font. Three yellow floral illustrations are placed on the text: one on the top left of the 'M', one on the 'A' in 'THAN', and one on the bottom right of the 'L' in 'ALIVE'. Each illustration consists of a stem with several leaves and a single flower.

NOTES



VOXCHURCH.ORG