

April 20, 2026

Dear Shades Crest Baptist Church Member:

On April 19, 2026, Brian Barksdale made an announcement in our worship services for the kickoff of an emphasis to pay down our church building debt by at least \$500,000 by December 31, 2026.

Our church borrowed over \$7 Million 16 years ago to construct the new fellowship hall, connector buildings and renovate other areas of the church. Today our remaining debt stands at \$2,966,151. The note to the bank balloons, or is required to be paid off or refinanced, in July of 2027. Your church leadership would like to have the debt balance at \$2.5 Million or below by the end of 2026.

Why is this so important? Because we currently pay approximately \$225,000 on the debt principal each year (which comes solely from contributions to our building fund) and another \$120,000 of interest that is included in the church operating budget. Imagine for a moment – what wonderful things could be done for God’s kingdom if those funds could be used for programs and other needs rather than being used for debt payments? Nearly \$350,000 each year for ministry rather than servicing debt!

By the end of 2026, we are trusting God to help us reach a \$500,000 goal — not through equal gifts, but through equal faith. Every household has a place on this journey.

Scripture reminds us, *Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.* This isn’t about pressure. It’s about prayer, trust, and participation.

Some will lead with larger gifts. Many will participate through steady, faithful giving. When those pieces come together, the vision becomes possible.

Our prayer is simple: that each of us listens to God, responds in faith, and gives as He leads. When we do that together, we believe God will do more than we can imagine.

Thank you for your generosity, your faith, and your love for this church. Let’s move forward together in faith.

As we begin this special emphasis the Finance Committee is asking for each church member to:

1. Prayerfully consider your commitment to this effort and the vision for increased ministry opportunities it brings to our church.
2. Make a pledge for contributions to the building fund – over and above your tithes and offerings to the church operational budget – and submit it to Laura Strange by April 26, 2026.

An example “gift pyramid” is enclosed, along with your pledge card.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Smith, Chair

SCBC Finance Committee