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[Music Intro]

[Male voice] The following is a presentation of Artisan Church in Rochester, New York.

[Voice of Pastor Scott]

Hello Artisan podcast listeners. Pastor Scott Austin here, thanks so much for listening. As you've probably heard our church has just launched a fundraising campaign to renovate and expand our children's ministry space and to make our building more accessible and inclusive. It's called Growing in Faith Together.

So if this podcast has been meaningful for you whether or not you are able to attend Artisan person, I want to invite you to be part of this campaign too. You can visit ArtisanGrowing.com to find out more, to make a one time donation, or maybe even pledge a recurring gift. Thanks again for listening and for supporting Artisan Church enjoy the podcast.

[Pastor Scott's voice giving the sermon in church]

So yesterday I had a few minutes home alone.

Whew.

That's a rare thing for me especially on a Saturday. Usually I'm here or we're running around together as a family, and those things are all wonderful. I'm not, you know, I don't, I don't regret that. I'm not complaining but once in awhile when the stars align and I get a few minutes home alone on a Saturday, it feels really good.

So I decided to do like a normal person Saturday stuff for a few minutes. I was sitting on the couch doing the New York Times Saturday crossword, wearing slippers, sipping coffee. And I turned on the T.V. like that, not the digital streaming device connected to my T.V., but the actual T.V., with the antenna that connects to the actual T.V. stations in our neighborhood. And you know what I found on that T.V. that was set to P.B.S.?

[laughter]

It was a show called *Ask This Old House*. You know this show? I love this show, so if you don't know *This Old House* was the is the classic P.B.S. home renovation show where these old, you know, carpenters and contractors from New England will renovate an old historic type house. But the spinoff, *Ask This Old House*, is where normals reach out to the people at *This Old House* and say, "I've got this problem, can you come fix it for me?" and what they do instead is they come and show the person how to fix it themselves. And I love this show, in part because they all have rural New England accents, and they wear work boots and trucker hats, and it's basically just like being in high school for me again [laughter], because I grew up in rural Maine, and that's a very nostalgic feeling which I enjoy. But I also get a kick out of people learning how to do things that are way outside their comfort zone and involve dangerous power tools.

[laughter]

That's, that's also quite enjoyable for me, because it's always somebody who's like never touched a table saw before. You know it's always a, you know, I'm not at all handy computer scientist or a busy mom or, say, a member of the clergy—who is really not comfortable with what's going on, and they show him how to do it. It's pretty cool. And yesterday's episode was a—they were they were showing a woman from Milwaukee how

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to replace the old crumbly mortar in her 19th century yellow brick house.

So I love seeing these these old carpenters with their accents do their thing. Do you know who else was a carpenter? I gotcha! [laughter] Jesus. It's always Jesus, right? Did you hear the story about the kid in Sunday school and the Sunday school teacher is like—"OK kids what's what's something that's grey and small and furry and has a bushy tail and likes to eat acorns?" And the kids are like "It sounds like a squirrel but I think the answer is Jesus."

[laughter]

Anyway. Seriously though today I do want to start with a verse where Jesus actually uses a construction project as an analogy for what it means to follow him. He begins by saying "I will show you what someone is like who hears my words and acts on them." So this story is from Luke Chapter six and if you'd like to follow along—it's very brief you can just listen if you prefer whatever works for you—but in these red Bibles you go to page 838 Luke 6:47 is the verse that I just read and I'm going to read a few following that one. As always I'll remind you if you do not own a Bible these red Bibles are our gift to you. Not *all* of them but you can certainly take *one* of them. We would love to have you on your own bible, that would be great. So Jesus say—let's start with verse verse 47—"I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. That one is like a man building a house who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock when a flood arose the river burst against that house but could not shake it because it had been well built." Other ancient authorities read it had been founded upon the rock. "But the one who hears and does not act is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the river burst against it immediately it fell, and great was the ruin of that house." So again Jesus is basing this teaching on the idea of a construction project. But we know this is not just the Ancient Near Eastern version of *Ask This Old House*, right? Jesus is not actually giving people construction tip—that's what's called an analogy. He talks about when the flood rose and the river burst against the house but could not shake it because it had been well built. It had been founded upon the rock. And the foundation, the rock, is of course Jesus himself. In fact the parable begins in this little intro verse that I skipped over, in setting this all up he says "Why do you call me Lord Lord and do not do what I tell you?" That's a good question that we all might want to answer or might not want to answer, actually. So it's not about the houses, it's not about what a properly laid foundation is like, it's none of those things. And the reason I bring this to you today is because we are faced with a similar kind of idea right now. We all have a big construction project on our minds. That is any of you who have been here for the last five weeks or who have been paying attention from afar or anything like that. And by the way if you just walked in the door for the first time ever at Artisan today this is *not* what we talk about every week and you are going to be OK. I'm glad you're here. Hang with us for one of these and then next week like I said, it won't exactly be normal but at least it won't be this, right? We all have this big construction project on our mind because after all we are finishing up the series which is our capital campaign which is all about raising money to improve our building and the way that it serves our community.

But I don't want to think in terms of dry wall and roof decking and P.V.C. pipe. I want us to think instead in terms of a movement of the Holy Spirit that has been going on in our church and which we would very much like to see continue. And which we believe would be facilitated by this construction project. You know these

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past few months, I've been thinking about this for quite some time but really I would say since early August this is been the only thing I think about at any length and for any amount of time. It has occupied so much of my attention. And especially during these past five weeks as I've been preaching these sermons I can't help during all this time but be reminded of our first capital campaign which I thought it was like a marathon—we did two of them that day the first one in the last one, right? But it turns out we ended up needing to do this other one and I can't help thinking back to that. It was called Deeply Rooted. Some of you were here for that, some of you were not. That campaign was an effort to raise funds so that we could purchase this building. It was about putting down roots, establishing ourselves in *this* location with *these* particular neighbors in *this* part of *this* city so that we could use our building as a base of operations to do good ministry for generations to come. We talked about trees that are deeply rooted in the ground. They produce fruit, and they offer shelter, and they have a stability and sustainability that uprooted trees obviously DON'T have. And you know what else they do? They produce seeds so they can make new trees and all those things have to—you have to be deeply rooted—the tree has to be deeply rooted for all that to happen. So that was the theme of that campaign. And there are some lessons that we learned during that campaign which I think apply very well to this one. The first one is really important and I hope it encourages you. The first lesson we learned was—we can do this! I was not so sure about it at the time. If you're here the first week the campaign I was pretty honest about how I felt about things. I was worried at the time. We needed to raise, you know at the time we were looking at around a hundred thousand dollars, something like that. And I'm terrified it's going to be like we're going to get fifty dollars and we're all going to have to say we're going to have to, we're going to have to not buy the building and go somewhere else and the church is going to break up and I don't know what's going to happen! And guess what? God was with us, we accomplished what needed to be accomplished and then some, and we made it. And that lesson is very important because I will be honest with you—I have felt similar things during this campaign, and I know that some of you have as well. Especially when we flash on that number, you'll see it later, for what we expect this project might cost. You get that tightness in your chest and you start to breathe a little shallow and you think we can't do this. This is too much! What's going to happen? The first lesson is we can do this with God's help. And as it happens the number that we're targeting this time, in relation to our annual budget right now there's a very similar ratio to what we ended up raising last time in relation to our annual budget then. So that offer some encouragement just if you're a math person that might be helpful to you to think about.

But the bigger lesson is this. Think back about how in the years since our Deeply Rooted campaign we have seen our ministry expanded. We have seen our calling clarified and particularized. Consider all the things that have happened at Artisan since the Deeply Rooted campaign. Now again so if you were here for that and you've been here for all of the stuff in between, some of you don't know the things that happened then so I'm going to recount a little bit of it for you quickly. Since our Deeply Rooted campaign we had our first of what turned out to be many joint worship services with Baber A.M.E. Church, which is something that is a highlight of our year now. That we look forward to every time it happens. Sometimes they come here, sometimes we go there. We're already in conversation with them about a visit to Baber in January that's going to be awesome. That's since deeply rooted. We've had a series of conversations and listening circles about gender sexuality and inclusion which eventually culminated in the adoption of our L G B T Q inclusion statement.

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Which I think provides us with a posture toward our community that enables us to do great ministry that we weren't able to do before. We've begun to learn about accessibility, we've made our building much more accessible. The ramp, the table, the coffee—all the stuff that you heard Stephanie talking about in the video last week. By the way that video is great and you should watch it on our website or on Facebook wherever you want to watch things. We've established partnerships with local charitable organizations that have helped us embody the Gospel in ways that we were not doing before. Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network—also known as RAIHN. We just served a week over at New Hope with RAIHN just this past week. North East Area Development doing great work in Beechwood and in the surrounding areas. Catholic Family Center, caring for refugees in Rochester at a time when they are not being cared for as well as they were say a year or two ago. And we've added—I don't know how many—new children to our community. I'm looking around the room right now and there are children sitting on laps who literally did not exist at that time. Not to mention new families that have been added to our congregation during that time. All of this stuff has happened since we put our roots down. Since we became a deeply rooted church. So in other words we have really grown into the church that we were meant to be. And what might have seemed at the time like a construction project, or like a fund raising effort that was really, you know, frightening, actually ended up being evidence of the movement of the Holy Spirit in our church's midst. I truly believe this, because none of those things that we just described could have happened the way they did without that campaign happening as successfully as it did. It's clear to me that the deeply rooted campaign was laying the groundwork for a movement of the Holy Spirit in our midst. Now, when I talk about the Holy Spirit moving in the church some of you have, I don't know if I'd call it baggage necessarily, but some of you have a preconceived notion of what it looks like when the spirit moves within a church, right? And it and it doesn't look like a bunch of intellectual people standing still while they sing (laughs). It looks like fire and wind and spiritual religious chaos! And it's exciting and beautiful and invigorating all those things. Does the Spirit move that way sometimes? Absolutely the spirit moves that way sometimes! Maybe not as often here as in some other places, but I think that spirit meets us where we are. You know how the Spirit also moves sometimes? With a still small voice. With a gentle call. With steady step by step incremental progress in the hearts and the minds of the people in a community who share around the table of the Lord week in and week out. Sometimes I think we idolize that. That more kind of explosive type of experience with God or of growth or whatever it might be. And I certainly don't want to say that those things don't happen or are not real or that that they're not meaningful or that we should never expect that to happen here. I want to be open to whatever the Holy Spirit wants to do in our midst. But I am reminded of that beautiful brief poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay that says “My candle burns at both ends, it will not last the night, but Ah my foes and oh my friends it gives a lovely light.” You have lovely light and you have it will not last the night, and that's sometimes a reality when you are all in on everything happening at once. I am encouraged in the depths of my soul when I see the other type of thing happening in Artisan, and when I don't see us going from having 150 people to having 450 people over the course of six months, but rather I see us growing slowly and steadily and in a healthy way. When I don't see us having a budget that's you know X one year and it's five X the next year but I see it slowly and steadily growing. This is the type of healthy movement of the spirit that I think we have experienced already and which I want to continue to experience.

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So what was it that Jesus said? “I will show you what someone is like who comes to me hears my words and acts on them.” It is my honest belief that the Lord is speaking to you already or will speak to you—to each one of you about what your part in this might be. It is my honest belief that if you love and care about Artisan, that if you are invested in this place in all the ways that you could be, that you are very likely to hear a challenge from God, if you haven't already, about what you can give to this campaign. You who've been around Artisan a long time know that I don't talk about money like this very often. Is that true? Can you all raise your hands if you know that, if you've noticed, so that our visitors don't think that? Some of you have said you should talk about money more often and you're probably right. Because money has a spiritual hold on us. But right now that's the way I'm talking because I'm confident in what it means. Maybe it's because I look at this number that we're trying to reach and I think there's no way this can happen if God doesn't speak to you, and call you, and if you don't respond, with trust and obedience. Or maybe it's because I feel pretty confident that I can be 100% crystal clear about the fact that I'm only asking each of you to give what you sense God leading you to give. Not a penny more than that, and not a penny less than that. We have this verse that gets brought out every time there's a big fund raising campaign. I'll put it on the screen for you. It's from Second Corinthians 9:7 “Each of you must give as you have made up your mind. Not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” And every pastor says this verse and then they say “Remember God loves a cheerful giver, don't give reluctantly because God loves a cheerful giver!” And what do they forget to mention in this very same verse? That you should not give under compulsion. I said this on Wednesday at our candlelight reception and I say to you all again now. If you sense your pastor telling you to give in a way that makes you feel like you are under compulsion I want you to speak to me boldly. I'm giving you permission to call me on the carpet. And if you do that and I respond to you in a way that doesn't make you feel heard, or that makes you think even more that I might have gone down the road of speaking about compelling you to give money, then I'm giving you permission to go find another church. Because that is probably a sign that I am not a spiritually healthy leader. How's that for a disclaimer? Because I have said that, I will now say to you, I'm asking you—the leadership team is asking you—to join us in making this project happen. I'm asking you to consider what God might be calling you to give. Because this is only going to work if we all take part in it.

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Let me show you a few numbers. I'm not going to break my promise not to be too "pledge drivey" here. But if we look at this project right here,



You know we're over in the in the sanctuary wing, and there's the hallway, and there's the children's wing and all that other stuff is either renovation or new construction. And if we want to look at numbers we're looking at about 2500 square feet of renovation and about 2200 square feet of new construction for a total project of about 4700 square feet and we're almost done with the numbers, hey humanities people hang in. If you figure about 100 dollars a square foot which is, we think, quite reasonable estimate for what this type of construction might cost, we are looking at a very sizable campaign or a very sizable project that needs a sizable campaign to fund it. At that size and at that rate it's about a 470,000 dollar lift. I love how Dan keeps saying we have a big lift to make. Nobody can lift all that at once, but if we all come around it, we can do it. I know we can do it, we did it before and will do it again. And remember it does scale with what we did before. I don't remember did I put the chart on the screen? Not today, OK? That's fine that's too many numbers for Sunday morning. But the chart is in the booklet. What's the campaign booklet? Have you seen the campaign booklets? Not having any trouble finding those, right? They look like this.



[holds up booklet]

If you look at it there's a chart here on the back page, there is a small math error on it but we don't need to go into that. What mostly what the chart conveys is this: each person in the Artisan community playing a part. Whether it's a very small part, which is all that some of you can do, or whether it's a very big part which is what some of you can do. We all come around this and we will make this happen. We will we will achieve the goal that we believe God has put before us. And trust me when I say if your staff and leadership team did not think they God had put this before us we would not have put it before you. So remember what I said before. I don't want think about this in terms of drywall and wood. I also don't to think about it in terms of dollars and cents. But the project, let's be honest, only happens with drywall and wood and dollars and cents. But if it's *only* about those things, if it's *only* a construction project, if it's *only* a fundraising campaign, we have a major problem on our hands. Because this needs to be a movement of the Holy Spirit.

So, what are we asking you to do specifically? I'm going to get specific for just a moment. We are asking everybody who cares about Artisan and everyone who calls this your spiritual home or has someone in your family even who calls your spiritual home to consider doing one of two things or maybe both of them. The first one would be to make an upfront gift. If you have financial means, money in savings whatever it might be, and you can make an upfront gift that's a big part of of getting us to where we need to go. And the financial implications of how this project is is paid for and all that stuff matter but I'm not going to go into it too much right now. But suffice it to say that upfront gifts are very helpful to us in achieving this project. And we want you to do as much as you can responsibly do in that way. That might be nothing. You might have NO margin right now when it comes to cash on hand, or you might have tons and tons and tons of it and you can do a big gift. Wherever you are the second thing is we are asking you to give on a recurring basis and this campaign is going to last three years. So we're asking you to make either a monthly gift 36 times, or a weekly gift 512. Is that right? I didn't think so, come on, 156? Like 52 times 3 that's not I mean I went to seminary but... So we're asking you to give weekly or monthly whatever is more comfortable for you for your budget. As much as you can responsibly give over the course of the next three years. And between those two things, raising money up front and bringing in money on a steady recurring basis over the course of a few years, we

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believe that we will be able to pay for this project.

And so that we can plan in a responsible way we're asking you to indicate to us what you are able to do and what you intend to do there's a couple ways to do that. If you're a pen and paper person you can use the pledge form which is at the back of the booklet and it has a place for upfront giving and recurring giving. But you know we're a digital a digital group so if you go to <http://artisanchurch.com/growing/> and click or tap on "Ready to give" or if you open our mobile app it's right there the Growing in Faith together, tap that and then it will show you where to go. You can use the the online form to submit your pledge and even to start your recurring giving. Then sometime between now and the first of the year we would like all of that giving to be underway, but for the purposes of planning the sooner you make your pledge, the more we will know and the better we will be. Now many folks at Artisan have come to a candlelight reception or they are a member of our staff or leadership team and they've already pledged. I'm excited to tell you that we are already, we already have pledges in the amount of 130,000 dollars. So we are in great shape, we have quite a bit of ways to go but most of you in the community haven't even, you know, had the chance to hear me ask you to do this in this way yet until now. So that's what we what we hope you'll do. We hope you make an upfront gift or you make a recurring gift and either case we hope you'll pledge and let us know what what we can expect. Now a lot of you give to Artisan regularly and we are asking you to do above and beyond your regular giving it doesn't really help very much if you stop giving in one way just to give it another way. Right? The capital campaign people call that shifting your gift. We don't want you to shift your gift. I'm like I can't say that rhymes, I don't do rhymes but I just did so I don't know maybe something strange is in my heart I'm not sure.

So you're new to the community you've never given at all and this is very strange for you to even think about. That's OK, I'm glad you're here and I see you. But this might be a chance for you to start a pattern of regular giving in your life and your relationship to this church. So now this is my one little breaking of the promise about the P.B.S. pledge drives, right? Because we have some thank you gifts and you need to see the thank you gifts (laughs). If you if you make a an upfront gift in any amount you can have one of these items. We will give you one of them. We have these really cool Artisan growing bottles which are great for containing liquid.

[holds up brown screw-top bottle with Artisan logo]

We have these—I am not I'm not a retail person so much—we have these beautiful Artisan pint classes with our values printed right on them, these are lovely. These are very popular these are also good for holding the beverage of your choice.

[holds up clear pint glass with Artisan logo and values]

And then because so many of us are notebook nerds we went and had these gorgeous letterpress notebooks printed locally by Type High Letterpress and they are dotted grid on the inside like civilized people use and they are beautiful and you can have one of those.

[holds up small tan notebook with Artisan logo]

So if you make an upfront gift you can take one of those, if you make a recurring gift you can take one of them, and if you make both you can take two of them. You may also be interested to learn about the the handsome apparel that we have. The goofy sales pitch is almost over I promise! So these tshirts and the

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corresponding hoodies—we all like hoodies right? Wooh!

[holds up gray tee shirt and hooded sweatshirt with Artisan logo]

Yeah so it's a little more colorful it's got the logo on the back there right. So these are these are not gifts in the same way that the others are. We're going to ask you to preorder those and let us know what size you want we'll get them printed to order. So adult tees are 19 dollars the hoodies are 39 and we have children sizes for 15. OK There you go the artisan apparel you can rock your Artisan logo wear (laughs).

So. Once again all that stuff is maybe funny to talk about maybe a little awkward to talk about but I truly believe this is the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst. This is what the Spirit has led us to, and this is a hinge point for us for where the spirit wants to take us next. And so I'm asking you will you please join us and be involved in this. I believe in it and I hope and pray that you do too. So let's pray together.

[Pastor Scott praying]

God we give you thanks for this day, and as we face this rather daunting challenge we hope and pray and ask and seek that we would always be acting based on the foundation, the rock, of your Son Jesu. That we would always be responding to the movement of your Holy Spirit. Whether it's fire and rushing wind or whether it's a still small steady voice. Give us courage and boldness, give us trust in your providence and your provision. And we pray that through this work Artisan Church would be set up to fulfill your mission for years and years and years and years to come. That we would truly be a place that welcomes all people, and that our building would express in its structure that which is imprinted on our hearts and in our minds which we believe comes from you. And we walk forward in trust and in the love the savior Christ the Lord in whose name we pray. Amen.

[Pastor Scott speaking]

We're going to sing a couple of songs together and take communion as we always do when we come to gather for worship. Artisan has an open table for communion which means you don't have to be a member here or anywhere to partake of the sacrament. You simply need to be following Jesus, trusting Jesus, seeking to dine at his table. We have wine and juice, we have regular bread and gluten free bread. Choose the one that would be the best option for you, and you can take a piece and dip it in the cup to receive at the table. If your kids to communion with you you can do that. Don't forget to go get them, if you want to get them right after you take communion that's fine as well and as always we will have a member of the prayer team at the back right corner of the room who would be willing to pray with anybody regardless of faith commitments. So our table is open let's continue to worship God. Amen.

[end of sermon]

[Male voice] For more information visit us at ArtisanChurch.com