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Issue 4



GROW the VISION

A Publication of the Community Covenant Church Stewardship Campaign

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain what he cannot lose.”
—Missionary Jim Elliott

UPDATE FROM GROW THE VISION-FULFILL THE MISSION CAMPAIGN LEADER

Let me take you back just a few short months ago to September 2013. You may have been sending children off to their first day of school. Memories of your summer vacation were starting to fade. The winter that seemed like it would never end had yet to begin. The members and friends of Community Covenant Church of East Bridgewater were about to kick off a stewardship campaign called *Grow the Vision – Fulfill the Mission*. A series of special newsletters, speakers, and even a theme song helped us to present the vision and challenge everyone to become involved in fulfilling the mission. As Commitment Sunday approached, a 24-hour prayer vigil was held at the church, as we continued to seek the wisdom and strength needed to undertake one of the most exciting adventures in recent history at Community Covenant Church.

If you're new to our church or weren't in a position to participate financially at that time, the opportunity is still available. We had set a goal to raise \$300,000.00 over a period of 3 years. The money raised is to be used for bathroom renovations and the calling of a Young Adult & Youth Pastor. Initial pledges came in below goal, but we celebrated God's goodness on October 20th with a banquet, believing that God had us right where He wanted us: on our knees. The congregation and the Leadership Team prayed for wisdom and discernment as we discussed our next steps; continue as planned trusting God to provide, or scale back the original ideas?

The Leadership Team decided to continue with the original plans and proceeded to form a search committee for a Young Adult & Youth Pastor and began receiving bids to do the work needed to renovate the bathrooms. These are exciting times for us as a church family as we continue to seek God's guidance even as we see Him at work and continue on our journey to join Him in fulfilling His mission.

The bathroom renovation project is a rather large undertaking, more complex than first meets the eye. Leadership was pleasantly surprised to find a reputable and experienced contractor who proposed a price approximately \$15,000.00 less than what had been anticipated. Although the search committee must operate in complete confidentiality, we do know that they are making headway and have been greatly encouraged by their progress to date. These and other signs tell me that God is most certainly at work in our midst.

Even as we are seeing pledges being fulfilled, we continue to see our regular giving fall short of the budget we committed to for 2014. Our Financial Officer has reported to Leadership that from his perspective, regular givers have not curtailed tithes and offerings in order to fulfill pledges. Giving to **Grow the Vision – Fulfill the Mission** is truly over and above giving, just as intended.

If all this leaves you wondering “where do we go from here?” you are not alone. What I know is this: God is faithful. Our response to His faithfulness must be to pray, be in His word, act, pray some more. We are a praying people. As we step out in faith we are taking action, and we will pray some more. If you aren't already a part of **Grow the Vision – Fulfill the Mission**, and would like to learn more, please go to www.CommunityCovenant.com. Click on Vision/Mission at the top of the page. There you will find past newsletters, videos of some of our special speakers and our theme song, “Build Your Kingdom Here”.

Can you think of anything more exciting than being a part of God's mission right here in East Bridgewater? Neither can I.

David Sawyer
Grow the Vision – Fulfill the Mission
Team Leader

“All too often we regard stewardship simply as a matter of our giving to God, but this aspect is secondary. Before we can give, we must possess, and before we possess we must receive. Therefore, stewardship is, in the first place, receiving God's good and bounteous gifts. And once received, those gifts are not to be used solely for our own good. They must also be used for the benefit of others, and ultimately for the glory of God the giver. The steward needs an open hand to receive from God and then an active hand to give to God and to others.”—Murray J. Harris

UPDATE FROM YOUNG ADULT & YOUTH PASTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I want to start by thanking everyone for your pledges and also for fulfilling your commitments over the past seven months. I also want to say that anyone who wasn't able to commit financially to the campaign before but now can, it isn't too late! Please see me and I can get an information package and commitment card to you. For those that have already made commitments, have you forgotten what you pledged to give over the next three years? Don't worry, you're not alone! If you need a reminder on how much you pledged to give please don't hesitate to contact me.

As Chairperson of the Young Adult & Youth Pastor Search Committee I can report that we've made a lot of progress since our kickoff meeting prior to Christmas. The process began by receiving profiles of candidates that are looking for a "call" to a new opportunity or ministry. The Covenant Church makes this part of the search process streamlined through their CovConnect website. Our church posted the congregation-approved job description to CovConnect and the database provided candidates that had matches to our job opportunity. We've received over 40 candidate profiles to date. These profiles are individual reports that are similar to a resume. They are typically at least 10 pages in length and provide details about each candidate's work experience, their faith journey, and how they feel they are being led by God. As you can imagine, we've done a lot of reading! To date we've conducted 8 interviews and continue to have great dialogue with potential candidates.

I've seen God working here in so many ways in a very short time. The church continues to see an increase in young adults and this is leading to a jam-packed toddler room and nursery every Sunday – what a blessing! The church recognizes the movement that is under way in the church and is answering by searching for a Young Adult & Youth Pastor. Once the position is filled, Community Covenant Church will be the only church in East Bridgewater focused on the Young Adult age group. Read that last sentence again and think about it for a minute. *Once the position is filled, Community Covenant Church will be the only church in East Bridgewater focused on the Young Adult age group.* It's hard to believe that such a critical age group has no dedicated pastor in the town. The opportunity to reach non-believers through this new ministry is huge, and I am proud to be a part of the Search Committee identifying the optimal candidate to continue to Grow the Vision and Fulfill God's Mission here at Community Covenant Church.

While it's very important that we continue to see the financial commitments of the campaign being met, I want to close with a quick comment about the operating budget. As many of you have seen through a recent mailing or heard at the Annual Meeting, we continue to see a shortfall in income versus expenses. Since the beginning of 2013 the church's unrestricted operating cash has fallen over \$25,000 due to the shortfall in income. The only way to support our current ministries is through the income we take in through tithing. The alternative is to reduce our expenses which would minimize some ministries. Our ministries are a visual representation to the outside world of who we are at Community Covenant Church. While \$25,000 is a lot of money to recover and put back into our cash reserves, I will end this with a quick mathematical calculation. The church has about 125 members, and there are 365 days in the year. If every member were to cut 55 cents out of their day for a year that would be a savings of \$25,093.75.

Scott Ambroceo
Young Adult & Youth Pastor Search Committee
Chairperson

**Breakdown of Young Adults and Youths Currently Attending
Community Covenant Church**

Present #	Age Currently	Age In 5 years	Age In 10 years
11	Children 2 and under	6-7	11-12
4	3-4 year olds	8-9	13-14
8	5-6 year olds	10-11	15-16
5	7-8 year olds	12-13	17-18
8	9-10 year olds	14-15	16-17
3	11-12 year olds	16-17	21-22
3	13-14 year olds	18-19	23-24
25	18-30	23-35	28-40