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Issue 5



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

Never Doubt What God Can Do!

It really wasn't that long ago that a member of the church made a motion at a congregational meeting that the Leadership Team should explore ways for us to hire a Youth Pastor. No easy task but the need was clearly there; the motion was seconded and overwhelmingly approved by the members. The Leadership Team went to work. Discussions led to the formation of committees and it was decided to launch a 3-year stewardship campaign to raise the funds necessary to add a full-time Pastor with a focus on young adults and youth. The campaign would also raise the funds needed to renovate the ladies' and men's bathrooms; a task sorely needed and left undone in previous years. Modeling Biblical principles, ten percent would be tithed to causes outside of our church (no direct benefit to us).

The campaign was introduced to the congregation in September of 2013 with a goal of raising \$300,000 over a 3-year period. On September 27 and 28, a 24-hour prayer vigil was held at the church, a week before members and friends made commitments in response to the challenge. On Sunday, October 20, 2013, we gathered in the multi-purpose room for a catered dinner and celebrated what God was doing. Although commitments fell a little short of the goal, we sensed God had us right where He wanted us, on our knees. We continued to pray, asking God to bless the plans we had made.

And He has done it! The pledges have been coming in. The bathroom renovations have been completed. Pastor Dave Capozzi has been hired and has immersed himself in several ministries. 10% of pledges received have gone to benefit Worldwide Heart to Heart Children's Village in Honduras, KICY Radio in Alaska, Brockton Christian Mentoring program and an anti-bullying campaign in the East Bridgewater schools. Praise God for His faithfulness!

Invitation to Participate

Perhaps you weren't a part of our church in 2013 when we started this campaign called *Grow the Vision—Fulfill the Mission*. Perhaps you were here but were not in a position to participate financially. Maybe you made a pledge but for one reason or another haven't been able to fulfill it. Possibly you made a pledge and it just fell off your radar screen and you've forgotten what you pledged and have been reluctant to ask someone about it. For any of these scenarios, please consider this your invitation to get involved in what God is doing in our church.

If you'd like to make a new pledge or modify an existing pledge, please see Scott Ambroceo. We'll also have pledge cards available at our celebration meal being held on Sunday May 3rd (see separate article). If you need information on an existing pledge, you can also see Scott. Plus, we'll be sending updates at the end of the 2nd quarter (to be mailed in early July) that will let you know what you've given to the campaign since the beginning, as well as what you originally pledged.

If you need more information, please see anyone on the Leadership team or the *Grow the Vision* committee. Bottom line: this is an exciting time in our church and it's exciting to be a part of what God is doing right here in front of our very eyes! This is your opportunity to get involved. Don't miss out!

Invitation to Celebrate!

Everyone is invited to a special pasta luncheon on Sunday May 3rd as we celebrate what God is doing through us and the *Grow the Vision—Fulfill the Mission* campaign. In addition to a great meal, we'll be providing updates on all aspects of the campaign and providing opportunities for anyone who has yet to participate to jump in now.

The schedule of events will be as follows:

12:15 – 12:45	Congregational meeting and hors d'oeuvres for guests
12:45 – 1:30	Celebration meal
1:30 – 2:00	Program
2:00	Reconvene congregational meeting (if necessary)

If you're able to join us, we'd appreciate it if you'd add your name to the sign-up sheet in the narthex by Sunday, April 26th so that we have an idea how many people will be attending. Gluten-free and meatless pasta dishes will be available. Please contact Betti Buzzee with any questions.

Financial Update

It's hard to believe that March 15th marked the half-way point of the *Grow the Vision* Campaign "giving period". As you may recall, the church was blessed to have 81 giving units commit to almost \$225,000 over a three year period. Through the middle of March the church had received close to \$94,000! As explained during the campaign, 10% of all contributions received would be tithed and given to 4 different organizations. Through the commitments and generosity of these giving units, the church has been able to give more than \$9,000 to these four organizations!

Despite this exciting news, the overall giving to the commitments made during this campaign has slowed down. We had expected to receive closer to \$112,000 through the middle of March but came up about \$19,000 short of that. Approximately 20% of the 81 giving units have not yet made a contribution. We've also seen some giving units not keeping pace with projected giving. The *GTV* Campaign Committee thought it would be helpful to remind each giving unit of their original commitments by sending a letter at the end of the second quarter. These letters will be sent by Scott Ambroceo and will show the original commitment made; they will not show actual giving. Later in July you will receive a giving statement from the church Financial Officer, Lee Stewart. In this letter you will see year-to-date giving to both the general fund and the *GTV* Campaign. You will be able to use both letters to determine whether or not you're on pace.

Invitation to Pray

Is Jabez's Prayer Relevant to Us Growing our Vision?

Around the year 2001-2002, I participated in a study of the book, *The Prayer of Jabez*, by Dr. Bruce Wilkinson (shortly after it was published in the year 2000). I have had a wallet sized card in my bathroom on the wall since then. I wanted and needed a visual reminder of such big Power in a small prayer **when it is prayed**.

The prayer is found in 1 Chronicles 4:9 and goes like this: "Oh, that you would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that your hand would be with me, that you would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain."

I want to ask you to do something with me: pray this prayer. There are 4 parts to the prayer. Seeking the blessing of God (God wants to do things for us that we can't do for ourselves); Enlarging our territory (we reach people around the globe and next door through our website and other ministries we support and personal connections); Asking that God's hand be with us (God's supernatural power to be with us and accomplish what we can't); and that He keep us from Evil (when we are where God wants us, the Evil One takes notice!) This prayer IS relevant to each one of us individually and, certainly, together as we unite as God's people in ministry at Community Covenant Church.

Let's keep our eyes on Him and pray:

"Oh God, We ask that you would bless Community Covenant Church and enlarge our territory, that your hand would be with us and that you would keep us from evil, so we don't cause pain. In Jesus Precious Name, Amen."