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JOURNEY

to...

...and they will do even

GREATER THINGS

>PHASE ONE

than these...John 14:12

From the Treasurer's Desk...

Dear Friends,

Recently I attended an event for the 5 Talent Academy churches where Tony Campolo was the featured speaker. You may remember he spoke to our church during Lent 2008 about what the Bible says concerning ministry to the poor. As you know, one of the 5 Talent goals, which we have adopted, is to use 10% of our giving to help the poor. Through his passion, Tony challenged us by saying that 10% was not enough; we should be striving to give at least half our budget to help the poor. I was very conflicted by his statement. My first thought was that we at Woodlake United Methodist Church cannot possibly increase our giving to the poor, as we can barely pay the bills. Many of our staff members are using their personal finances to fund programs that were previously funded through congregational giving. We have not been able to start several new programs and have had to suspend several long-time events because there has been no money to fund them. This year, all of our missionaries even had to pay their own way to go on mission trips with no church funding.

Given our situation, how could Tony think we would even consider his challenge? Then I realized that rather than being indignant, what I was feeling was sadness...

More than ten years ago, even before the 5 Talent Academy existed, our church set a goal to annually increase the percentage of our budget for missions until we had reached 10%. In 2009 we budgeted 5.3%. Because we are \$150,000 behind budget in giving, our staff has cut \$60,000 from spending for church programs. Our Trustees have cut \$30,000 – most of which is to maintain the Woodlake building. Because we do not have sufficient cash, we have used our Mission budget to fund the remaining shortage, resulting in only 1/3 of our 2009 mission budget being funded so far. Additionally, we are over \$76,000 behind in what we owe to the Virginia Conference and Richmond District of the United Methodist Church (our apportionments). These funds are used for missions in Virginia and worldwide and to pay the retirement and health care benefits of Pastors who have given their entire adult lives in

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Woodlake United Methodist Church

• *Helping and guiding people to become fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.* •

2010 Ministry and Missions Budget

Continued from page 1...

service of the church. In addition to the fact that this is our obligation as members of the Global United Methodist Church, we were blessed by the Conference when they gave us \$300,000 to start our building at Hampton Park. Many of the Virginia churches are losing members and have not been able to pay their apportionments, so the Conference has dipped into its reserves to the point they are depleted. If these obligations are not paid going forward, the worldwide missions will not be fully funded.

In my job, I must decide which bills we can afford to pay based on the giving each week. Many of our bills are fixed costs - approximately \$105,000 must be paid out monthly just to keep the doors open. As I write those checks each month to the utility companies and for equipment leases, my heart breaks because I know there will be little or no money left over for our children, youth, music groups, Sunday School classes, small groups and especially to send to our mission partners. It is not easy to face the staff and tell them they cannot spend money until further notice. It is even harder when CCHASM (Chesterfield and Colonial Heights Alliance for Social Ministry) or Richmond Friends of the Homeless calls to ask for help.

Woodlake UMC has always been generous in supporting great causes. For example, when we collected for Hurricane Katrina and for Cuban Pastors, we surpassed very lofty goals. Imagine the possibilities if we use that same focus to support our church's ministry. I cannot get the words I heard from a Pastor many years ago out of my mind, "It's not our money that we are giving to God. 100% of what we have belongs to God. He just lets us use it. We owe it all to Him." I'm not asking you to give to Woodlake UMC but rather to give *through* Woodlake UMC and let God lead us in His work.

The Finance Committee and our staff have proven to be good stewards of the money you have graciously given in the past. They have asked for God's direction in the distribution of our funds and are working diligently to keep the 2010 budget at the 2009 level. This will be difficult as our obligations to the Conference will increase by \$48,000. If we do increase our pledges and subsequently our giving, rather than just keeping the doors open and the current level of programming, we will have *greater* capacity to help and guide people into becoming fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.

Because the economy has been tough this year, determining the level of our individual pledges will be especially difficult. Seeking God's direction through prayer to help us make that decision is essential. I ask that you please consider all that I've shared with you here as you prepare to make your commitment for the 2010 Ministry and Missions Budget. Join me in giving sacrificially to both the Greater Things campaign and the Ministry and Missions Budget so that God can use these gifts for His purpose to care for His people.

Your Servant in Christ,



Shirley Huffman
Treasurer, Woodlake United Methodist Church
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Commitment Weekend: November 21-22

*Please bring your completed Commitment Card to service on this weekend.
For your convenience, additional Commitment Cards will be available at each service.*

Commitment Card Instructions

Below you will find detailed instructions on how to fill out your Commitment Card. Please note you will be making a commitment to both the two-year Greater Things Capital Campaign, as well as the annual 2010 Ministry and Missions Operating Budget. This is a two-sided Commitment Card, so please be sure to fill out each side completely prior to turning it in on November 21-22, 2009.

STEP ONE: Complete your Greater Things Commitment.

- By checking this box, you are pledging to commit a financial gift in support of the two-year Greater Things Capital Campaign, beginning in December 2009 and ending in November 2011.
- Next, choose the method of giving frequency that best suits you. Once you've chosen a frequency, take your total two-year gift and divide it based upon that frequency and write that amount in the space provided.
- (e.g., If you pledge a \$1000 gift and choose to give monthly over the next two years, you would write \$41.67 in the space next to "monthly for 24 months".)

GREATER THINGS COMMITMENT

- I/We commit to the following financial gift to support the "Greater Things" two-year campaign during the time frame of December 2009—November 2011.

\$ _____ weekly for 104 weeks
 \$ _____ semi-monthly for 48 periods
 \$ _____ monthly for 24 months
 \$ _____ annually for 2 years
 \$ _____ one-time gift

STEP TWO: Complete your Ministry & Missions Commitment.

- By checking the first two boxes, you are committing to pray for and be present in worship at Woodlake United Methodist Church.
- By checking the third box, you are pledging to commit a financial gift in support of the 2010 Ministry and Missions Operating Budget which includes, but is not limited to, staff salaries, utilities for both campuses, ministry programs, apportionments and missions.
- Next, choose the method of giving frequency that best suits you. Once you've chosen a frequency, take your total annual gift and divide it based upon that frequency and write that amount in the space provided.
- (e.g., If you pledge a \$1000 gift and choose to give monthly over the next year, you would write \$83.33 in the space next to "monthly for 12 months".)
- Next, sign and date your commitment. If filling out this commitment jointly, both parties should sign and date.
- Lastly, turn over and complete the other side of the card. See page 4 of this newsletter for further instructions.

2010 MINISTRY & MISSIONS COMMITMENT

PRAYERS

- I/We commit to praying for WUMC and its efforts to bring others to Christ.

PRESENCE

- I/We commit to attending a worship service each week.

GIVING COMMITMENT

- I/We will support WUMC in the year 2010.

Choose one:

\$ _____ weekly for 52 weeks
 \$ _____ semi-monthly for 24 periods
 \$ _____ monthly for 12 months
 \$ _____ one-time gift

Signature for commitment

Date

Signature for commitment

Date

Please turn over and complete the back side of this card.

Place your completed card in the return envelope and bring to the Altar for dedication during the time of Communion at the Commitment Celebration Services during the weekend of November 21-22, 2009.

