

March 12, 2017

Friends,

Since the start of this calendar year, we have focused on both God's call to follow Jesus and on His expectation that as followers, we are called to go out into our community, our city and even the world to serve in Christ's name. Sometimes we like to say that we have been saved to serve. At other times, we remind ourselves that we are meant to be sent. As we commence our annual stewardship campaign, we invite you to consider how this same call to be sent impacts your giving.

Two years ago, when Vision 2020 was first communicated, we acknowledged that we were undertaking something that was impossible without God. Each year since, as we've crafted our plans and prepared our budgets, we have positioned ourselves to move a step or two closer to the fulfillment of that vision. Now, as we begin to see early evidence--through Project Flourish, Alpha, APEST and our initial church planting dreams, we have come to a time when we believe God is asking us to step out even more boldly and to ask for His help in making the "impossible possible."

A NEW SEASON OF GIVING

As we prepare to move into a new giving season, and begin planning how and where these dollars will be used, we want to be purposeful in asking God to do more in us and through us than we ever dared imagine. So this year, the leadership of FPC is asking you to exercise your faith not only in how you serve, but in how you give.

First, if you've never pledged to FPC before, we ask that you consider making a pledge this year; second, if you do give regularly, we are asking that you prayerfully consider pledging an amount that reflects an increase of ten percent over last year's giving. To gain a deeper understanding of how these contributions impact the lives of those around us, each Sunday of our campaign, we will hear from an individual or ministry that has been the recipient of your faithfulness. Also, enclosed you will find a devotional calendar for our coming fiscal year that highlights additional ministries supported by FPC and encourages us in our giving journey with monthly illustrations of the challenges individuals in the Bible faced as they responded to God's call to serve.

As many of you know, giving (and even pledging) is a spiritual discipline that not only allows FPC to responsibly plan for the coming year, but that also allows you to experience the blessing that comes from making a formal commitment to supporting the work of your church. This year we would love to see everyone commit to giving what they can and to trusting God to do amazing things in us and through us, for His glory. We believe that this will be an exciting year in the life of the First Pres family and we're praying that everyone will commit to being a part of it.

AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE SENT

Finally, and unlike any other stewardship campaign in our past, we also want to use this time to create an opportunity for members of the FPC family to actually be sent. At the conclusion of this pledge period, an individual, plus one guest, will be selected to go on a mission trip to Honduras, all travel expenses included, this fall. Your pledge, of any amount, includes you in the opportunity to be selected. A recipient will be selected on June 1 and announced during all four services on June 4.

I am so excited to see what God will do in the year ahead as we step out in faith, both in giving and doing. I hope you will join us as we pray for 100% participation in this year's pledge season and for the faith to trust God in this important dimension of our lives.

In Christ,



Jim Birchfield, *Senior Pastor*