

What You Need to Know about “I’m In!”

The Basics...

- Sunday, 11/20/2011, at the Mayo Civic Center
- Congregation gathers in one place/one time
- Inspirational Worship 10:00 a.m.
- Delicious Brunch 11:15 a.m.
- A Challenge and a Celebration
- A time to take a stand – “I’m In!”

How does this November’s celebration relate to previous Novembers?

Each November since 2009, we have taken a step towards a new vision for Gloria Dei. In 2009, we shared the basics of “Catching the Wave,” a strategy for watching what God is doing and then joining God. In 2010, we changed our constitution and ministry model to be more flexible so that we can more easily join God in his ministry plans. And this year, we invite members of the congregation to take a stand, to say “I’m In!” It is one thing for the congregation to give the leadership permission to reorganize around a new vision. It is another to support this vision. We need you to say, “I’m In!”

So, by asking me, “Am I In?” you are really asking me for money?

Yes and no! This is really not about asking for money. It is about “Catching the Wave” – seeing what God is doing and joining God. That’s our plan as a congregation. It must also be our plan as individual members. Each one of us must ask ourselves the question, “Is God doing something new here?” And if we answer, “Well, it would appear so!” then we must prayerfully consider, “Lord, how do you want me to be involved?” There are many ways to answer this question: pray for our congregation and leaders, volunteer, get involved in worship and Bible study, and yes, support the ministry with our money.

Ministry is also about money. We all know this. For the past five years, we have tried not to mention money. We have “tightened our belt.” A decade ago, we were a stressed congregation. Money talk would have made us more stressed. But now we are healthy. Now we can have the money conversation. We will not twist your arm. We only want you to see the facts. For ease of understanding, we are calling this: “***A Million, a Million, and a Mission.***”

What do we mean by the first “million” dollars?

\$1 million for debt reduction over the next three years

We are currently carrying an indebtedness of \$1.9 million because of a building remodel, the purchase of 30 acres of land, and the purchase of two homes adjacent to our church. As a congregation, we agreed to take on this debt. Now we need to address it. Currently this means monthly payments of \$16,500. We will make these payments for the next 14 years. One million dollars over the next three years would pay down 1/3 of our debt. Whatever plans God has for us in the future, this debt holds us back. Let’s pay it off!

What do we mean by the second “million” dollars?

\$1 million for our operating budget for 2012

In 2011, you approved an operating budget of \$899,000. Without adding a thing to our ministry plans, our budget for next year will increase by \$40,000. Increasing the operating budget to one million dollars would provide an additional \$60,000 seed money that, if added to areas where God is working, could bring about some big returns. Here the council is thinking of such areas as: small groups, Koinonia groups, service, Bible study, women’s ministry, men’s ministry, ministry to 20-somethings, singles ministry, adult choir, and additional contemporary worship services.

What do we mean by “a Mission”?

Of course, everything we do here might be called “mission.” But for purposes of our financial commitment to Gloria Dei, we invite you to consider the work of our Sustenance Fund. In 2010, we gave \$104,000 to our Sustenance Program which helped our neighbors in Rochester and around the world in areas of food and shelter. Our Sustenance Program reminds us of two things. First and foremost, we give back to God; we take care of our neighbor in need. This is an important value of Gloria Dei. Secondly, the Sustenance Fund is a shining example of what we as a congregation can do when we all say, “I’m In!”

What will the Council do with our pledges?

Our church council has the responsibility of informing members of ministry opportunities and then using our resources to best support our ministry. The congregation has been informed. Now the council waits to see your response. On the basis of your response, the council will set a budget for our January 2012 Annual Meeting. This needs to be a realistic budget. Therefore we ask you to fill out a pledge card and bring it to our service of celebration on 11/20/2011.

What will the pledge card look like?

Please note that we have three funds, corresponding to our theme of “A Million, a Million, and a Mission” – the debt retirement over three years, the operating budget for 2012, and our Sustenance Program for 2012. By making a pledge, you help your church make an informed ministry plan for 2012. But you also help yourself. By setting aside our first fruits for God, by giving a percentage of our wealth to God, we test God’s promise to truly take care of us. Once we experience that promise to be true, we worry less about our financial future. God does provide.

Why would I want to make a pledge?

Each of us must answer that question for ourselves, but here are some answers worth considering: because this new ministry is exciting and I want to be part of it; because I want to make a difference; because someone supported the church that nurtured my faith, I want to be that someone who nurtures someone else’s faith; because God wants me to.