

March 15, 2010

Dear Friends:

We wanted to write to share with you our excitement regarding our Conference's *"TRANSFORMING CHURCHES - TRANSFORMING LIVES"* Campaign. To date, we have raised \$150,360.00 from the Conference Staff, Conference Board of Directors and Campaign Steering Committee! Visits to churches are now underway and we are deeply gratified at the seriousness and faithfulness with which the message is being heard; and we are inspired by the commitment of so many hours by so many people to get that message out and around! We are certain that we will be successful in raising our goal if we continue to join our efforts and to pray for God's blessings.

But there is one point we think, from our conversation with others around the Conference, that could use some clarification. It relates to the nature of the commitment local churches are being asked to make to the Campaign, and the time frame for making those commitments.

By sending in the Declaration of Commitment Form we are saying to our Conference, "This is our church's **goal**. This is what we **intend** to raise for this Campaign. This is in good faith what we will **try** to do." These forms are not carved in stone. They are like the pledge cards which many of us have our members submit in the Fall or Spring of each year. We recognize that sometimes circumstances change and later people must alter their pledges, up or down. But the cards declare their intent.

Remember, declaring your intent now does not mean that you are to begin raising the funds immediately. In fact, we want you to take the proper time to plan the campaign within your congregation as this will maximize your results. (This is why we encourage you to attend the Fund-Raising Workshops that will be held around the Conference this year. Exact dates are currently being determined.) Your congregation determines when the campaign is to begin in light of your own stewardship efforts. **Encourage your Council/Board to make a recommendation of an amount / goal to the congregation. By doing this, it says that our leadership really believes in this effort.**

The best way to raise the funds is to conduct a local church campaign and making the Southeast Conference the Outreach & Mission portion of the campaign. Local churches always have needs - - and by conducting your campaign in this manner - there is something in it for the local church as well as the wider church. Please review the Sample Three Tiered Goal Chart attached. The advantages of using the three different goal levels during your campaign is:

1. It takes the fear out of the Congregation trying to commit to one plan and deciding if the church can afford it before conducting a campaign.
2. You don't limit yourselves or lower your sights! All you are asking the church at this time is to give you the best opportunity to raise as much money as you can. At the end of the campaign, your church leadership will review the results and recommend at a congregational meeting the best course of action for the church to proceed with.
3. It takes the weight off the leadership's shoulders – it shows more faith in the congregations ability.
4. You are being good stewards by trying to accomplish more at today's dollar. Putting it off only costs more!
5. Conduct 1 Campaign rather than 2 or 3 successive Campaigns.

And that is why we need to make commitments soon! June is right around the corner and it is important for us to feel that we are all in this together. Our goal is to have as close to 100% participation by all of our churches by the June, 2010 Annual Meeting of our Conference. The Campaign has already done so much to help our people become more aware of our shared Christian ministry. A positive momentum is being established. We sincerely hope we can keep it moving forward by considering your commitments now and submitting the commitment forms as soon as possible. (Pledge cards are available for your campaign - just call Steve at the Campaign office.)

Blessings on you and your ministry. Thanks for all you have done and are doing. We encourage you to share this letter with the members of your Council/Board and congregation.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call the Campaign Office at (800) 903-1535 or email: campaign@secucc.org.

Faithfully,



The Rev. Timothy C. Downs
Conference Minister



Ms. Vanessa Robbs
President, Conference Board of Directors

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