

November 3, 2009

To the Members of Northside Drive Baptist Church:

The Reverend Dan R. Dick is an ordained minister of The United Methodist Church and a nationally known speaker, teacher and author. He recently wrote about the difference between giving out of a sense of obligation or as a discipline and giving that is based on generosity and motivated by the joy of doing something good. According to Rev. Dick,

“There is at the root of all true generosity a source of joy—a deep satisfaction that comes from doing something good. Yet, the joy of giving is rarely the main focus of giving in the church. In many of our churches, joy isn’t much considered. Instead, we focus on the discipline of giving—calling people to “make a pledge,” or if we want to pretend that’s not what we’re doing we call it an “estimate of giving” or a “commitment” card. ... Mostly, the focus on money in the church is on the need of the church to receive, not on the joy that can transform a community grounded in generosity. In fact, we don’t focus on generosity, just on giving—and they are not the same thing. ... True generosity is grounded in the values and beliefs of the whole person. Generosity is an identity issue—not so much about what a person does, but about whom a person is. ... Giving is not just a practical issue, but a deeply spiritual one.”

This is the time of year when we normally prepare the Church’s budget for the next year and ask the members of the congregation to support the budget through their pledges. We are doing the same thing this year because it is an important and necessary part of the business of our Church. We cannot keep the doors open and the lights on and make plans for our various programs without your support.

This year, the theme of our campaign to pledge our 2010 budget will be “The Joy of Generosity.” As you consider how much you will be able to support your Church during the next year, we are asking you to focus on what your Church means to you and on the joy you will receive from your gifts rather than on what your Church needs. The needs of our Church are important, but they are insignificant compared to the joy we hope you will receive by supporting it.

The Finance Committee, the Trustees, the Church Council, and the Church-in-conference have all approved the 2010 challenge budget for our Church. It is now time for us to ask you for your support.

The challenge budget for 2010 is \$826,567, compared to the final 2009 budget of \$801,000. This represents an increase of 3.19%. The primary reason for the increase is that the challenge budget includes a raise pool for members of the Church staff as well as funds to restore the benefits that were taken away from members of the staff this year.

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Due to financial pressures, we were unable to provide any salary increases or bonuses to members of the Church staff this year, and we also had to eliminate benefits previously provided to members of the staff, including reimbursement of automobile mileage and payment for continuing education and professional expenses. The amount of the proposed raise pool for 2010 is \$8,640, which consists of proposed raises or bonuses of \$7,500 in the aggregate for all ministerial and non-ministerial staff members, plus \$1,140, which represents 15.2% of the proposed raises and bonuses for the Church's share of Social Security and Medicare taxes. In addition to the raise pool, the challenge budget includes \$12,625 to restore the benefits that were eliminated from the 2009 budget.

We are enclosing a copy of the 2010 challenge budget, a pledge card, and a brochure describing some of the missions of our Church. Of course, you need to understand that the challenge budget is only a proposal that is being submitted to you for your consideration. We will not be able to adopt the challenge budget as our budget for 2010 unless we receive the pledges to support it.

In an effort to complete our pledge campaign in advance of Advent, we ask that you submit your pledge to the Church office before November 29, the first day of Advent. You may pledge by (1) returning the enclosed pledge card, (2) by visiting our website at northsidedrive.org and pledging online, (3) by calling Carolyn Scott, our Business Manager, at 404-237-8621, or (4) by sending an e-mail to Carolyn at carolyn@northsidedrive.org.

During the next few weeks, you will be hearing more about "The Joy of Generosity." As you think about your pledge for 2010, we ask you to listen carefully and to consider the joy you will receive from supporting the missions of the Church we all love. Thank you very much for your past and future support.

On behalf of the Finance Committee

Walter M. Grant, Chair

P.S. Please feel free to contact any member of the Finance Committee if you have any questions. The other members of the Finance Committee are Don Janney, Kathy Harris, Carolyn Mahaffey, Jim Nicol, Dee Davis, Barbara Atchley, J.L. Jerden, Dick Underwood, Hartwell Dew, Beth Laxton, and Jeanne Goodwill