

Thursday, May 3, 10:26 PM

Space for Grace update, & personal perspective

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Dear Grace family,

The initial pledge totals and gifts for *Space for Grace* are in, with 93 families already participating so far toward the \$1.4 million goal. These families, all together, have followed God's leading and sacrificed to bring the total of cash & pledges to \$861,569.

Other pledges are still coming in from those who were unable to bring their pledges on Sunday, and updates are being [posted](#) regularly as we have them.

Over the last few days I have heard a full range of perspectives based on the results so far. I see our Celebration Sunday as a defining moment for us as a church and was deeply moved and filled with gratitude by so many coming forward with their pledge cards and their stones, written on to remember God's faithfulness.

While I admit it would have been amazing to have the whole amount pledged right out of the chute, I am encouraged so far and feel God's leading to send you this note. As we embark on this journey together, here are a few things that you may not know that will help give you a good perspective:

1. Grace to my knowledge has never had a wealthy attender who gave significantly at Grace. Most campaigns have at least one donor pledge 10% or more of the total; that has not been true for us (at least not yet). One church in town just finished a campaign of roughly our size and had a single donor give \$1 million to their expansion, making the rest of it relatively easy. God's plan for us will call us to live for a season *by faith*. But you know, what Grace hasn't had with major donors, it has always made up for with tenacity! You will especially hear this from those who have been a part of Grace for the last dozen years or more. That has been true of prior building campaigns and was also true when Grace had to "tackle the monster" of an increasing debt back in 2001.
2. We have seen nearly 2/3 of the goal given or pledged at the very beginning of the campaign — enough (once enough of the pledges have come in) to begin construction on phase 1 and be on our way to phase 2. This is already, by far, the best response to any campaign in the Grace's history. In 1995 only a small amount of contributions came in, and the church took out a massive loan to build the sanctuary. In 2005 (the second and most recent expansion), only

- \$225K was pledged out of a \$600K need.
3. Typical campaigns that are managed well through to the end show giving beyond initial pledges at the beginning of a campaign, as new people join in and others blessed by God give more. A good rule of thumb here is an additional 25%. In our case, I understand some families made large commitments to year 1 but have not yet made pledges for years 2 and 3.
 4. We have a robust contingency of 15% built into our building estimates, much better than the two campaigns in Grace's early years. We have an excellent and fiscally conservative Building Expansion Team, and I have been told that any contingency funds not needed in phase 1 can be rolled into subsequent phases.
 5. Last but not least, remember friends that we are embarking on a 5-year vision for our future. It would have been cool if the "F" part of our vision were just completely taken care of in a year's time, but if we can accomplish it within that 5-year period I would consider that a success! Wouldn't you?

During our Celebration Sunday this weekend, when people were walking forward to give their pledges, Jeannie Shedlock looked at her husband Paul and said, "Are you *seeing* this?!" They were moved to tears. The Shedlocks have been part of every campaign in Grace's past, and Paul later told me, "**Space for Grace has already blown the socks off of anything we've ever done in the past, because so many people helped with the effort and it was done really, really well. There is nothing for us to be discouraged about in this campaign, absolutely nothing.**"

Yes, we still have a ways to go. It will take all of us, together, giving sacrificially to finish the expansion of the church and prepare us for generations to come. However, let us not forget the slogan of this campaign from the beginning, "*It's all about God!*" God uses us as we listen and obey Him, and I know the Lord will surprise us as we seek to follow faithfully His vision for us. God also will use us and bless our efforts as we commit wholeheartedly to investing in our city, loving those in need and sharing with them the hope of Christ.

God is preparing us — He is preparing us to be a community who loves our city well and is willing to sacrifice to have sufficient pastoral staff and church campus space in order to meet the needs of everyone who finds Grace to be a place of grace, as we all have.

But may we never forget the words of the Psalmist: "*Unless the LORD builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain.*" — Psalm 127:1

Grace family, let's pray like we never have before, have faith in God, and love northwest Tucson so well that they won't know what hit them! God is calling us to live *by faith!*

Pastor Dave

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