

Hello, Church!

One additional responsibility I have within our extended community is the privilege to be a leader in the Northeast Ohio District of the Church of God. And, last week Tuesday, the leadership of the district made key decisions you will want to know about.

The Executive Council has agreed to a new vision for the district - yet to be ratified by the General Assembly: *that every soul in Northeast Ohio encounters the glory of God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.* For those within our church in East Canton, that's not so new. But, for this district, it is a key step in a bold direction. Why?

A common vision requires us to communicate it often, plan for its fulfillment, and to come to unity in its pursuit. Otherwise, it is not a vision but perhaps a placard on a wall or yet another cast-off phrase tucked deep in a set of by-laws or some such organizational document. Without a common and well understood vision, each of us has our own "picture of a preferred future" - our own vision. And, where there is more than one vision, there is di-vision.

This vision is another significant step in the life of the Church of God in Northeast Ohio - one of many in its rich history. Please join us in praying that the General Assembly will not only receive this vision, but act on it.

Secondly, in the spirit of this visionary perspective, the Executive Council discussed at length how we might approach Campmeeting differently this year. Here are some highlights:

- We know that Campmeeting is to be a time of soul (and church) revival. Therefore, whatever we do should strengthen that focus upon revival - not diminish it.
- With regard to giving, we are instructed that *"each one must give what he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."* (2 Cor. 9:7) This principle God has provided guides His people to live as they give.
- Although in past Campmeetings there have been creative ways to approach the privilege of giving, there remains an impression of an ongoing compulsion to give.
- Oftentimes, when people understand more clearly how giving is spent or distributed, they want to give more.

From this discussion, the Executive Council agreed to a different approach to Campmeeting this year:

- The primary emphasis for commitment to Campmeeting will be declared clearly: we come for the revival of the person and the church. Therefore, while we will celebrate the generosity of God through the giving of those present, there will be no communicated financial goal this year that might distract from this purpose.
- All offerings received will be distributed in the following fashion:
 - 50% will go to district expenses which includes the cost of the Campmeeting itself and the Retreat Center.
 - 25% will go to Global Missions, equally distributed to the missionaries present (Ernie & Lori Nicholas, Kenya) and the Pink Door Ministry in Berlin, Germany.
 - 25% will go to Local Missions in the Northeast Ohio District, equally distributed to Hannah's House 119 and the Joanne's Pantry.
- The vision and mission of these ministries, both local and global, will be well communicated so that each giver understands and can give "cheerfully".

It is our fervent hope that these steps of faith will bring a freshness to the revival of Campmeeting beyond our expectations and for the years to come.

So, please look at your calendars and be sure to schedule your time of revival this summer. I know that this Weekly Connector is distributed far beyond Northeast Ohio and not all of you can come to Campmeeting here. But be sure to schedule some time this summer to reflect, to learn, to grow in the LORD, and to prepare for the next year as God prepares you for what He has uniquely planned. If you happen to be in Northeast Ohio, we hope to see you at [Campmeeting](#), July 21st through the 29th.

This Sunday, we continue our walk through "The #Blessed" statements with a focus on mercy. What is mercy? Why is it as important to offer it as it is to receive it? Be sure to bring a friend and come discover how God's mercy factors into our lives as His children and into the lives of those around us. Service starts at 10AM and I hope to see you there.

And now, *"may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."* Romans 15:13

I remain with great hope for Christ's work in His church - and in you!

I love you, Church!

Pastor greg

