

Exploring the Potential of a New Major Outreach Project

by Mark Oudersluys, Outreach Team Chair

Our congregation is rapidly approaching the completion of our Forward in Faith building campaign, and we currently have less than \$30,000 remaining of the original \$4,200,000 goal. During the third and final phase of the campaign, our consultant commented that from the information he had received from the congregation, he did not believe that there would be another building campaign in the near future. However, from the responses he received, he did believe that there was significant interest in having another campaign to address local service or outreach issues.

This spring the Church Council overwhelmingly voted to do just that, and to form an exploratory committee to look into the potential of a fund raising campaign to address significant areas of need in Kalamazoo.

Over the past several months, several congregational members have been meeting to discuss what this Major Outreach Project could look like. We have developed a broad outline of a potential campaign but have not developed any specific plans. What we have determined is that the campaign should be significant and follow in the tradition that you have repeatedly carried out in the past. We believe that the goal of the fund drive should be to raise approximately \$1,000,000, possibly a little higher or lower, depending on the project selected.

At this point, we believe the fund drive should be composed of three separate components or phases. The purpose of Phase One is to develop a broad outline of the intent of the campaign, provide the congregation with an opportunity to review the intent, solicit their feedback, and answer any question that they might have. This is the phase we are currently in.

The end result of this phase will be to have an ongoing discussion with the congregation about this project and ask for their approval at the annual meeting, on Monday, December 11, to move to Phase Two.

Phase Two will be to review the various needs within Kalamazoo, make a determination as to where we believe we can make a significant difference,

and make one, or several, recommendations to the congregation. The congregation would then select what project, if any they would like to undertake. At that time the congregation would vote to approve moving to Phase Three; or, to discontinue any further work on the project. We anticipate this phase would be completed in June of 2018. These decisions would also determine the amount and duration of the fund drive.

Phase Three would include working with local organizations that would join with us and assist in attaining shared goals. We would develop a specific implementation plan and conduct the actual fund drive. The organizational part of this would occur sometime in the June to August 2018 time frame, with the fund raising beginning in the fall of 2018.

Some other specifics related to the Outreach Fund Project that have been discussed over the last several months include:

- 1) It should be a project where our expenditure of time, effort and resources can make a significant difference on a portion of the Kalamazoo population.
- 2) It should be one where ten years from now we can look back and say that what we did made a difference.
- 4) It should not attempt to duplicate existing services or the work that organizations are currently performing.
- 5) This is not something that we will be able to complete on our own. We are the encouragers, facilitators, and fund raisers. We expect to partner with existing organizations and assist them in meeting our shared goals.
- 6) This should not be looked upon as an alternative means of funding existing FUMC projects such as: YANA, JFON, HON, Costa Rica or youth missions.
- 7) The time frame for the fund drive will be dependent on the nature of the project but is expected to be two to four years in duration.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns related to this project please feel free to talk with one of the following individuals: Cheryl Anderson, Pastor Steve Charnley, Donna Dunyak, Pastor Julie Kline, Mark Oudersluys, Judy Ross or Kim Taylor.