

Dear Central Friends in Christ,

***"Behold, I am doing a new thing, do you not perceive it?" Isaiah 40***

On Sunday, October 11, Central United Methodist Church took a bold step in faith and approved a Capital Campaign to raise the necessary funds for the redevelopment of our ministry facility to accomplish our Ministry Plan to be more hospitable, accessible, energy efficient, and provide space for ministry to our children, youth, students, families and older adults. For almost 4 years, the congregation has been in an intentional period of discussion and discernment to listen for God's guidance about the future of our ministry as a church. This time included over 19 congregational meetings, prayer journeys, a Vision Sunday, development of a ministry plan and coordination with our community and city neighbors, like UMKC, Shepherd's Center, and others.

This is new thing that God is doing in our midst. A Capital Campaign is an opportunity to remember God's rich blessings in our lives and the privilege of sharing our resources and gathering them with our church family to see amazing possibilities for ministry emerge. I have been a part of many church capital campaigns to build sanctuaries, renovate old spaces, and create Christian Life facilities—I am always in awe of how God works through these efforts to renew the faith of some, ignite the faith of others, and inspire the witness of an entire congregation as it rededicates itself to the purposes of God.

The Ministry Council, Trustees, and Finance Team have secured Rev. Dustin Cooper, from RSI Stewardship Company, to be our campaign consultant. Dustin and his wife, Ruth, made Central UMC their church home 2 years ago and joined us in this exciting journey, professionally, pastorally, and personally. Dustin's commitment to our church's vision and mission, as well as his exceptional professional accomplishments in assisting churches in raising their campaigns, makes him just another part of the rich blessings which God has provided throughout this journey.



Much of the campaign from Nov.-Jan. will be 'quiet' in nature, that is, focusing on leadership recruitment, training, and materials development. After the holidays, you will hear much more about home gatherings, pledge opportunities, and our Celebration Sunday on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2010! Your best support of this campaign right now is to hold our work in your daily prayers that we will grow in our generosity and vision; and say 'yes' as you are invited to lead and assist in one of the many areas which will be essential to the campaign.

### ***"Come Ye Thankful People Come"***

In the midst of all of this excitement, we also have an annual operating budget to support for 2010. You might be thinking, "enough already!" Think about your household, though. While you are planning for major work to the house, saving for college, investing in the future, it is still necessary to keep the monthly utilities paid and the grocery bills covered. In many ways, God's house depends on that very same stewardship. Remarkably, as the church moves into this exciting time, we should expect operations resources to grow, not be diminished by the capital campaign. That's because we have a vision, we are accomplishing great things for the Kingdom of God, and we want to be a part of giving in

faith and realizing the blessings that come from giving for others.

Make this a season like no other in your household this Fall. Spend time talking about the riches and blessings that flow freely from God. Talk over dinnertime about those gifts that we've been given that money can't buy. Dream big about what new gathering, education and mission space could mean for Central. Pray to loosen the grip on money that could be shared with others more than on ourselves.

We'll be having those conversations in my household and we'll be praying and preparing for what God is calling us to do with our church family to realize these visions. I'll never forget the satisfaction and joy my family felt when we moved into a new sanctuary or enjoyed a youth room after our other churches' campaigns—we were a part of making that happen for ourselves, others, and new generations. I can't imagine a better way to give back what God has given us!

In a season of thanksgiving, I am grateful for you and for Central UMC. See you in church on Sunday!

In Christ's Service with you,  
Rev. Amy L. Gearhart, Senior Pastor