



← COMMITMENT RESPONSE BEGINS APRIL 28 →

The time is at hand for the families of First Baptist Church to make a most rewarding investment in the work of this church and the Kingdom of God. Commitment cards are being mailed to each Church family. Families are encouraged to complete their commitment cards and return them to the Church in privacy envelopes included in the mailing. Those commitments will be tabulated, and an updated total will be announced each Sunday during the Commitment phase of our campaign.

According to **Lori Andrews**, our Commitment Director, the aim is to encourage each family to participate in a meaningful way in Possess the Land. Commitments should be in addition to any present church giving; and, hopefully, this will reflect both generosity and sacrifice on the part of our membership.

Commitment cards can be completed and returned to the church in person or by mail. We encourage families to return their cards at their earliest convenience, so we can celebrate our collective resolve to fulfill God's plan for our future. Our ultimate goal is to have all commitment cards returned by **Celebration Sunday, May 18**. If you plan to mail your card, please allow time for your commitment card to return to the Church office by Friday, May 16.

Our church entered into this campaign confident of the Lord's leadership. We will either go forward, confident of God's provision to our church, or we will go backward in our doubts and fears. God's intent must surely be for the church to reach forward, not merely to subsist. Accomplishing the goals we have set for ourselves through **Possess the Land** will signal a giant step forward, both in ministry and in outreach. We not only assure provisions for our present ministry, but we will also be providing the resources for witness and ministry for many years in the future.

Equal sacrifice, not equal gifts must be the goal as commitments are made. There will be no question about meeting our financial goals for the campaign if each family takes time to pray for the Lord's leadership about their decision and is willing to make a sacrificial commitment.



A COMMITMENT OR A PLEDGE?

Families in our church will soon have an opportunity to indicate on a commitment card their plans to give sacrificially over the next three years in support of our Possess the Land campaign. The emphasis is upon commitment, not pledging. How does a commitment differ from a pledge?

For one thing, a commitment involves an effort to discover and follow God's leadership. A commitment to give certainly means more than just the dollars committed. It is a decision to allow ourselves to be used of God in line with Paul's commendation of some Macedonian Christians, "They first gave themselves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8:5).

In addition, a commitment denotes a trust in God. We never know what may happen tomorrow, much less over the next three years. Because we have earnestly sought and followed God's leadership, we believe God will enable us to fulfill our commitment, and we trust Him to provide.

In preparing for your Possess the Land commitment, begin to pray in earnest for God's leadership. Once you have discovered God's will for your giving, then you can confidently follow that leadership and join with other families in making a joyful, sacrificial commitment.

WHAT IS MY PART?

Some families in our Church, who are leading in the campaign, are returning their commitment cards this week, before the Vision Banquet, April 27. But most of our families will return their commitment cards by **Celebration Sunday, May 18**. Commitment packets are being mailed to each family's home. A letter in the mailing will encourage you to join a host of other families in making a sacrificial commitment over the next three years to help complete the projects of our new building and to limit borrowing to achieve them.

Many will be asking, "What is my part?" Actually, this is a question that each family must decide for itself. No family will be told what it is expected to give. Each family is urged to prayerfully make its own decision. There are some ways a family can arrive at a decision on how much to commit to give.

First, pray for God's leadership in light of the church's needs and opportunities for ministry and outreach.

Second, apply the principle, **Equal sacrifice, not equal gifts**. In this case, sacrifice means at least a decision to forego something, however worthy, in order to participate more generously in the church's Possess the Land campaign. Recall that David said he would not offer unto the Lord an offering that cost him nothing (2 Samuel 24:24). Probably, the acceptance of a more meaningful discipline in money management is involved in a truly sacrificial commitment.

And, third, when you have prayed for God's leadership and made your commitment, you will experience great joy. Tremendous joy always accompanies sacrificial commitment, and this includes a commitment in giving. The writer of Hebrews says that Jesus endured the cross, despising its shame, "for the joy that was set before Him." (Hebrews 12:2).

**Only one life --
'Twill soon be past.
Only what's done for Christ
Will last.**

Important Campaign Dates:

April 27
Vision Banquet

April 28 - May 17
Commitment Response Phase

May 18
Celebration Service

June 1
First Fruits Sunday (Three-Year Giving Begins)

I WANT TO GIVE MORE . . . BUT

Are you considering how your family can make a worthy commitment to our Church's future? Perhaps you may be able to give more generously by using other ways or sources of giving than by weekly or monthly cash flow. As you pray about your family's response in the **Possess the Land** campaign, you might consider the following suggestions:

1. Give an asset (real property, stocks, bonds, other investments) directly to the church for resale. (Giving appreciated stock can help avoid capital gains taxes as well as being a contribution.)
2. Set up a charitable remainder or revocable living trust, a gift or deferred gift annuity, making the church the ultimate beneficiary of the trust.
3. Give through your corporation rather than from personal assets and income.
4. Make the church the beneficiary of an insurance policy that is no longer needed for the protection of your family
5. Provide for the church through your will.
6. If you give by cash, consider giving the tax saving which your gift allows as well.

Before making a decision about which ways are best for you, you need to consult with a qualified tax professional (i.e., attorney, C.P.A., trust officer).



TESTIMONIES OF SACRIFICIAL GIVING

In Florida, a school teacher had plans to retire and to buy a new car. After being challenged to pray about her commitment, she decided to forego both retirement and a new car and commit \$40,000 for the church's building expansion.

In North Carolina, an elderly couple had saved money in order to attend the World's Fair. After praying about their commitment, the couple cancelled their plans and committed to give what they had saved to the new worship center. They said, "What we invest in God's work will pay dividends for God's kingdom long after we die."

In Oklahoma, a couple was saving to buy a new home. When their church decided to build a new educational building, the couple gave what they had saved to the church and postponed their move to a larger home for two more years.

In explaining his family's commitment, one Illinois deacon explained, "I've learned that my commitment is not just a financial matter between me and the church, but a spiritual matter between me and the Lord." He went on to explain, "I had saved to buy a new truck this year. Last night, the Lord asked me to drive my old truck for three more years, as part of my sacrifice, and I said yes. Though you can't see it, I am laying a truck on the altar tonight for our new building."

A Missouri woman, after a successful career as an executive secretary, was planning to retire, but postponed her retirement for three years so she could give a more worthy offering to her Church from those extra earnings.

Testimonies such as these abound in churches all across America, as families have experienced the inner joy of sacrificial giving for the kingdom of God. It is no wonder that, with such expressions of commitment, those churches achieved financial and spiritual success in capital stewardship campaigns.

A Missouri Pastor, whose church reached its hallelujah goal, said, "God did a tremendous work in the hearts of our people. Our capital stewardship campaign did more for our church spiritually than just the raising of the money."

The word sacrifice means "to make something sacred." Through efforts such as these, people have made savings, stocks, boats, and even a pony sacred by committing them to the Lord's work through their church. As we pray about our commitments in Possess the Land, may our sacrificial gifts be inspired by the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, God's "unspeakable gift." (2 Cor. 9:15).

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF FESTUS, CRYSTAL CITY**

107 N TRUMAN BLVD
CRYSTAL CITY, MO 63019

POSSESS THE LAND

I have a question

What are our campaign goals?

Our minimum Victory Goal need is \$1,000,00. We also have a Challenge Goal of \$ 2,000,000 and a Hallelujah Goal of \$3,000,00.

When will my family make its POSSESS THE LAND commitment?

Your family is encouraged to make your commitment by returning your card at your earliest convenience, but before Celebration Sunday, May 18.

Will my family be asked to make a public commitment?

No. Commitment cards were mailed to your home. After you fill out your commitment card, you may mail or return it to the church in the provided return envelope. The confidentiality of your commitment is assured by using this process.

What assurance do I have that my family can fulfill its commitment?

God never leads us to make a commitment we cannot fulfill. One Pastor noted, "When people give from reason, they give from their apparent resources; but when people give from revelation, they are free to give from God's resources.

Why use a commitment card?

Commitment cards enable families and individuals to indicate in a simple, yet confidential way their plans to support the Possess the Land capital campaign. Commitment cards also encourage families to set specific goals for their giving. That information also helps the church plan wisely for financing renovation projects on our Church building.

How will my family give its commitment?

Prior to the start of the three-year giving period June 1, the church will provide each family Possess the Land envelopes. Later, the church will provide dual-purpose envelopes so families can give both budget and capital campaign offerings.

