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BEYOND THE GAP CHALLENGE

Mariners' Church launched a campaign called Beyond the Gap Challenge in April of 2009. This Challenge was presented in a three part series of sermons on Sundays; April 19, April 26 and May 3. Sermon audio CD's are available upon request in the Info Area.

WHY THE BEYOND THE GAP CHALLENGE?

Reason #1:

The Biblical Mandate we are given in Scripture to grow in the area of giving.

II Corinthians 8:7 "But just as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving."

We believe that as the children of God, saved by the blood of Christ and made alive by the Spirit of God, that we are to bear an increasing resemblance to Our heavenly Father. And Our Father at His heart is a giver... **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world that He gave..." We believe that one of the most practical ways that we can express the "giving love" of our heavenly Father is to give of our earthly wealth to advance His heavenly kingdom. Beyond the Gap is about growing in the grace of giving.

Reason #2:

The Present Opportunity at Mariners' to Bridge and go Beyond the Gap.

In early 2009 we were prompted to examine our hearts on giving through a consistent shortfall in our monthly income, and even after adopting drastic budget cuts, we projected our entire surplus to run out by the first week in December 2009. It was determined that our financial gap over the remaining 8 months of 2009 was in the amount of \$250,000. We needed to Bridge the Gap.

We believe that God's Work done God's Way will never lack God's Supply. Believing that the Lord funds his kingdom work through His people, we saw the opportunity to present the Scriptural

Mariners Beyond the Gap Challenge

Mandate to grow in the area of giving.

Initially we thought we would challenge our congregation to “bridge the gap” in our income and expenses so that we could continue to operate at current ‘bare-bones’ level. But then we decided to stretch our faith to raise money that would take us “Beyond the Gap” so that we could expand our work in advancing the Kingdom here in Annapolis and around the world. So, we doubled the goal from \$250,000 to \$500,000 dollars.

WHAT IS THE BEYOND THE GAP CHALLENGE?

The Beyond the Gap Challenge was presented to everyone in our church family as an opportunity to consider growing in what they planned to give to Mariners’ for the remaining eight months of 2009 (May–December). For example, if a person’s planned regular giving was \$10,000 and the Lord led them to give \$12,000, they filled out a “Beyond the Gap” pledge in the amount of \$2,000. Our goal is to raise \$500,000 in total pledges followed by the faithful fulfillment of those pledges.

WHEN IS THE BEYOND THE GAP CHALLENGE?

We believe that the Lord wants this challenge to continue until December 31, 2009. For this reason, each month we are going to give you the opportunity to either up your pledge or make a pledge for the first time.

Once a month, on the first Sunday, we will provide you with information on the status of the Beyond the Gap Challenge. We will answer the question of where current pledge amounts stand next to the goals of both Bridging the Gap (\$250K) and Beyond the Gap (\$500K). The week prior to the announcement of the new status, there will be an announcement given on a Sunday morning and a Beyond the Gap Pledge Card in the Bulletin and people will be instructed with these words...

- If you have been a regular giver at Mariners’ and have not yet pledged an amount above your regular giving or if you are a new giver here at Mariners’ since we started the challenge and you want to be a part it, we would encourage you to make a pledge through the use of these cards.
- If you have made a pledge and the Lord has blessed you and led you to increase that pledge, you can fill that out on the card and put your increased pledge in the Beyond the Gap Church.

HOW WILL THE BEYOND THE GAP FUNDS BE USED TO ADVANCE GOD’S KINGDOM?

The additional \$250,000 that takes us ‘Beyond the Gap’ has been earmarked for evangelistic purposes. These funds will allow us to expand our efforts to reach Annapolis and the world for Jesus Christ. We are currently developing a comprehensive evangelism plan and we will keep you informed as that plan unfolds.