

November 28, 2011

Dear Church Family,

As we near the end of 2011, you probably won't be surprised that we as a church face a significant financial deficit. The truth is that most churches in America receive far more than one-twelfth of their giving receipts in the closing month of the year. In part that's because some people receive a major portion of their income at year's end. Other givers use that calendar landmark as a time to take an accounting of where they're at and accelerate their giving to reach their personal giving goals by the end of the year.

This year, however, I suspect there's also another dynamic at work. Frankly, many among us are worn down when it comes to money. As we head into a third year of worldwide economic turmoil, some of us are struggling. Maybe you've been downsized or you're trying to make do with one income where there used to be two. Maybe you're just starting out in your career, trying to gain traction in a time when good jobs are scarce. Or, maybe you are doing well, even surprised by how well.

Whatever our personal circumstances today, there's a very real danger in times like this that we all—those who have much and those who have relatively little—can become what some have called "fearful givers." We become people whose giving is overshadowed by worries about an uncertain future, unplanned expenses, and a volatile economy.

If that resonates with you, can I ask you today to invite God into your financial decision-making at a whole new level—asking Him to help you become the cheerful giver He's called you to be? He knows your circumstance, down the smallest detail. And if worry is your problem, you can rest assured that He understands that too. Just a quick read of Jesus' powerful Sermon on the Mount speaks God's truth right to the heart of our most basic worries—and promises that He is ready and able to care for our every need.

Yes, we as a church have a significant shortfall looming, but far more important to me as your pastor is that you experience the deep joy of living a life of prayerful obedience, including obedience in giving. May God transform us from *fearful givers* to *cheerful givers*, regardless of our circumstances, as we hear and respond to Him!

In the light of His faithfulness,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rob Bugh".

Rob Bugh  
Senior Pastor

