

## FROM THE DESK OF BISHOP PHILLIP O. THOMAS

January 15, 2006

Dear Members and Friends:

Once again our church has entered a time of wonderful potential change and challenge—*Our vision is to retire our \$1.5 million mortgage in five years.* Part of this challenge has been to embrace the most ambitious stewardship effort that this ministry has ever known, and we need your help to ensure its success. Our theme for this five-year campaign is: *“CD-ROM: Christ Deliverers, Retire Our Mortgage.”*

The success of our campaign is directly related to the number of active members and friends who get involved. In a congregation our size, it is crucial for everyone to take part in the process from the very beginning. Some of you will be able to provide financial support with no problem and others will realize more of a challenge. However, the bottom line is we all must participate because it says in Deuteronomy 16:16-17: that “*no man* should appear before the Lord empty-handed,” and, “*every man* shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee.”

While I was preparing the initial briefing to the congregation, the Lord had to remind me that He has history with this ministry when it comes to changes and challenges. He first reminded me that our congregation is endowed with many God-given gifts and that He has blessed us these many years in such an awesome way that we have never known lack.

In the early 1980's when we needed an insurmountable sum of money to expand the building in Arlington, you never staggered at the awesomeness of the task. You presented your gifts to the ministry, as well as volunteering your precious time to build a church for which we were all proud and that still stands for others to enjoy. As a result of your acts of faith, we never had to acquire a building loan. And years later, because of the renovation to the property, we were able to sell it for a substantial amount.

And when we were faced with yet, another major challenge in the mid 1990's, in one year about forty members gave tithes and offerings totaling well over \$100,000! That was utter dependence upon God!

Throughout this five-year campaign we will create ways to keep you motivated and informed. We will plan services and special events, post information, speak words of encouragement and utter prayers to keep you focused and on track.

Remember, working as a team (**T**ogether, **E**veryone, **A**chieves **M**ore), we can achieve together what none of us can achieve alone. Our goal is attainable, it is the Vision and it can and will be done in five years! With prayer, faith, vision and courage, we can do it!

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