



December 14, 2018

Dear Members of The House of Hope Church,

I greet you in the matchless name of our Risen Savior, Jesus Christ. During this season of Advent, as we engage in intentional prayer and meditation preparing our hearts and spirits to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, God has impressed upon me to communicate to the congregation a request for your thoughtful and prayerful consideration.

If you're like me, over the last few weeks your email inbox has been inundated with various request from all types of corporations, businesses, social services programs, non-profit foundations, civic institutions, and colleges and universities. Each of these organizations are asking explicitly and directly that you, as the recipient, consider making a financial contribution to their efforts. Those efforts might entail feeding the homeless in underprivileged areas, helping to build water wells in Africa, or helping your alma mater provide more scholarships to students in need. These organizations are quick to remind you that if you make a financial contribution before year-end, then you will receive a corresponding tax deduction for this calendar year. Most of these institutions mean well, have applaudable intentions, and will do very good work in society and the world at large with the financial contributions they receive. ***Very few of them, however, need as much financial assistance as your church needs right now. And let me explain why...***

God has summoned our church on a journey – a journey towards renewal, reinvention, and revitalization. Since 2017, our community of faith has *stepped* out on faith and begun this process of journeying towards the greater heights to which the Holy Spirit is calling us. Like the Israelites who journeyed through the wilderness, we too are trusting in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and God's provision and power to carry us to the Promised Land. The wilderness experience itself is challenging, fraught with danger, demons, distractions and disease. It sometimes looks easier to turn back, wishing for the comfort of old, the convenience of certainty. But to go where God wants us to go – and where God wants *you* to go – fears must be overcome by both faith and action. We must trust God, and we must do our part to help bring God's vision to manifestation.

This leads me to encourage you and your family to consider making a special Year-End gift to the House of Hope Church in honor of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. This Year-End gift will go towards two initiatives: 1) Helping our church replenish \$5,000 in our savings account and 2) Providing resources to go towards purchasing additional church signage and media equipment. **This Year-End giving starts 12/14 and lasts through Sunday, January 6th, 2019.** Know that God will receive all the glory from your contributions, and I am hoping that you prayerfully consider making an impact on the financial health of our church by sowing this seed, over and beyond your regular tithes and giving.

We have two options for you to give: you can give via our website at houseofhopeie.org and clicking "give," and of course you can give during our worship services.

Collectively, on one accord, our church can continue its journey of renewal, reinvention and revitalization if we each pitch in and do our part. I have not a shadow of doubt that God has called The House of Hope Church to be a place where we aggressively and unashamedly pursue our church's mission of "Building God's Kingdom by spreading hope, together." However, the operative word in our mission statement is "together," which describes a sense of community, of singular purpose. Our mission can only be fulfilled when we work together, serve together, love together and give together. In other words, when we are the Body of Christ.

Give today, and watch God do something incredible for you, your entire family, and your church!

Excited For The Future,

Pastor Steven D. Johnson II

P.S. "Give and it will be given unto you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back" Luke 6:38

" S p r e a d i n g H o p e . T o g e t h e r . "