



"In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life."

1 Timothy 6:19



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The Future is Now ... or is it? by Ron Steinke

When the Michigan District decided to embark upon *The Future is Now* in celebration of its 125th anniversary, who would have thought that a couple of years later the economy would be struggling with unemployment percentages exceeding 15% in Michigan. Now coupled with *Fan into Flame*, one wonders if this is really a good time to be raising money. Unequivocally I say, "yes!"

Consider the year 1901. Population of the United States was reported to be 77.5 million people, 2.4 million of which resided in the State of Michigan. The average worker earned \$0.25 an hour. A sack of flour, a pound of round steak, or a gallon of milk averaged \$0.14, representing a half-hour earnings. Prices today for such items represent a much lesser percentage of the average hourly wage. In 1901, the average life expectancy was age 49. With such life expectancy, I suspect the people of that day must have possessed a greater urgency for getting things done!

In 1901, a group of clergy and laymen gathered in Frankenmuth and decided to establish a fund whereby church buildings could be constructed. The idea of pooling their resources together and to lend that money, for the sake of mission, gave birth to the Church Extension Fund in the Michi-

gan District. Now, 108 years later that mission has not changed.

That is why the CEF is a proponent of *The Future is Now*. We see the need to start and expand mission congregations, and to train professional church workers. Our Lord Jesus Christ gave us the command in the Great Commission, but did not qualify it by allowing us to decide whether the timing was right or not! God has placed us in these times, in an economy such as it is, to help spread the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. And, He has promised us the resources to do so.

The Future is Now. Let's turn it around and consider if *Now* is the *future*? It is not about us, it is about the present unchurched and the generations to come. Now is the time!

*Ron Steinke, President
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Resource Tip ...

HAVE QUESTIONS or need to meet to discuss participation?

Would you like to have a presentation at your church?

Call Ray or Andrea at 888.225.2111 or contact your Circuit Coordinator. (A listing of Circuit Coordinators can be found at www.michigandistrict.org/g3a3.html.)

Progress to Date ...

District \$3,965,000

Congregation Highlights

We thank the following congregations who have recently submitted commitments and/or gifts to the campaign: Peace, Ann Arbor; Calvary, Carson City; Good Shepherd, Cass City; Peace, Flint; Family of Christ, Grand Rapids; St. Peter, Hemlock; Zion, Hemlock; Messiah, Holt; St. John's, Ludington; St. James, Montague; Our Redeemer, Muskegon; Trinity, Newberry; St. Paul, Pigeon; St. Peter, St. Johns; Christ, Stevensville; St. Michael's & All Angels, Traverse City; and Our Redeemer, Washington.