
HOPE IN THE FACE OF THE NEW REALITY

The recent failures in the financial markets cannot be ignored. The churches, institutions, and individuals we serve have been shaken. We are all concerned about the market drop and what might happen next, but we must remember who we are and continue to have the courage to “Be the Church”. While The Holston Conference Foundation is not exempt from the turmoil in the marketplace, the need for our “getting and giving” educational services and financial ministry has never been more important. The following points will help us move forward in the face of this new reality:

RESET PRIORITIES

As existing resources have evaporated, the Foundation and all ministries must be more frugal and creative about managing what we have. We must examine every expense and find ways to trim unproductive spending. At the same time, we cannot ignore the GOOD NEWS that people’s giving makes ministry happen and we must be bold enough to ask.

KEEP INVESTING IN THE CORE

We must remember our mission and keep investing in our core values and the things we do best. We bring special skills and services to people, churches, and other ministries. There cannot be a future harvest if we do not continue to prepare the soil and plant the seeds.

COMMUNICATE LIKE CRAZY

In recessions all constituencies weary from the dreary news. We do not have to have all the answers, but we need to be sensitive and honest about conditions while keeping hope alive. Optimism is contagious and the fruit of generosity is joy! We must continue to visit churches and living rooms to share ideas about the ways, means, and opportunities to make a lasting difference.

NEW PROBLEMS AND NEW SOLUTIONS

Our churches, people, and ministries are faced with new problems, so we must be prepared to provide new solutions. We must provide “valued services” with the best possible customer service we can muster. We must be a resource for information and tools to help them make the most of what they have and help them find and examine ways to get more. All churches and ministries need to have and use good stewardship practices.

HOPE AROUND THE CORNER

All recessions end and this one is no different. Going back to 1926, the S&P 500 posted 24 years of negative returns and 59 years of positive returns. During that same timeframe, the average Bull (up) Market lasts 32 months, while the average Bear (down) Market lasts only 11 months. We are now about 17 months into this downturn. While we have no ability to predict the future, this historical perspective reinforces a reason to believe better days are ahead. Though it is hard to be upbeat about a recession, it does present us and the entire church an opportunity to serve and lead. Doing the right things well in hard times takes courage and skill. Our future and the ministries we serve depend on how we manage and what we do right now!

SET THE EXAMPLE...OPEN THE DOOR

More than ever we need bold leadership from our clergy and laity to set the tone and the example for others to follow. Invite us into your church to help educate others about giving and leaving a legacy. Get your own affairs in order and consider your own opportunities to make a lasting difference. Explore the materials and tools we offer to assist committees and churches with endowment creation or policies on spending and investing special purpose funds. We are at your service, but we need you to remain faithful and help open the door!

– Roger Redding, Executive Director

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