

Annual Congregational Meeting
St. Mary's Episcopal Church
January 29, 2017
Report on Stewardship
Given by: Tracey Ragsdale

You through the discernment process told us your desire to build a healthy future for St. Mary's on a foundation of a rich past. You charged the Stewardship Committee to better communicate with all parishioners and to educate them more about finances and the operations of the church. We created a vision for the Stewardship process that celebrates our abundance of time, talent and treasure while engaging parishioners through clear communications and expectations. For the first time, a Narrative Budget was created and distributed that detailed how our money is spent and our hopes for the future. Each of you received this in the mail but there are copies in the back if you have misplaced it or would like to review it again. We charged every parishioner to pledge offering the first fruits of our labor and income rather than offering what is left over at the end of the year. We prayerfully asked that every parishioner increase the percentage of their support and that all new members also make a pledge. We shared that based on our experience that we estimate our expenses will increase by about \$100,00 or 10%. And to fulfill the wants and needs of the ministries in which you expressed interest through the discernment process will require an additional \$50,000.

I'm pleased to tell you that over 25 new families have stepped up and they've pledged nearly \$35,000. We have received a total of 289 pledges totaling \$828,307 which is an increase of 8.5% of last year's givers. Thank you of where we are so far.

We stand before you today with a goal of \$1,100,000, a short fall of almost \$300,000 against the pledges already received. Yes, as David Rose explained there will be amounts coming from earned income from already existing accounts, but there are still 88 families that pledged last year and the year before that haven't made their pledge so far this year. In addition to that, there are 100 families who have never made a pledge to support St. Mary's. We will in good faith work towards meeting this goal and supporting not only this beautiful campus but the work we do with our children, our teens, our families, and our community.

Bob Hetherington in description of stewardship wrote, "the church is an equipping place. It is a place where we can stay close to Jesus. It is also a place where we can practice building community. It is a place where we can get the inspiration and guidance we need to get on with our lives in the best way. The Church exists to help us become the best people we can be out there and work in the world. At our spiritual best, we are generous and compassionate people. We are good stewards of the gifts and the talents God has given us. Support this ministry with your time, your talent, and money because it will help you fulfill the vocation which God calls each of us to live out."

Thank you.