

ST JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

JULY 16, 2017 - PRESENTATION

Stewart Clayton and I, Bruce Weir, were asked by the vestry to present an update on our financial status; might say we are the sacrificial lambs. Not exactly the case. We volunteered, because we feel passionate and driven to help St. John's resolve this financial shortage. Before getting into our presentation, I thought this may be an appropriate way to start.

The Gospel reading at our July 2nd service just seemed to be a great way to start this conversation: In Matthew 10:40 Jesus said to the twelve: Whoever welcomes you welcomes me. (I'm not claiming to be Jesus; however, we have a message you all need to hear)

Please listen to this presentation with an open mind. The Vestry has been struggling with our financial giving shortage for a long time (expenses are greater than income, something needs to be done). We are all looking and praying for a miracle solution, but there is none, we the congregation are the only solution.

I would like you to think about what you hear, not as a problem but an opportunity for every one of us to become a part of the solution. A team that gives all he or she can for a common cause. Like any team effort some can do more, but to succeed it take all members of us.

Our deficit for the last few years and through June 2017 is \$18,000 and if some action is not taken, we anticipate it will continue to grow through the end of 2017.

Stewart Clayton will present the plan our Vestry has come up with to eliminate this deficit and prevent future deficits.

Our vestry is looking to eliminate the \$18,000 deficit by the end of this year.

We are also asking each member to increase their giving by 20% so St. John's can continue now and into the future without a deficit.

If we exceed our goals and you have not given, please continue to give so in the future we can support the ministries that have been reduced.

We will keep everyone informed throughout the next few months with our success in eliminating the deficit and reaching your 20% increased giving, in the Weekly Bulletin and Joy Journal, by displaying the Survival Boat poster, a face to face presentation once a month.

We will not give up, work hard and do everything in our (the Vestry's) power, with prayer and your help to see this process succeed.

What the Vestry is bringing to your attention, cannot be solved without everyone working together for the common goal of meeting our financial obligations. We are all in this together. I love St. John's as you do and we need to do whatever we can to make sure St. John's will be here now and in the future.

Winning the lottery would be nice, but that's not likely to happen. We are the only answer!

This is not a budget issue (our budget is skinny to the bone no meat to cut). We have a giving issue and I know in my heart that we will do whatever we can to assure we meet our financial obligations.

I believe giving comes from the heart. The amount will be different for each of us, but whatever we give we will all be richly blessed.

I can assure you, you're giving at St. John's is not being spent frivolously. You have seen the deficit. The bills **must** be paid and there is not enough giving to cover the bills. I'm sure you will do whatever is possible depending on your own financial situation.

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As a part of the Vestry, all the Vestry members and Fr. Cecil have given our financial crisis hours of prayer and soul searching, reviewing expenses. Spending is not the problem. Our income does not cover the necessary expenses. You may think oh, I'm sure there are extras in the budget to cut and the problem would go away. This is not the case, it won't go away!

We all know this is a major challenge, but we must do whatever is possible to solve our financial crisis. There are few options if any. We've got to pay the bills.

I appreciate you giving the Vestry this opportunity of candidly speaking to you about this financial opportunity.

What we have talked about this morning is a big deal. It is not to scare everyone into believing today is dooms day. It is to make you aware of this opportunity to solve the giving shortage. Everyone needs to be part of the solution team. Don't sit on the sideline and think we don't need your help--that would be a problem. In the past, someone else always fixed the problem, not the case this time. We need everyone's help. The Vestry is confident and committed that with your help we will succeed.

You now know the situation. I sincerely wished that we had better news, but unfortunately this is our financial reality. Please give whatever you can afford to eliminate the deficit so we can continue operating without a deficit.

We can't tell you what you can give, only what the deficit is. Your giving is personal and comes from the heart. You know what you can afford to give. Whatever the amount, we thank you in advance for your love of St. John's and generosity. God will bless you and you will feel good for being a part of the solution team.

With your help, we will be able to continue our mission at St. John's as a caring church. It won't be easy, nothing worthwhile is.

I would like to close with this Prayerful Commitment:

God please let me part of the solution and not the problem.

Show me what I need to see. Open my eyes to Your reality.

And give me the courage to move forward in the direction you desire.

I read this prayer from a book Stewart gave me. Great, isn't it? But one last thing!

I have taken the opportunity to use the same prayer, but changed the wording to be more consistent with our financial need. Listen:

God please let me absorb what I heard today, to help financially support St. John's to the best of my ability.

Yes, God I will help to secure the future of St. John's.

Guide me in making this important decision.

Open my eyes to Your reality for St. John's future, so St. John's will overcome this financial bump in this rocky road with the help and commitment from the whole congregation.

Thank you for listening.