

THE WARDENS' REPORT TO THE 2012 ANNUAL MEETING THE 2011 TEMPORAL CONDITION OF THE PARISH

Each year, the Wardens are required by our Parish Constitution to present to the Annual Meeting “a statement of the temporal condition of the Parish”. Most of us probably relate the word “temporal” to a period of time or the passage of time and, if we ever associate the word “temporal” with our church, we think about the life in this world, rather than spiritual life. So, the Wardens have historically summarized the day-to-day operations at St. Gregory’s over the previous year and reviewed matters such as the church buildings, activities and ministries, and, often, some monetary realities.

If we peel back just one more layer in the definition of “temporal”, we find that there is actually a definition specific to Christianity. Within Christianity, the word “temporal” means “relating to the laity”. That is, relating to all the non-clergy, or all of the parishioners, at St. Gregory’s.

Let’s rephrase: what shall the Wardens say about the condition, the health, of the laity here at St. Gregory’s? How was the year 2011 at St. Gregory for all the parishioners? Lacking a specific answer to that question for each of you, we can at the least ask the members of our Vestry, those twelve other men and women who represent – it is hoped – a cross-section of this parish and with whom we meet monthly to make decisions affecting our shared life at St. Gregory’s. And so, at our January meeting, we asked the Vestry members to share their thoughts about the past year, in terms of some successes and challenges that have characterized this period of time in laity life as they have experienced it. To the extent that this group represents all parishioners – our laity – we can get some picture of our temporal condition from their opinions.

The first comment that was made by a member of the Vestry was that **our parish responded well to unexpected events in 2011**. Most specifically, the transition to a new Youth Minister went very well. It was smooth, with no real loss in programming, and with no apparent stress to the young people in the youth programs. We owe this success to the work of our Youth Commission, to Erica Jeglum, to the Vestry support and to the personality and work ethic of Bret Chandler, our most fortunate selection as our new Youth Minister. We applaud them all and report that the condition of the laity in that area of our shared church life is very healthy!

Another remark from our Vestry meeting was that week-in, week-out we hold Sunday and Wednesday morning services, conduct Children’s Church and Christian Ed classes, open our facility to many community groups, fix the leaks, offer Bible Study and Centering Prayer groups, pack care packages for our country’s troops, fix the leaks, operate a preschool, make and serve meals in Waukegan, fix the leaks, repair the sinks, care for the sick, publish the newsletter, print the bulletins, pay the bills, fix the leaks the point being that this church functions through the on-going efforts of the clergy and laity that love it. That love – to a HUGE extent – was expressed in 2011 through volunteer gifts of time and talent bestowed in exponential amounts upon this parish by you, the laity. Vestry members along with other parishioners have responded to ministry and service calls with a positive attitude. We applaud all of you and are pleased to report that **our shared love for St. Gregory’s was very evident in 2011!**

Another success of 2011 noted at our January meeting was **the management of our financial resources and the efforts to-date to document financial procedures** at St. Gregory’s. Your Vestry is pleased to report that we are making many positive steps forward in this regard. Documentation will be on-going, but thanks to the work of our Governance committee – notably David Schaper – we are well underway in producing a reference manual of procedures for our activities at the church. This effort was viewed as a “must-do” task at the onset of 2011, and much has been accomplished.

As to the day-to-day management of our financial resources, the Vestry also reports successes in 2011. We are confident that the financial updates received monthly from the Finance Committee and from the Treasurer are carefully produced and reflected upon. We know that everyone working in the church (whether staff or volunteer) with responsibility for specific budget lines takes seriously the task of working within those budgets. And we appreciate the countless hours from those volunteer parishioners who record our contributions, make bank deposits, reconcile accounts, pay your parish’s bills and interface with the Diocese on behalf of St. Gregory’s. We recognize that these are NOT small efforts, they are BIG works of stewardship, and we are grateful for them.

We are also grateful for the strong financial support from so many of you in what continues to be challenging times. Your **consistent and faithful giving** has enabled us to overcome economic hurdles which might have tripped us otherwise.

Because of the successes in documenting and reporting about our resources and because of the generous giving within the parish, the Vestry has had the information it needs to make financial decisions. We have done our best to do this in the interest of the whole parish. This has not always been easy, but we can report that our **parish' financial health did not weaken in 2011**. Like all of our individual homes, the church home will have its financial ups and downs, with your Vestry working to minimize the downs!

Another highlight of the 2011 Vestry year is the **repayment of the loan taken out for necessary repairs at the Marian House**. Many of you responded to the appeal at our last Annual Meeting to donate in order to pay down this debt, and we had been chipping away at it throughout the year and had made significant progress, thanks to your extra pledges. The original plan was to continue to use your extra contributions over the next couple of years to repay this loan before the due date. As 2011 neared its close, we had about \$42,000 left to repay. We are pleased to share with you today that the entire loan was paid off very early this year. And HOW – you may well ask – were we able to do this?

It was May of 2011 before the budget for that year was finalized. On recommendations from the Finance Committee, this final budget anticipated our yearly Income to be \$ 442,000 and our yearly Expenses to be \$ 446,000, with our goal, as always, to balance this budget by year-end. As you may remember, this balanced 2011 budget was achieved because we approved a Tithe of 1% instead of 10% and a pledge to the Diocese of 8% instead of 10% in 2011. Once those two Expenses were reduced, our expected Income could match our expected Expenses.

The Treasurer's report at the end of 2011 showed that our Actual Income for the year was \$ 461,000 and our Actual Expenses were \$ 411,000, a positive difference of almost \$50,000. This positive variance resulted primarily from two things: First, a difference in Actual expenses as the result of the transition to a new Youth Minister, and secondly, under-spending in the BGMT budget. The 2011 BGMT budget had been planned to include some portion of the anticipated expense of a new rectory roof, which was a real likelihood that, fortunately, did not materialize in 2011. Additionally, BGMT was very careful to utilize donations and to minimize expenditures throughout the entire year.

So, the difference between the anticipated/ budgeted outlay and what turned out to be the actual/ real outlay in Youth Ministry and BGMT left us with a positive balance. In her report, the Treasurer will share with you exactly what was done with the entire balance in addition to paying off the Marian House loan.

Ending the year on such a positive financial note, we were **able to return our Parish Tithe and the Diocesan Pledge to the 10% level in our proposed 2012 budget**. This is good news. However, in order to have a balanced budget, we have not included any paid help in the office for this year, we have not considered compensation increases and we have made some small cuts in other areas. This is somewhat disconcerting and yet – as we all know – it is the way budgets work. We pray that all of you will commit to a level of giving you are not just comfortable with but which stretches you just a bit during 2012. When we understand parish giving, we can create a better budget. And in that sense, the cards are in your hands, the hands of our laity. You will shape the next report on our temporal condition.

May God continue to bless each of us and to bless St. Gregory's throughout 2012.

Respectfully submitted,

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