

This update is part of a continuous effort by the Vestry to keep the congregation apprised of activities and developments affecting Bethesda.

Financial Audit and the Pledge Campaign to Sustain Bethesda in 2012

In order to effectuate a smooth transition to an interim rector and eventually to a new rector, the Vestry retained the services of Eileen O. Wiebicke, a Certified Public Accountant, to conduct an audit of Bethesda's finances for 2010. As part of the audit, Ms. Wiebicke has not only reviewed numerous documents, but she has met with the Vestry, the Wardens, Father Parke, and members of the staff, particularly Katrina Keech. Our gratitude is extended to all who assisted Ms. Wiebicke in her important task. We anxiously await the final audit report, which will be made available to the congregation. Not wanting to wait for the final report, however, the Vestry has reviewed a draft audit report and has met with Ms. Wiebicke to discuss her preliminary findings. As one might expect, the financial crisis that has had a dramatic impact our nation and the world, has not left Bethesda unscathed. In fact, we were left with a large deficit in 2010, a result of troubling trend: increasing expenses and decreasing revenue. The recession hurt us as individuals and as families, and our church is similarly feeling financial pain. We are, however, on a path towards recovery.

The Vestry is striving to cut costs and is implementing procedures to better track church funds. We have, for example, recently purchased computer software which will be used by the Vestry for budgeting and financial planning. Furthermore, the Vestry will be able to provide the congregation with periodic detailed financial reports. The first such report we are planning on issuing in the near future. While these changes will make a difference, the financial health of our church depends upon the congregation's monetary contributions. In the coming weeks, the Vestry will be speaking more about how you, through your pledge, can help sustain Bethesda in 2012. In the mean time, please consider this prayer as inspiration for soul searching regarding what Bethesda means to you and how you can help.

Lord, we pray thee, O God, for thy blessing upon the forward movement of thy Church. Use it, we beseech thee, to open our eyes to the needs of all for the Gospel of Christ, and to the opportunities that lie before the Church to extend his Kingdom. Stir up, O Lord, the wills of all thy people to share in this work with gladness of heart and self-sacrificing spirit. Let not our purpose slack, but let the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of our God and of his Christ.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast taught us always to pray and not to faint, we lift up to thy mercy the needs of thy Church. Amen

Volunteers Needed for the Buildings and Grounds Committee

As fall is here and winter is approaching, the Building and Grounds Committee is in need of volunteers. In the past we have been blessed with Father Parke handling much of the routine maintenance. However, volunteers are now needed to help maintain our facilities. Members of the Buildings and Grounds Committee will, among other responsibilities, conduct assessments of church property; inventory religious relics, furniture and equipment; and perform routine maintenance such as snow shoveling and plowing. Your help can keep Bethesda beautiful and keep our costs down. Those interested in contributing time and resources, please contact Vestry member Tom Remington at 583-4589 or tommod54@gmail.com.

Annual Meeting: December 4th

Bethesda's Annual Meeting will be on Sunday, December 4, following the 10 a.m. service. The meeting will include reports on the church's activities over the last year and its finances. The election of Vestry members also occurs at the services prior to the Annual Meeting. Two current Vestry members whose terms have expired and who may be re-elected are John Van der Veer and Mary Withington. Others who would like to be considered for the Vestry should call Sr. Warden Doug Huston (584-0404) or Jr. Warden Mark Claverie (584-1921).

In Closing ...

The Vestry greatly appreciates your continued support, and we ask that you keep Father Parke in your prayers. Please feel free to speak with any of the Vestry members or email us at Vestry@Bethesdachurch.org. Together, as a community in Christ, we will meet all of our challenges.