
ST. MICHAELS CHURCH BOARD NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Chairman's Corner:

The Tripod of Support

By Christopher Meyer

Three Legs - Money, Communication, Participation

There are three reasons why a church suffers stagnation and then decline: lack of money, lack of communication, and lack of participation. Money, communication, and participation form a tripod, a solid stand, for any organization to stoutly stand on and grow.

The First Leg - Money

In this issue, you'll hear about the first leg of the tripod - money - and seen fees increase as well as been asked for more donations. Money's great; utility companies and service companies prefer money rather than IOU's and farm animals. But money only pays for basic services and allows the church the opportunity to grow ... it takes people to do the rest and provide the support for the other two legs.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS -

COMING SOON

Church Finances

By Christopher Meyer

The Annual Report and Audit

As mentioned in the All Members Meeting in June, the Board is committed to disclosing how much money is coming in, where it is coming from, how much money is going out, and what it is being spent on.

The annual finance report is due September 15, 2009, and within a few weeks of that date, a subset of the Board will audit the finances. The results of the annual report and the audit will be available in the next newsletter.



2010 Fiscal Budget

In addition, we are obligated to provide a projected budget for 2010. This budget is due in the same time period as the audit and a high level view will be offered in this newsletter.

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The Second Leg - Communication

Communication is a problem at St. Michaels. There are factions within St. Michaels ranging from knowing everything to knowing 'everything' and disseminating false information. The majority doesn't really know what's going on but wants to know. Sure, you'll open your checkbook and donate more money, but where is that money going? Are the people involved in spending that money and securing services doing the best they can to get the best prices and cut where it makes sense to cut?

One unfortunate example of poor communication is the rumor that the Board and Father Pater are taking a cut of the money generated by the new fees. This is wholly untrue, unfounded, and undermines the spiritual community of St. Michaels. No member of the Board gets paid or any special privileges beyond those needed to ensure proper function of the church – like access to the financial records to ensure accountability. Father Pater's fees have not gone up; they remain the same. The new fees bring us closer to being able to meet our basic need of \$1500 / week (see article in this newsletter).

This newsletter should provide timely, accurate information. Yes, stamps, paper, and envelopes to send this will cost more money, but we hope you, the members of the church, being better informed, will step up and help pay the extra costs to get more information to build the community.

At a minimum, a newsletter will be generated quarterly, and one should be generated within a couple weeks of a Board meeting. It will also be posted in the vestibule of the church

The Third Leg – Participation

A church is not just a building, a priest, and a handful of people on a Board ... a church is the people it serves, and the people serve it as well. A church needs the members to actively participate. This means joining the choir, doing the readings, ushering for communion, collecting weekly offerings, working the Sunday coffee hour, and so on.

You see the same people working these events, and they rarely complain, providing the service as an obligation. And service in a church is an obligation not for a few but for all members.

In order to build a stronger community and grow, we'd like to see more people participation in the church. Claudia Meyer put together sign-up sheets (see article in this newsletter) in the vestibule of the church where you can sign

up to volunteer. We encourage you to look at your schedule and pick a day and time to serve the church. Don't worry if you don't know "how" to do it ... those that have done the service for years will guide you.

The Tripod – Support for Growth

With money, communication, and participation, St. Michaels Church can turn the corner of decline and stagnation and begin to solidify its membership and purpose. The church has been a member of the Aurora community for 100+ years, and closing the doors due to a lack of any of the three legs would be a huge loss to the history of Romanians and the city they helped build.

Please come to St. Michaels Church prepared to give your money ... your voice in communicating the positive and offering constructive comments ... and your time by volunteering to serve the community. ❖

The Cost of Running the Church

By Christopher Meyer

In the All Members Meeting in June, we mentioned how much it costs to run the church:

- The church needs ~\$72,000 annually
 - That's ~\$12 per week per family
- The church currently receives ~\$39,000 annually
 - That's ~\$6 per week per family

We need to double our income just to meet the basic needs of the church

We are taking three approaches to bridge the deficit gap:

1. We encourage you to make weekly donations at no less than \$12 / week. If you can't show up every week, please make up the missed donation
2. Church service fees have increased. These are minimum values, please consider adding a donation
3. We are creating "special collections" to cover unexpected costs such as storm damage or overdue maintenance ... this prevents us borrowing from the funds we use to cover the basic needs

Please ask us questions or offer suggestions on increasing revenue. ❖

Volunteer Opportunities

By *Claudia Meyer*

There are two new calendars in the church vestibule: the Usher Calendar, and the Coffee Hour Calendar.

The Usher Calendar

Gus, John, Frank, and Attila usher every Sunday morning. Judy and John usher every Saturday afternoon.

Chris fondly remembers walking up the aisle at St. Augustine's Catholic church in Gainesville, FL to deliver the wine, the communion hosts, and the weekly collection to the altar. Every week, this service was provided by a different family ... what a great way to build community and participate in the church.

How about volunteering to usher?

The Coffee Hour Calendar

Viola and Bernice work Coffee Hour every Sunday morning. Did you know: these goods are donated and do not come out of the church budget? Viola has donated the coffee and the goodies for years?

How about signing up for a Sunday and pick up treats for your church community?

Other Opportunities

The church is in need of basic maintenance. Last year, Chris and I donated new window air conditioning units; Attila, Mihai, and Chris installed them. Attila maintains the electrical to keep the church up to code. Nehu repairs the roof, repaints the porch, and does other "basic" repairs.

How about offering a few hours of service every other

Closing Thoughts

By *Christopher Meyer*

The first board newsletter is done. The emphasis was necessarily more on money than anything else. St. Michaels church is losing money every month; as long as this situation exists, every month that passes brings St. Michaels closer to closing its doors. It's unfortunate that this reality exists for us as Board and church members ... no one wants to own a situation where you have to dig out of a hole!

month to clean the church, wax the floors, mow the lawn, pull weeds, or clean the kitchen? Teach our youth about your faith, read a Bible story, or sing them a spiritual song?

Every volunteer hour saves the church money by not hiring an outside service, and every volunteer hour is tax deductible.

Please consider finding the time to offer your talent and service to St. Michaels Church. ❖

Youth Sunday School – Begins September 13

By *Anaal Tokars*

Youth Sunday School will resume on Sunday, September 13th. We want to welcome all children who will be in Kindergarten this year to Sunday School.

We will use the *white house* each Sunday this fall.

It is also important for the children to be exposed to and experience Mass. In order that they get the most out of Mass, we ask that children are given parental guidance about the meaning of reverence for the mystery that we experience during Mass. We know that this is difficult for children to understand, so we will reiterate this at Sunday School as well.

A schedule of teachers and topics will be available shortly.

We look forward to teaching your precious children again this fall.

Peace. ❖

I am encouraged the Board is getting more active. I am encouraged general church members came to us and pushed us to have a general meeting to bring up the financial situation. This tells me that the members of St. Michaels Church are not about to let the doors close.

We will probably lose a few members as we make changes; I hope not, as all the changes are meant for the positive future of St. Michaels. If we do lose a few folks, I hope they come back, and come back more engaged and ready to serve.

God Bless. ❖

Contact Information

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Etc ...