

The Report of the Board of Finance

The Finance Board faced many difficult challenges in preparing and presenting this balanced budget to the Congregation, resulting unfortunately in drastic cuts in programs and to basic support. Based on realistic income figures from the pledging of the Congregation and anticipated fixed expenses, the board in good conscience, reluctantly had no choice but to deeply cut many essential program budgets.

The budget was based on many discussions and agonizing decisions the Board spent days on including:

- Unfortunately in 2005 the church found itself having to spend more than was pledged, and the Board does not want to repeat last year's mandate to put a hold on all non-essential expenses in November for the remainder of 2005 due to lack of funds.
- The deficit left by this year's spending was due to increases in insurance, utilities and building and grounds costs. Thus, we were not able to fulfill our commitment to the wider ministry of the sabbatical year.
- Our wonderful and dedicated staff, Scott, Lucia, Kevin and Carol spend many hours performing work and serving the Congregation, and like all of us face rising living expenses. We have only offered them a raise of just 2% since no increase would have resulted in only a savings of approximately \$2,500, including benefits.
- Circumstances and programs can change, but without an increase in pledging units, the Board would be open to special appeals for various programs and Basic Support. We pray **all** members and supports of the church will consider pledging and if able to, increase their pledge for 2006.

The Board has tried to emphasize how valuable each person's time given to church work is in addition to financial needs. On Stewardship Sunday, an insert written by Betsey Reid asked, "Did you listen in prayer to the Church's request for more of a commitment from you as it tries to meet your spiritual needs?"

I wish to acknowledge and thank members of the Finance Board (Karen Beauvais, Philip DiPeri, Phil James, John Oestreicher and Betsey Reid) for their many gifts of time, hard work and commitment this past year not only on the Finance Board but their involvement in other church activities as well.

Special thanks also goes to Jody Gallagher for keeping the pledge reports up to date, and to Treasurer John Tibor, who has spent many hours at the Church paying bills, preparing reports, attending meetings, and ensuring that the books were balanced.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Bennett
Board of Finance Chair