

JUST THINK ABOUT IT

WHAT DO YOU PAY FOR CABLE TV?

We think little of paying \$40.00, \$60.00, or much more each month for our entertainment. So, ask yourself this question:

“What would it amount to if I gave that same sum over and above my regular giving to the church for the next three years?

HERE’S THE ANSWER

- \$40 x 36 months = \$1,440 or about \$9 a week or \$1.31 a day
- \$60 x 36 months = \$2,160 or about \$14 a week or \$1.97 a day
- \$100 x 36 = \$3,600 or about \$23 a week or \$3.28 a day

God’s good gift of healthy entertainment can be inexpensive and uplifting. The gospel of His grace to us in Christ Jesus is priceless and free!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

SPIRITUAL LIFE PRAYER VIGIL, JANUARY 12

Beginning at 3 PM., Saturday, January 12 and ending at 9 PM on the same day, we will be challenged to pray for our church, our ministries, our community and our world. Remember – this campaign is focused on people and not on bricks and mortar. God calls us to love people and to use things. The new Education Building will enhance our ability to do both.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH CELEBRATION, JANUARY 13

This worship service, designed and led by the youth on a giving/stewardship theme, will be a special blessing for all church members.

MINISTRY CELEBRATION, JANUARY 20

On Sunday, January 20, you will be invited to participate in our Ministry Celebration. The Celebration will give each of us an opportunity to discover the vastness of our mission and ministries. Want to know why we need the new building? Come to the Celebration and the need will be made very clear.

Mark 16:15-16
 “He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.’”

St. Mark's Episcopal Church
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CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER 2

St. Mark's Episcopal Church



St. Mark's Episcopal Church

Dear <<name_salutation>>

It takes more than just buildings to make a church - It takes people who have fellowship with one another and, more importantly, with God. Through this fellowship we are launching out in faith with the "Growing in Grace" stewardship program, believing that our church is going to achieve a new experience in stewardship and spiritual growth.

One theme of this stewardship program, "Growing in Grace," is a great challenge to all of us. As we all give sacrificially, not only will our financial needs be met, but our spiritual growth will be blessed by seeking and doing God's will.

The commitments we make during this campaign will be very important to the future of our parish. Together, under God's leadership and direction, we will realize God's vision for our church.

Faithfully,

Jan Seaman



L. Seaman



Lisa Arnold Vincent Arnold

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Nearly every Sunday I see new faces at St. Mark's--some are the faces of infants, young children, and teens! I believe parents realize one of their most important responsibilities is to give their children an understanding of our Christian faith and traditions. We presently have a unique opportunity to make a solid commitment to our children by providing support for that understanding with a much-needed new facility.

Jeanne Reaves

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 - January 27 Commitment Sunday
 - February 10 First Fruits

ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Prayer

"Therefore, from the day we heard this we do not cease to praying...asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's in all spiritual wisdom and understanding..." Col 1:9

It may sound a bit simplistic, but have you ever asked yourself, "Why do we pray?" Have you ever wondered, "Why it is so important?"

The answer is simple, relationship.

Think about it for a moment. How difficult would it be to develop or even maintain relationships with our spouse, kids, friends, and peers, anybody — if we couldn't talk to them or communicate in some way? Be pretty tough, wouldn't it?

Well then, would it not be just as tough to develop and keep a relationship with Jesus Christ if we didn't or even couldn't talk to Him? Fortunately, as His children, that is not the case. We have prayer. In fact, Jesus, in His wisdom, even taught us how to pray.

"Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name..."

On the other hand we must recognize that the Lord's Prayer is only a beginning. We are never limited to only using the Lord's Prayer. We can and should speak to God throughout every day of our life — in the car, on a boat, at the office — anytime and anywhere.

For it is through prayer and only through prayer that we can discuss with

God those things that concern us, the things that challenge us most. What an interesting phenomenon, prayer. Have you ever entered into prayer with an issue that seemed hopeless, asked God to relieve your burden so that you could concentrate on family, friends or work? Then, when completed, felt this delightful release and a remarkable sense of peace that was not there before.

If you have not; try it. It works. If you have, you recognize the imperative to set those troublesome things aside or gain insight into how to make them work out better on a regular basis.

It is an amazing process, prayer.

Still even more amazing is what follows. You see, when we earnestly speak to God and He reveals new insight into our individual situations and then those little insights begin to work out for the better, we come to trust God more, depend on God more.

In the end, trusting God is what real Faith is all about. It sets us free. And, Faith found in this freedom is essential when we are asked to make the kind of decisions that are the most difficult to make, including decisions about the future of our church.

Pray for our parish. Ask God for that special little insight into how you can help.

After all that is part of **Growing In Grace**, too!

Gratitude

"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it." -- William Arthur Ward, Author

Most parents make a point of teaching their children the basics of courtesy. Yet, teaching fundamental courtesies is one thing, while understanding the deeper meaning of why we do them is another.

As children, one of the first expressions we learn that conveys a complete meaning is the words, "Thank You!"

"Ok, Tommy, what's the magic word?"

"Please!" Tommy says. Then, "Please, Mommy, may I have a cookie?"

When the mother gives Tommy the cookie, she continues the lesson by demanding that he respond once more.

"And, what do you say now, Tommy?"

"Thank you!"

We teach children this as a courtesy lesson, a way to be polite, but it should be more. It should be a lesson on how to express gratitude as an appreciated response for something received.

It seems simple enough. Turns out it is not. Instead, "Thanks" can quickly become a perfunctory, almost mechanical, response. The reason is society demands a response regardless of whether we actually feel grateful. We deliver it to satisfy that societal obligation. What's more, the benefit can be self-serving when it appears to reinforce the thought that, "If I say this, you might feel better, and I'll have fulfilled my obligation to acknowledge you, and maybe you'll give me something else sometime!"

"Thanks" offered in this manner is not gratitude, but a demand that asks, "What's in it for me?"

On the other hand, true "Thanks" comes from a grateful heart, only. The grateful heart may still deliver the word "thanks" from a societal obligation, but the grateful heart balances that obligation with a real desire to give something back in return; not as

an externally imposed obligation, but as a need that rises naturally within us as we acknowledge how we have been supported and cared for by others.

This is the true meaning of thankfulness.

Therefore, teaching children to express gratitude is one thing, while teaching them to be grateful is another. The first is an action of the hands and lips, and the second is an attitude of the heart. Perhaps that's why the Bible says "God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. 9:7)

Teaching an attitude of the heart can be done, but gratitude only first grows in people through example. A heart that rejoices in God's gifts will receive them with thanksgiving and seek to share them. Christian gratitude never hoards. It always seeks opportunities to give.

When Jesus was presented with five loaves and two fish, He first thanked God for them, and then gave them to His disciples to give to the crowd of over 5,000 that had surrounded Him. Everyone ate; no one went home hungry. Similarly, on the night of His betrayal, Jesus took bread and

wine, gave thanks for them, and then gave them to His disciples to eat and drink. The promise that He attached to this meal is that everyone who eats and drinks it believing in Him has everlasting life.

Such a gift moves Christians to genuine thanksgiving — revealed in the attitudes of converted hearts and in the actions of converted lips and hands. That is the example we must give to our children. It was "...for the joy that was set before Him..." that with fullness of heart,

Christ gave His hands to the cross. (Heb. 12:2) He rejoiced in His mission and lovingly gave Himself as a sacrifice to God on our behalf. Having received the benefits of Jesus' sacrifice as a gift from God, His disciples then and today want to imitate Him in giving themselves for the blessing of others.

Growing in Grace is about more than money. It is about setting an example for others. It is about cheerfully and gratefully giving to God by giving from a truly grateful heart to the future ministry that serves neighbors, strangers, and even enemies as an act of worship. It flows from the heart as a thankful return of love for love.

After all, *"We love because God first loved us."* (1 Jn 4:19)

A few Questions and Answers

Q Why is this campaign involving both the 2013 Operating Budget and our new Education Building?

A All parts of the campaign are vital for our present and future. First, we must take care of the regular ordinary giving that supports our ongoing ministries. Only then can we consider the future and our new Education Building.

Q How did we arrive at the amounts needed for our new building?

A Initial estimates are that the new building will cost \$1.6 million. We have allocated \$400,000 from the sale of our Rosenberg property toward the new building, and we received a \$500,000 matching gift from the Leaman estate, which leaves a remainder of \$700,000. We have a goal to raise \$500,000 and subsequently fund the difference with a manageable loan.

Q So, how much are we actually trying to raise?

A \$245,000 – in Operating Pledges for 2013 and \$500,000 – for the Capital Campaign

Q Do we have any current short and long-term debt obligations?

A In December 2012, we completed payments on the additional land purchase and currently have no debt.

What's it all about anyway?



People!