

Congregational Connector

August 2017

News from the Board of Directors

GSRP@STL: In mid-July Michele Jones of the CrossBridge Action Network (a group organized by Rev. Rob Kasper and the Michigan District of the LCMS) approached STL about using our preschool space to host a Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) for at-risk preschoolers. The BOD has accepted their proposal with the expectation that this program, which should open in September, will use this unused space in our building to serve the needs of our community while carrying minimal financial risk for STL. GSRP is a government funded program designed to promote kindergarten readiness for children in families that cannot afford preschool education.

Great Start @ STL will host a maximum of 16 four year old students Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. While CrossBridge (a tax-exempt, not for profit organization) will be 100% responsible for staffing and running the program, they are very open to STL offering after school programs for children and adults. STL also will be able to develop relationships with enrolled families and to promote STL ministries.

MCREST SUCCESS: This year may have been the best ever for STL hosting the Macomb County Rotating Emergency Shelter Team. Our guests included 20 women and 11 children. The children ranged in ages from 4 months (two infants at this age) to 14 years. Kelly Crivella, STL coordinator, wishes to thank everyone for their support and efforts. MCREST is a structured program offering housing, support, and training for families who find themselves without home or direction. STL, during the one week we host them every year, provides a safe and comfortable place to stay, two warm meals, laundry services, and more each day. Our guests leave our building each morning around 8:00 for their assigned tasks and return around 5:00 p.m.

NEW ROOF: SCHENA roofing company arrived on Friday, July 28 to begin the project of replacing the roof on our west wing. They have been progressing very well on the long-awaited project. They expect to complete their work, weather permitting, no later than August 8. After that our insurance company will have people working inside our building making repairs to inside water damages, and we will be at work cleaning the building and preparing it for fall programming.

NEW PHONE SYSTEM: Our new phone system was installed on July 31, after our old one 'gave up the ghost' in the middle of the month. Special thanks go to Linda Bucholtz who handled all of the church calls through her cell phone during the interim. Our old system was installed in 1997 and has been discontinued for many years.

FALL PROGRAM KICK-OFF: September is just around the corner and plans are taking shape for an exciting fall. **September 10** is the date set for Sunday coffee and doughnuts to make a permanent move to the north end of our building – making it more accessible to all. The following Sunday at 10:45 a.m. will be the kick-off for Cross†raining our Children in Christ, Cross†raining JC Style and Faith Hope Love ministry. We also will be offering something new, called Faith Conversations. **Cross†raining** is for children ages 3 through fifth grade. **Cross†raining JC Style** is for students in grade 6 through high school (and their parents). **FHL** is offered for adults on Sunday mornings, and many days throughout the week. If you would like more information on any of these programs (or if you are interested in helping), please contact the church office at 586-772-3370.

GETTING THE WORD OUT: Three projects have been initiated over the summer to expand the Gospel impact STL is having upon our community. First, Pastor Hetzner has begun sending a weekly text message with encouragement from God's Word to help people get through the week. Second, plans are being made to broadcast Sunday worship on FaceBook Live. And third, the NOW + NEXT Campaign is underway to assist in getting the Word out to many through personal contacts and meaningful conversations, encouraging ministry partnerships and ownership. For more information on any of these initiatives, please contact the church office.

2016-2017 FINANCES: The fiscal year at STL runs from July 1 through June 30. In the year just ended, STL started off strong, carrying an actual cash surplus through December. However, congregational giving faded somewhat in the second half, and we ended the year with a General Fund deficit of \$23,000.00. The good news is that we are current with all of our bills, mortgage payments (with principal) continue to be made, and we are reducing the debt owed to the Restricted Fund. Also, no STL Foundation funds were used to support the General Fund.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Here is the report of our joint General Fund stewardship (family finances and congregational finances) for fiscal year 2016-2017.

	Year to Date		
	Anticipated	Actual	Percentages
Income	\$ 442,900.00	\$ 416,737.58	94% of budget
Expense	<u>\$ 442,900.00</u>	<u>\$ 440,103.12</u>	<u>99 % of budget</u>
Net Excess (loss)	\$ 0.00	\$ (23,365.54)	

July 2017 income was about 107% of budget, and we are praying for a strong August.

Mortgage Balance: \$1,817,705.12

(We have paid \$44,758.76 off the principal so far this fiscal year)

Balance of loan to General Fund from the Restricted Fund: \$60,750.00.