

There's pie, and then there's pie-in-the-sky.

You all know that 2009 has been a very tight year financially. But look at what we've done so far. I'm only going to mention a few things:

1. We made a commitment to bring our preschool to success when it looked as if we might have to close it. Our new director, Dr. Dick Aubry, and a new board have moved to put us on the map as one of the high quality education and child care facilities in the area.
2. We changed our Sunday morning to increase our education, program and worship opportunities. One of the most exciting adventures is the development of a new choir, a Schola Cantorum, to give young voices a chance to be trained in the English Cathedral tradition and to sing with us at the new 11:15 service on Sundays from Advent to Easter.
3. With fewer staff we increased our communications, developing a new website which we now run from our own desks in the office, and a Facebook page in which anyone may participate.
4. Although our outreach grants were greatly diminished by the economy, our hands on commitment is clear from the number of "Minute for Ministry" talks you've heard on Sundays, the special giving trees in the parish hall, and the expanded food collection at the Sunday services.
5. We expanded our youth ministries, bringing in young people who were not even church members, and providing two youth mission trips, all from the funds the kids raised and your donations.

Most of these ministries are in a healthy stage of development and they need prayer and energy to succeed. The job of the staff is to enable all our parishioners to find their ministry so that the church can truly be God's agent in the world around us. I envision new successes and new programs in each of the areas I mentioned: preschool, worship, education, communications, outreach, and youth work.

I think a key part of that is to restore the benefits and salary cuts we made in 2009. First, to have the parish pay its full share of health benefits for staff, and second to restore the salaries in stages to the point where they should be.

Synopsis of Ted's points for pie festival

While 2009 has been a financially difficult year, we've done some great things:

- + commitment to preschool success
- + Sunday morning changes increase education, program, new music
- + Fewer staff but more communications with website, Facebook, etc
- + Hands on outreach increased to match reductions in Foundation grants
- + Expanded youth ministries with funds raised by kids and donations

These initiatives, in a healthy stage of development can be successes in 2010 and beyond. A key part is to restore the cuts to staff benefits and take steps to restore the cuts to staff salaries.