



St. Michael & All Angels
Episcopal Church
601 Montañó Rd. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87107

September 12, 2024

Dear Siblings in Christ,

In January 2024, the Stewardship Ministry Team, in collaboration with the parish, embarked on an in-depth study of Miguel Escobar's book "The Unjust Steward," which is rooted in the Parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:13). These discussions have been profoundly affecting and illuminating, causing us to scrutinize the appropriateness of the term "stewardship" for our ministry. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry characterizes the book as inspiring but also confrontational and unsettling for those genuinely committed to following Jesus's Way of Love—Escobar's work endeavors to widen and enrich the ongoing conversations about wealth and poverty in the church. The book has us asking how do we make generosity a spiritual practice, rooted in our values?

At about the same time, our Vestry began a process of deep reflection to identify core values that can lead us forward. The vestry engaged in deep discernment and led discussion groups about these values in Spring and Summer. Three overarching values emerged through this process:

Welcome, Action, and Spiritual Grounding

These are not just words but the pillars of our shared mission, a mission to which we all contribute and are all a part. We as a community are now invited to consider the following questions: How do these values inform our communal life together? How do we support the ministries that we engage in? How are we fostering healing and reconciliation in our community and beyond? Are we acting as the radical loving rebel, Jesus? Are we welcoming our neighbor and the stranger by building relationships beyond our walls?

The simple act of a financial gift to our community underpins the work of spiritual grounding and radical action that builds and strengthens our community. The spiritual action of monetary support strengthens all of our relationships. We know that we have support in all forms. From the little acts of waving and smiling to someone we do not know during worship, to providing refreshments to people between services, working with asylum seekers, feeding our neighbors at the food pantry, and educating the children of our community, our actions build solid relationships and beautiful, meaningful worship. Together, these collaborative efforts strengthen and grow our community. Jesus calls us to work together, to recognize the needs of our neighbor, and to spread his love into the world. He calls us to support and love each other, and to act for the benefit of all. In these acts of love, we build the kingdom of God, a place of justice for all, a place that respects the dignity of every human being. Your financial support is what makes all of this possible.

Fall is the time of year when we ask for monetary gifts and invite our members to learn about and join in the work of the ministries of our church. Last year, our gifts increased by an average of 19%. This level of commitment to our faith community is inspiring and energizing. Can we match that growth this year? We understand that not every member is in a place to increase their giving each year, and we celebrate each gift. If you can increase your gift, we invite you to do so. We are deeply grateful for each and every pledge in support of the vital mission of St. Michael's, and we want to express our heartfelt appreciation for your contributions. We encourage you to pray as you consider your commitment for this year. Discuss your decision with all members of your family. The vestry and stewardship ministry leaders have all agreed to pledge in good faith, and we hope that you will also give generously as we plan for our future. **Ingathering Sunday will be on All Saints Sunday, November 3, 2024.** Help St. Michael's invest in making a love-spreading difference in 2025.

Yours in Christ's Love,

Cathy Bailey, Stewardship Chair

The Rev. Mike Angell, Rector

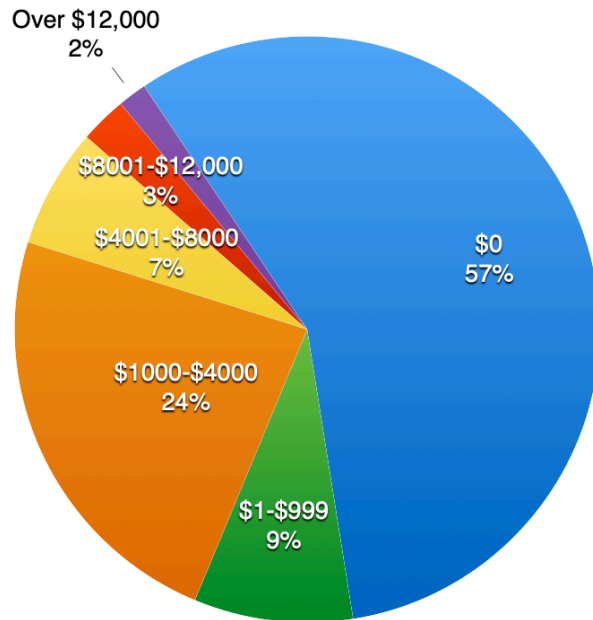
Join us Sunday September 22 at 10:15am for a forum on finances.

VISUAL BUDGET: WHAT DOES PLEDGING LOOK LIKE?

2024 Pledge Participation

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| \$0 | 285 |
| \$1-\$999 | 44 |
| \$1000-\$4000 | 118 |
| \$4001-\$8000 | 33 |
| \$8001-\$12,000 | 13 |
| Over \$12,000 | 8 |
| Total Households | 501 |

Average Pledge: \$3215

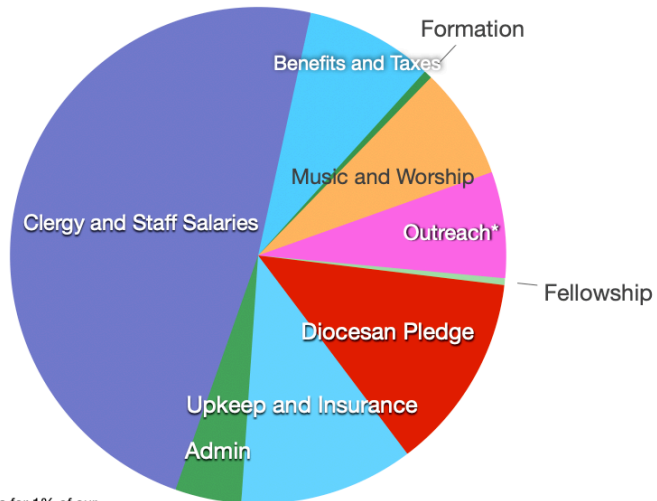


Every pledge counts. We would like to see every member make a pledge. St. Michael’s is an economically diverse parish, and we are grateful for generosity at all levels. Almost ten percent of our members pledge between \$1 and \$999. We also know that for some of our members, increasing their annual gift would not create a financial hardship. We encourage you, if you are able, to reach the “next level” in your annual gift to the church. If even just a few of our pledgers decided to increase their giving to the next level, we could expand our ministry footprint in ways that would make a real difference for our neighbors.

VISUAL BUDGET: WHAT ARE THE CHURCH’S OPERATING EXPENSES?

Budget Expenses 2024

| Category | Year To Date as of July 31 | Budget for 2024 |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| Clergy and Staff Salaries | \$281,048 | \$541,393 |
| Benefits and Taxes | \$48,661 | \$90,067 |
| Formation | \$3,191 | \$9,950 |
| Music and Worship | \$42,603 | \$65,596 |
| Outreach* | \$40,459 | \$7,250* |
| Fellowship | \$2,584 | \$2,600 |
| Diocesan Pledge | \$75,034 | \$125,261 |
| Upkeep and Insurance | \$66,490 | \$78,294 |
| Admin | \$25,287 | \$57,883 |
| Total | \$585,357 | \$971,044 |



| Revenue to July 31 | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Total | \$564,789 |

* While outreach only accounts for 1% of our operating budget, generous donations restricted to our food pantry and immigration ministries mean that closer to 17% of the money received by the church goes into outreach each year.

The generosity of our members accounts for 9/10ths of our budget. We do not receive money from the wider church. Rather, we contribute over \$125,000 annually to the diocese and the Episcopal Church. We aim for financial transparency at St. Michael’s. We projected a significant deficit in our budget this year. The good news is that through sound financial management, and especially due to the generosity of the congregation, we are nowhere near what we projected for the year. We have work to do in the years ahead to better project both our expenses and our income. One of the most helpful things you can do is to make a pledge.