

Part XII

Managing Our Money – Buildings & Grounds

(This is part of an ongoing series of articles about the church's finances by Dual Macintyre, Treasurer)

Whenever there is consideration to confirm another saint, those who volunteer for the Buildings and Grounds assignment are at the top of the list. No one ever notices when everything works smoothly, but when something breaks – and everything that flushes has a propensity to break – the call goes out to the Buildings and Grounds committee. Of course, the problem always develops on a weekend evening and naturally there is a big event scheduled for the space on Sunday. We are most fortunate to have Kip Arsenault as the head of our Buildings and Grounds committee because he has the patience to deal with a crisis calmly, the knowledge to know how things should be fixed and the island contacts to get it done quickly.

There is a great deal more to the B&G job than making sure the plumbing works. This year we have almost \$50,000 allocated to maintain our buildings and keep our grounds in tip-top shape. It will cost us about \$1,000 a month to clean our church, Gardner Hall and the Parish house and they are only cleaned once each week. We also expect that normal maintenance and repairs will cost about \$9,000 for our buildings this year. That includes painting, plumbing repairs, electrical work and snowplowing. We also pay about \$5,000 a year to maintain the grounds, our Memorial garden and the sprinkler system.

We have set aside \$5,000 as a contingency in our budget for emergency repairs, like the proverbial plumbing crisis on a weekend. We feel it more prudent to budget for unknown contingencies than to have to scramble to find the funds to cover an unexpected plumber's bill. This year we have also created a reserve for our church heating system and another to cover church roof repairs. Both the heating system and the roof are old and approaching the end of their useful life. When the boiler fails or the roof leaks, we hope to have the funds set aside to make the repairs without disrupting the rest of our budget.

Also under the B & G umbrella fall the major repairs and restorations that we undertake. Last year, for example, we completed the restoration of the 12 clearstory windows, those that are located at the top of the church on both side of the nave. This year, we have received funds from the Community Preservation Committee to begin the restoration of the 23 stained glass windows on the ground floor on both sides of the nave. That will involve making new wooden frames for some of the windows, restoring the frames for the remainder, repairing and transferring the stained glass, painting, caulking and reinstalling the windows in each opening. This is delicate work that requires experience and skills that only a few companies in the country possess. To the Building and Grounds committee falls the task of coordinating this massive effort and insuring that it is done properly.

There are two additional projects waiting in the wings; completion of the Gardner Hall renovation and the construction of the Daume Memorial entrance and handicapped access to Gardner Hall. Although we have some funding for each of these projects, we do not have enough on hand to move forward on a large scale. We have done some preliminary work on the kitchen design, the handicapped access and the Daume entrance, but we will not proceed until we have more funding secured.

You may have noticed that I have not talked about other costs associated with operating our campus. The utility, insurance and other costs to run our buildings are carried as separate line items in our budget. I will talk about them next week.