

## St. Bartholomew's Stewardship Budget Update

### *A Forward-Looking Plan Rooted in Hope, Transparency, and Shared Mission*

For nearly a decade, St. Bartholomew did not have a standing Finance Council—something both Canon Law and good stewardship recommend for every parish. The Finance Council was re-established in May 2025, coinciding with the arrival of Fr. Henry Hoffmann as pastor. Since then, we have worked diligently to understand our financial position, evaluate operating costs, and plan for long-term needs of our campus.

Today's update focuses on the day-to-day operating costs of running the parish. Meanwhile, we are compiling and estimating the costs of deferred maintenance needs and look forward to sharing those details with you in March 2026.

As your Finance Council, we are committed to:

- Ensuring financial oversight
- Listening to and representing parishioner perspectives
- Promoting budget accountability and transparency
- Planning for long-term sustainability
- Communicating financial information clearly and consistently

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve. Our goal is simple: **clarity, openness, and responsible stewardship of the resources entrusted to our parish community.**

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### **Strengthening our Financial Planning: From Reactive to Proactive**

In past years, St. Bartholomew managed expenses and major repairs as needs arose, without a dedicated reserve for unexpected costs. A financially healthy parish typically maintains about **18 months of cash on hand**. After replacing the church roof in 2024, our reserves dropped to **approximately 3 months'** worth of expenses.

This financial strain led to the HVAC fundraising campaign, and—thanks to your extraordinary generosity, the parish emerged from 2024 on stronger financial footing. While this was a significant step forward, we still fall short of the cushion needed for long-term stability. Today, we are taking proactive steps to create a healthier and more sustainable financial foundation.

To build a more secure financial future, we must **increase the Sunday Stewardship Budget** to cover true operating costs, many of which have risen year after year due to inflation. Sunday giving has not kept pace with these increases. Updating the budget to reflect real expenses is essential to caring responsibly for our buildings, ministries, and programs. This change **positions St. Bartholomew for long-term health and future growth.**

This leads to an important question: **What is driving the increase?**

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## Why the Stewardship Budget Increased by ~25%

The updated stewardship budget reflects real costs and responsible planning. The nearly 25% increase is driven by:

- Recurring operating expenses
- Inflationary pressures
- Shared costs within our Family of Parishes
- A healthier, sustainable budgeting model

Like every household, St. Bartholomew faces rising costs in utilities, insurance, maintenance, supplies, and services. Updating the budget to match these realities ensures we can continue providing a safe, welcoming, and well-maintained environment for worship, ministry, and community life.

As part of the **Our Lady of Divine Providence Family of Parishes**, we now share certain administrative and operational expenses with our partner parishes. This collaborative model reduces redundancy and helps all parishes operate more efficiently. Shared costs include technology systems, communication tools, Family-wide ministries, and other essential support services.

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## Looking Ahead

By adjusting now, we place St. Bartholomew on a stronger, more stable foundation for long-term vitality. This update represents important progress, but it is only the beginning.

Our long-term goal is to restore parish reserves to 18 months. With this plan, we expect to reach an 11-month reserve—a significant improvement from the 3 months we had at the end of 2024, but still short of where we need to be.

Your generosity has proven time and again that when St. Bartholomew identifies a need, our parish family responds with faith and dedication. That generosity has already begun to reshape our financial outlook in profound ways.

We will return in **March 2026** with a detailed report on long-term maintenance needs. Please note: unused funds from the HVAC campaign will be applied to upcoming maintenance projects, ensuring your contributions continue to support essential improvements.

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We are deeply grateful for your continued faith, generosity, and trust. St. Bartholomew is an extraordinary parish. Together, with your gifts of time, talent, and treasure, we are building a strong, vibrant, and sustainable future.

Finance Council Members:

Tiffany Hanisch, Tom Kessinger, Bart Kohler, Kathy Marks, and Katie Siefker