

- Good morning everyone.
- I'm sure all of you have received pledge forms and letters related to the capital campaign and our goal to raise \$75,000 over the next three years.
- Before I get into the State of Affairs at St Theodore's, I would like to share a biblical story with you.
- It's the story of Nehemiah, the prophet, a humble cupbearer in the service of the Persian King... Artaxerxes
- You see, Nehemiah was in a very comfortable place in the Citadel of Susa (a fortress, safe from its enemies) but he was saddened by the news of the state of Jerusalem, the home of his ancestors
- You see the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the gates were burned with fire. The Jews returning home from exile were in great trouble and disgrace. They had no suitable living accommodations and were despised by the inhabitants of the land.
- Nehemiah was greatly troubled by the fact that he lived in the comfort of a protected fortress and well to do while his fellow Israelites were suffering.
- The bible says that 'When Nehemiah heard these things, he sat down and wept. For some days he mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.'
- God heard his prayers and the king permitted Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem and more than that... provided him with whatever resources he would need to rebuild the city
- You see Nehemiah took a step of faith. He took up the painful responsibility of rebuilding the city of Jerusalem to promote the welfare of the Israelites.
- And all the Jews had a hand in repairing the walls of Jerusalem under great distress and at the risk of being killed.
- We are also faced with a similar situation except of course for the part of being killed. Our walls of prayers at St Theodore's are indeed broken and the gates are burnt. Last winter a service was held without heat due to a broken boiler.
- God has blessed us with a place of worship for the past 56 years and our responsibility is to care for His house.

- St Theodore's is where we meet God and are fed spiritually every Sunday. We fellowship with each other. It is our spiritual home and we are the church!
- However, we cannot have the church without a suitable and safe building.
- We have embarked on a capital campaign to raise funds over the next three years to deal with major repairs and any contingencies that befall us.
- On behalf of The Corporation, I would like to clarify some questions / concerns that have been raised with respect to the Campaign.

So... what will the money be used for?

We have been asked this on a number of occasions and it's a reasonable question. Most of you come to St. Theodore on a regular basis. You drive or walk as the case may be. You come in and sit in your usual spot (although as you have noticed, there has been a subtle hint to move closer to the front!!) There are a number of expectations that each of you have every Sunday that you are here-- the lights will be on; the automatic opener for the front doors is engaged; there is heat in the winter; the washrooms are in good working order; the kitchen is operational with items kept cold in the fridge, the water works and the coffee is ready for fellowship time. This sounds very much like the things you use and expect to work in your own homes!

Now ask yourselves... what would you do or how would you feel if these expectations are not met? Some of you may say why is there no heat? Why is the front door not working? Why are there no greeters? Others may say we need to do something about this, this needs to be fixed!

You see the church is our home as well -- and like any home, it should meet our expectations and it needs attention -- repairs have to be made, items wear out and have to be replaced and yes, sometimes we have emergencies to address.

We are fortunate in that the church construction is quite simple and basic; however, over the 56 years, it's seen a lot of use, wear and tear and it's now reached the point where significant repairs have to be made.

The Corporation is constantly engaged in responding to repair requests; planning for future repairs/replacements and trying to prioritize what needs to be done within our financial constraints.

This is a never ending challenge that the Wardens have to grapple with and this is no different than what you and I have to do in our own homes!

Ok, so what does the corporation have on its plate and why has St. Theodore's embarked on this fund raising campaign?

Let me share with you a list of major items that will need attention either immediate or in the near future. The list in the campaign brochure was not all inclusive and probably should have been to demonstrate the severity of the current situation:

1. **The roof.** We had the north side done a few years ago, but the south side will need replacement in a few years (we have already had instances of water leakage). The tiles are blowing off from time to time.
2. **Basement washrooms.** The fixtures are in its original state -- the only change is they have been painted a few times. New fixtures will reduce water consumption and costs and they will be less smelly. New lighting will make them brighter and there needs to be a better use of the space.
3. **Stairs** -- they have been deteriorating steadily and many of the risers that prevent slipping have fallen off and need to be replaced.
4. **The sign on the front lawn** -- finding the letter rails, letters etc. is problematic - not many of these around anymore. It's falling apart -- the hinges are wearing out, there is no proper locking mechanism and it's limited in the information we can provide. A proper sign outside is usually a good indication of what's happening inside!
5. **Parking lot** -- as far as I know it's the "original asphalt" --- and it shows. It's in dire need of resurfacing as many of you already know.
6. **Chimney** -- the brickwork and masonry are cracking and falling off. It was never properly lined and at some point it will have to be repaired -- this will be very expensive. If/when we have to replace the boiler, we will need to repair the chimney as well. Hopefully in the meantime, it does not fall down!

7. **Speaking of the boiler** -- you are all aware of the problems we had with it this past winter and for the last couple of years. This is another very expensive project. We keep crossing our fingers that we can get a few more years out of it, but the fact remains that it needs to be replaced.
8. **The north facade** -- it's the small wing that juts out at the front of the church -- the brick and mortar are disintegrating -- at some point it has to be repaired or torn down.
9. **Windows in the choir loft** -- the ones that open for fresh air no longer seal properly -- we lose heat in the winter and we get some water leakage as well if not fixed will lead to expensive damage and repairs
10. **Sanctuary carpets** -- as you can see they are very worn, stretched and stained and should be replaced.

We want the church to be an inviting place of worship for us and for visitors and newcomers and this can be done only through regular repairs and proper maintenance.

Ok, so what have we done so far with limited resources we have:

1. The driveway has been repaved. We would have liked to do the parking lot as well but that would have cost another \$60,000 which we don't have. Many of you have noticed the difference in entering the driveway...no more pot holes! Until we enter the parking lot!
2. The lights in the nave were replaced as the old sodium fixtures were failing and they used a lot more electricity. The exterior lights have been replaced as well and a few were added to brighten the surroundings at night.
3. Boiler controls were replaced so we could get heat back into the church. Very costly repairs! It's like fixing an old car!
4. We put a sump pump under the elevator lift to remove water that was causing the lift to fail in addition to the annual inspection and repairs
5. Okay... so I think you get the picture -- just like your own homes, the church is in need of repairs -- if not, at some point the doors will close because it will not be safe nor inviting for prospective or existing parishioners.