Shepherd of the Hills Parish Letter September 15, 2019

Greetings in Christ,

Attached is the parish annual financial report from Fiscal Year 2018-2019

The 2018-2019 budget results ended us in an adjusted negative position of - $5,843.94 below budget. The adjustments were as follows:

* Changing LOM contributions from General Income to Living Our Mission (LOM) savings
* Charging LOM expenses to LOM savings instead of Maintenance budget
* Changing the $5,000 Home Mission Grant from General Income to LOM Savings for the new flooring

All of the items above were important factors for our end of year financial position. Our collections continue to be on the decline, mostly due to the decreasing Parish population. We budgeted collections at $90,596 and collected $ 80,852. The $10,000 gap was made up by decreasing the Justice and Peace donations, the increase in interest income from our CDs, and the Home Mission Grant of $5,000. Our annual fundraising only generated $1,868.77, yet we had budgeted $3,000. We attributed this shortfall to the volume of items we had to sell, and these 2 primary factors: 1. The opening of the new Thrift Shop in Stanardsville (many of our parishioners donated their treasurers there vs keeping them until our Yard Sale) and 2. GRACE held a yard sale a few weeks before us, where many of our parishioners also donated.

We once again held a joint Parish Picnic with Holy Infant, this time in Greene Recreation Park pavilion. We had a good time, games were fun and food was delicious! I want to thank all those who helped make it a success, especially Cookie Bonneville our coordinator. Unfortunately attendance was down due to the weather and threat of tornados, but several members of Holy Infant were still able to join us.

Cookie also coordinated the Easter Egg Hunt after Easter Sunday Mass, but this time a special guest “The Easter Bunny” was there for pictures with the participants. Photos of the event were in the Greene County Record, giving some positive press to our great parish and a subtle way to let the community know who and where we are. As stated earlier with our parish membership declining, our ability to pay utilities, salaries and support ministries is impacted. In fiscal year 2019-2020 we need to find way to let the community know about us, and have them come to our Parish for spiritual fulfillment vs. a further away church in Charlottesville or Madison.

Maintenance this year on our facility focused on repairs to the Skylights, general items, and improvements funded by LOM contributions. We had the altar platform replaced and enlarged. This change was remarkable and provides additional safety, by reducing the cramped square footage on the original platform. We also have contracted to replace the flooring in the Social Building, and purchase new signage for the church. This will provide us the opportunity to save costs by not purchasing signage for specific events (Yard Sale, Hot Dog Sale, etc.). Additionally, both the Social Building and Church locks have been rekeyed, and each individual with keys were issued new ones. Going forward, anyone needing keys must contact Parish Council. Their name will be maintained on a list which is provided to the Sheriff’s department. Although our maintenance was minimal this year, we did have a shared expense with Holy Infant of $2,134.29 for repairs to HVAC.

Living our Mission (LOM) pledges, have continued to be honored by Parishioners resulting in contributions this year of $4,182.22. This was divided between the following 3 designated efforts: Building Beautification $1,589.23, Building our Future $1,589.23 and Ministry Outreach $1,003.76. Current total balances in these same accounts are: Building Beautification - $6,801.97, Building our Future – (-$2,054.40) (Parking Lot put us in negative position in 2016, which was approved by Parish and Finance Council), Ministry Outreach - $11,980.84. The total balances in LOM are $16,728.41. We anticipate spending the balance of the Building Beautification fund next year for the new flooring. The Ministry Outreach fund could be used as we focus on increasing our Parish population. In the 2019-2020 budget year, the LOM pledges should be fullfilled. Overall contributions since 2015 are: $57,752.81 + $10,000 in Home Mission Grant money. I thank you sincerely for honoring your pledges and allowing us to improve our facilities over the past 4 years.

Diocesan guidance increased lay and clergy salaries, health insurance and several other required expenses taking more from our income. We also saw an increase in our utility bills, and ask every parishioner and group using the facilities to be conscientious when raising the heat or lowering the air-conditioning and make sure you bring it back to the recommended temperature on the thermostat when you are done using the facilities.

Last September the Finance Council asked Parishioners to increase their donations by $2 - $3/week, and we appreciate you for doing this. Unfortunately it is not enough for us to cover the reduced income from the loss or relocation of several of our Parishioners. We now ask you to think of activities we can do to increase our presence in the community, and to participate in all of our Fund Raising efforts – time and talents are equally important to treasure, and we are thankful for your donations of both. Please continue to use your envelopes, or for your convenience, you can sign up for automatic deduction. To do this, contact the parish office at 540-298-1341 to obtain the information, and then contact your financial institution to set this up.

 Thank you for your continued contributions of time, talent and treasure.

God Bless You Abundantly,

Fr. Michael Mugomba, Administrator Parish Financial Council