

It has been a busy month for Staff-Parish Committee. We have four main areas to report:

First; we have been gratified to have two new people volunteer to be a regular office assistant to Marianna. We are currently working with Marianna to ensure that they can reduce her workload as we continue to make efforts to help our church office run efficiently and not overwork our staff. We are optimistic that we can continue for the present with our current level of staffing, but later in the year we expect to work on a longer-term plan.

Second; we have completed the transfer of Maria Wilcox to her new role leading Children's Church on Sunday mornings. We would like to thank both Maria and pastor Melissa, who have been the main staff impacted by this, for their gracious and forward-looking support. We continue to stress the importance of supporting all staff and lay people involved in Christian Education as they work through details and ensure this change helps our church work better.

Third; we are in the process of working with the Northern Illinois Conference as we prepare for a change in associate pastor. There have been some rumors doing the rounds that suggest that our church requested the change as part of a budget reduction process. This is not true; the change was made as part of the usual conference process, based only on the pastors' communications with the conference, church needs in the conference, and, ultimately, the bishop's discernment. We are not seeking a change from being a church with two full-time, ordained pastors and are currently working with the conference as we look to receive a new assistant pastor in July.

Financially, we made a commitment to reduce our staff expenditure. Our current status is that we have covered about two-thirds of the gap between 2012 expenditure and the 2013 budget and do not expect that any further major changes will be needed to fulfill our commitment. Clearly the change in associate pastorship will impact our plans, but we do not believe our commitment to financial stability will stop us from accepting the best possible associate pastor for our church. Our primary goal, as always, is to support our staff and help them be effective and happy in their work. We would like to thank all our church members who also provide encouragement and support for our staff.=