

# Saint Luke the Evangelist

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**8 Atkinson Depot Road Plalstow, NH 03865 TEL (603) 382-8324 FAX (603) 382-1113**

Dear Saint Luke Parishioner:

This note is addressed to the whole Parish community as a way of thanking you for your generosity and good stewardship over the course of the past months. The pandemic has forced so many institutions to think about their mission in new ways and with new purpose, the Parish is certainly in the thick of that “new normal.” The pandemic has also challenged families personally, financially, and spiritually. I am simply awestruck by the many ways so many in our community have risen to the occasion.

As expected, the Parish’s donations have dropped off in the past few months. I am happy to report that the drop off was not as precipitous as we initially feared. This is a testament to the good stewardship of our community.

The drop in offertory during the shutdown was mitigated by the Parish’s participation in the Federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP). The PPP provided the Parish with \$53,000.00 that funded employee payroll for 8 weeks, enabling our staff to keep working on your behalf. The PPP is a loan that is designed to be forgiven, we are in the process of filing documents for loan forgiveness.

Since the re-opening of the Parish churches for liturgical services, we have been blessed by your generosity. The offertory remains strong, which has enabled us to continue to serve the needs of our community, pay staff and maintain our campuses.

A significant downturn in donations has happened with “second collections.” This is understandable since those collections often represent a special need or cause and parishioners already concerned about their ability to contribute are forced to make decisions with their resources. I call your attention to the PROPERTY MANAGEMENT and FUEL collections that we would typically take up on the first and third Sundays of the month. These collections are not for a special need or cause, they are fundamental to the Parish budget to pay utility bills and other property costs. Perhaps because these are “second collections” they are perceived as optional, but they form an integral part of how the Parish operates. Downturns in those collections force us to draw funds from the regular Offertory to pay bills.

For some time, the weekly Bulletin has listed a need for \$7000.00 per week in Offertory to meet expenses. In consultation with the Finance Council and appreciating inflation and expenses, this total has been adjusted to 8500.00 per week. With the Property Management and Fuel budgeted at 2400.00 per month each, (divided by 4 weeks) the actual figure for the Parish's weekly needs is more in the order of **\$9700.00**. I call your attention to this issue to better inform you of the Parish's ongoing needs and the way in which we structure our budget and spending. In future editions of the Parish weekly Bulletin, you will see this revised figure of \$9700.00 as a way of reflecting our true financial needs. This amount reflects the regular Sunday Offertory and the two monthly FUEL and PROPERTY MANAGEMENT collections divided out into a four-week month.

I encourage anyone who is not able to join us at Liturgy to sign up for our electronic giving program. We use PARISH GIVING as a way for parishioners to make electronic transfers or use their credit card to make donations to the Parish. The PARISH GIVING program allows you to select collections and giving amounts week by week or months at a time. It allows you to budget your contributions and continue your good stewardship to the Parish even when you are not able to be at church. Log onto the Parish website at [www.stlukenh.org](http://www.stlukenh.org) and click on the PARISH GIVING logo to register.

Our Parish is still coming to grips with the "new normal" of a global pandemic, a task many parishioners face each day as well. I continue to be thankful and amazed by generosity of our community on behalf of the Parish, our Saint Luke the Evangelist Food Pantry, and our Parish Saint Vincent de Paul Society. I remain committed to working through this time with a sense of optimism for the Parish's future.

The Finance Council is currently discussing ways in which more cost savings might be achieved in the months ahead. Thank you for your continued support of the mission of Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish, and my God continue to console us, strengthen us, and bless us all.

God's peace,



Father Albert, obl. SB  
Pastor

On behalf of the Finance Council