

# Life Center Update

Wednesday, March 23, 2011

*Building for the  
Hospitality of God*



## It Takes Many Teams... To Build a Dream

It is an appropriate point to pause and recognize all who contributed so much to the Life Center project and to the very successful completion of the first phase of the campaign. Their number is way too large to list here, but each one of them is worthy of a special thanks and a well deserved pat on the back.

The 9-member Steering Committee, 18-member Building Committee, 16-member Capital Campaign Committee, and well over 100 volunteers led the highly successful in-parish portion of the campaign. We are now beginning the second phase of the campaign, reaching out to those beyond the parish who will support expansion of our various outreach programs as well as additional ones that will be made possible by the proposed Life Center.

Our success to date is the direct result of the dedication, talent, and hard work of these individuals. Many of them will continue to be actively involved as we embark on the next phase to reach our goal.

On behalf of the entire congregation, we want to express our gratitude and heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you!

*Robert & Sue Collett, Campaign Committee Co-Chairs*



## Looking Ahead with Your Help

I am delighted and proud to be a part of such an amazing parish. As we move forward we once again enlist your support. Do you know someone who isn't a regular parishioner, but has a heart for the ministry of Saint Thomas? Do you know anyone with a heart for education, Alcoholics Anonymous, or outreach efforts to the less fortunate through Congregations for the Homeless, The Sophia Way, or our Thanksgiving ministry? Would you be willing to make the first introduction? We would appreciate hearing about them from you.

Please help us share the enthusiasm and importance of the Life Center with our community and neighbors. Contact me at 425.454.9541 or by email at [simeone54@comcast.net](mailto:simeone54@comcast.net).

Our progress is exciting! With your help and with the support of our friends and neighbors, I can see a Life Center at Saint Thomas on the horizon. Please help us continue to ***Build for the Hospitality of God.***

*Bob Simeone, Parish Life Center Project Manager*

## Campaign Success!

Parishioner contributions and pledges total slightly over \$5 million, with more than \$1.5 million already received and on deposit with the Legacy Foundation in the Life Center Building Fund. We encourage parishioners who have not yet made their gifts to do so. As we speak to community members outside the parish, we must be able to point to significant support from our members. It is also very gratifying to report that annual giving increased over 6% at the same time. Our sincere thanks to all who have given so generously to both the Capital Campaign and the Annual Stewardship Campaign!

Phase two of the Capital Campaign is led by Mary Newcomer Williams and her team of volunteers. They will focus on outreach to: neighbors in the community, potential users of the facility, founders and friends of St. Thomas, interested benefactors, and foundations.

We have also engaged a professional grant writer and an experienced, locally oriented fund raising consultant to assist us in this community phase of the campaign. Preliminary discussions with a few potential contributors indicate there is meaningful interest in our Life Center plans – particularly in the youth center, our community outreach programs, and the emergency preparedness center.

We look forward to apprising you of the campaign's progress as we move forward. It is important for us to  
*(continued on page 2)*

## St. Thomas Life Center Update

*(continued from page 1)*

remember that our parish community stepped up quickly and generously with gifts; we are now approaching people with limited, if any, knowledge about the Life Center. We anticipate this phase will not move as rapidly as the first phase, but we feel confident we will meet with similar success.

Your enthusiasm and willingness to serve as ambassadors in the community can help us reach our goal. Please continue to spread the word about what the Life Center will enable us to do. Your response to our additional requests for ideas about potential interested donors has resulted in several additional contacts – thank you. With everyone working together, we can make it happen!

*Ev & Vesta Loyd, Campaign Committee Co-Chairs*

## Meet Our New Team Member

Tracy Bennett, a professional fundraising consultant and 20+ year resident of the Three Points neighborhood, will be assisting the Capital Campaign Committee as we embark on outreach to members of west Bellevue and beyond. Tracy brings significant capital campaign experience and extensive knowledge of the Puget Sound philanthropic landscape. A parent of five children, Tracy is active in numerous community organizations including the Beverly Lambert Guild at Seattle Children's, the Washington Women's Foundation, and Forest Ridge School where she has served as a trustee for nine years.



"I am thrilled to work with Saint Thomas on this exciting project. The Life Center will meet a vital need in not only our neighborhood but also the larger community. Expanding the education, outreach and service activities of the Parish will bring tremendous benefit to children and families. This speaks to the church truly living its mission and extending the hospitality of God well beyond its walls."

## A Center for the Entire Community

***"I know that you have a challenging road ahead with the Capital Campaign. Once the building is complete, it will serve the larger community in many wonderful ways. Please accept our humblest offering as you go through this journey."***

This note was on a Christmas card I received from a family in our neighborhood. They know our St. Thomas community very well but attend another church. This

family has been inspired by our vision for the Life Center as a resource for the entire Eastside – a place of hospitality and welcome for youth activities, children's services, community and outreach organizations, and emergency shelter space. This family recognizes that nothing like this exists in west Bellevue, and it is vitally needed. They also see the future Life Center as an essential resource for their growing family. Enclosed in the card was a check to the "Building for the Hospitality of God" campaign. I know this family; this was truly a sacrificial gift for them.

We are currently in conversation with some well-established, not-for-profit groups on the Eastside, inviting them to imagine how the Life Center could further their missions. Entering into partnership with these organizations, whose missions align with ours, will serve the wider community and provide enriching programs for both our parish family and our neighbors. The potential for such partnerships is exciting.

"Practicing the hospitality of God" means many things to us. Surely among the most important hospitable acts is providing support for the care and nurture of children and families. Stay tuned for more information as these conversations evolve. As we enter the broad community phase of our capital stewardship campaign, the faithfulness demonstrated by the parish in the first phase sends an important message to potential supporters. It is a message of St. Thomas' commitment to leadership on the Eastside. It is a message of hope for the future of the entire community. As we move forward, my prayer is for others who will embrace our vision – just as my Christmas-card friends did.

*Faithfully,  
Lex*



***Building for the  
Hospitality of  
God***

***For Christ,  
For our  
community,  
For future  
generations***