



Together, We Can Do Much

Dublin Presbyterian Church is a terrific place with terrific people doing terrific things, which is why Cheryl and I chose this church to be our church, and that is a topic for another testimonial on another Sunday.

For those who are relatively new to our fellowship and are trying to learn and remember names, and for those who are visiting, I'm Grant Varian, an elder and chair of the Stewardship Committee. By the way, we have a wonderful committee of Beth Marsh, Linda Landis and Rex Zent. In fact, I will unabashedly claim that our committee is the best committee in our fellowship, and I will gladly meet those who disagree in the parking lot after the service.

2016 was a terrific year for our church. We experienced expanded programming, more community outreach, a blossoming music program, new membership, a growing mission focus, and notable capital improvement. All of this required considerable time and talent of our staff and congregation. In addition, these positives occurred on the backdrop of unprecedented financial support. Pledged giving in 2016 comfortably exceeded projections and budget, and non-pledged giving was up, as well. In addition to our routine funding of the previously mentioned programming activities, we continued to contribute monthly to our contingency fund in preparation for large necessary expenses in the future. We paid nearly \$1000 monthly in excess of our scheduled mortgage payment to reduce principal. And we still had a positive bottom line at year's end. 2016 was, indeed, a terrific year for our church. Now,

how do I achieve the precisely most effective amount of drama, here. I'm not a drama kind of guy, but this is exciting stuff! WE CAN CELEBRATE 2016!! And we should celebrate. We can celebrate what we have accomplished and what it all portends for our church in the future. Thanks and praise to God for our countless blessings!

Now, we turn our attention to 2017. Our structured 2016 Stewardship campaign for pledged financial support of Dublin Presbyterian Church in 2017 concluded on Pledge Sunday, November 13th. Early on, we were excited that pledge commitments seemed to be coming in at higher than historic rates, but then they slowed down considerably, We still have enough outstanding pledge commitments for 2017 that the pledged income entry in the 2017 budget proposal from the Finance Committee is somewhat conjectural and based on historical experience. Currently, it appears that there will be fewer pledges in 2017 and that the amount pledged will be less than the total initially pledged for 2016. The 2017 budget proposal from the Finance Committee to Session will show a projected deficit of around \$2000 at the end of the year. All of this is based on the current evidence and trends. That deficit already reflects a reduction, not elimination, but reduction of the monthly contingency contributions and the mortgage payment overages that were established last year. We are still trying to understand all of this and why we have a variance from 2016. Rea Buchanan, Financial Secretary, will faithfully contact most, if not all, outstanding pledging units for clarification of their intent. This will help Finance formulate more precise budget corrections. In addition, the Stewardship Committee will send a letter to these individuals and families encouraging their financial support of our church in 2017. By percentages, alone, the comfortable majority of you here, today, have already presented your commitment of financial support of Dublin Presbyterian Church in 2017. To each of you, THANK YOU!! For those who

have not been able or haven't had an opportunity, please, consider even a small commitment of financial support. Every amount helps.

Dublin Presbyterian Church is a terrific place with terrific people doing terrific things, and Cheryl and I are VERY happy and proud to be counted among its members. It has changed our lives. Our church does change lives. It changes lives within our walls, lives within our local community and lives across our country and the world. This place is not here to just exist. We are not just a club that meets every week in a pretty building occupying prime real estate in an upscale residential neighborhood. We're not talking about mere survival here. That's not why we are here. This church was founded and this building later built for spiritual people to gather in fellowship with others of similar belief to worship God; to learn about God and grow as Christians. It is a place where young parents can bring their children to learn about Jesus and to begin to experience a Christian fellowship. It is a place where we can discuss and even debate what we believe. Where we can believe differently and still feel comfortable and safe. It is a place where we can hear wonderful music praising God. And it is a place from which we can reach out into our world to help. At the end of the day, each one of us wants to believe that our life has purpose and meaning beyond our simple existence. We want to do good things. We want to help others. God is at work in our church doing good things. Dublin Presbyterian Church is a wonderful place to invest your charitable dollars to make a difference. Together, we can maintain and build upon the pace we set in 2016. Together, we can do much.

Grant Varian, Ruling Elder

Stewardship Committee Chair