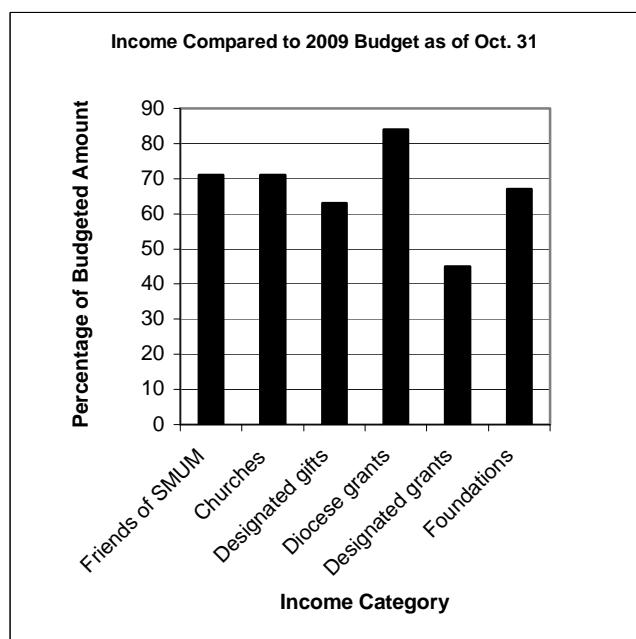


The Canticle

The newsletter of Santa Maria Urban Ministry, San Jose, CA November 2009

Financial Picture at SMUM Improved, but Not Ideal

Thanks to the generosity of many individuals, churches, and other organizations, the financial footing of Santa Maria Urban Ministry (SMUM) is better than might be expected, given the current economic conditions. Some problems remain, however. The graph below shows our income at the end of October in comparison to the budget adopted by the Board of Directors. Because the income is for only 10 months and the budget is for the entire year, the percentages would equal 83 percent (10 months of 12 = 83 percent of the year) if the budget figures were being met.



Most of the income figures are *not* at 83 percent. For example, note that although the contributions from the Diocese of El Camino Real *are* equal to 83 percent, contributions from Friends of SMUM and from churches are about 70 percent of the budgeted amounts, not 83 percent, so they are significantly less than expected. Exacerbating the situation, some of our expenses are greater than expected. For example, vehicle maintenance has caused unavoidable and unanticipated expenses. Contributions have generally increased in

December in prior years, and we hope that this will be true again this year, despite the economy.

Christmas Is Coming to SMUM; You Can Help Make It Merrier

Christmas at SMUM will include the following:

- Receipt of Christmas donations—from 9 AM to noon, Monday through Saturday, from November 23 to December 16
- Gift wrapping parties—as scheduled from December 1
- Studio 17 Christmas party—December 3
- ABC Playtime Christmas party—December 9
- Distribution of Christmas gifts—from December 7 through December 19
- Christmas break—from December 20 to January 4

As you prepare for Christmas, there are lots of ways you can remember Santa Maria Urban Ministry clients and help make their holiday more joyous. Here are a few suggestions:

- ✓ **Bring gifts** such as new toys and clothing to SMUM. Because we need to ensure that all items are appropriate, we ask that you leave them unwrapped. Clients include all ages so the range of gift choices is wide.
- ✓ **Purchase a \$50 gift certificate** for a client family and bring it to the SMUM Reception Desk. You can also obtain documentation for a tax deduction at the desk.
- ✓ **Get a group together** (your family, choir, Bible Study group, or friends) and schedule a wrapping party at SMUM. You can call Lawrence Robles and arrange a time that's convenient for all of you. Bring some cookies and have a good time while you're doing good!
- ✓ **Send a check** to support the ongoing work of SMUM—a gift that is always welcome.

Representatives of Companion Dioceses Visit SMUM

Bishop Michael Perham and his team from Gloucester, England, Bishop Gerard Mpango and his team from Western Tanganyika, and Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves and representatives from the Diocese of El Camino Real all gathered for lunch at SMUM on September 21. This was one of several stops that day on the Bishops' itinerary that took them from Mountain View to Seaside, as they traveled the width and breadth of the diocese, meeting people; praying in English, Spanish, and Swahili; studying; and answering questions.

Lucretia Mann, chronicler of the activities for the visit, stated, "We traveled to downtown San Jose for lunch and a tour of Santa Maria Urban Ministry. We were greeted by Lawrence Robles and his dedicated staff and offered a delicious lunch of sparkling apple juice, tamales, beans, salad and rice. Our three bishops were honored with bouquets of red roses. Lawrence led a tour through the facilities, graciously answering all the team members' questions.



Team members tour the SMUM warehouse. Images Copyright 2009 by Katy Dickinson and John Plocher.

Among the impressive facilities with which team members were acquainted were the ABC classrooms (academics, behavior, creativity) where young children enjoy supervised morning activities. Next we viewed the facilities for the Studio 17 program where older children learn and practice computer skills through mentoring and peer relationships. After visiting the newly

refurbished playground used by the ABC children, we toured the spacious and refurbished warehouse."



Bishops Perham and Gray-Reeves, SMUM Executive Director Lawrence Robles, and Bishop Mpango. Images Copyright 2009 by Katy Dickinson and John Plocher.

The partnership was established on the First Sunday of Advent 2008 to provide a safe setting for conversation about the difficult issues that divide the Anglican world. In the formation of the triad relationship, Bishop Perham suggested that in companionship, "We really need to include an American, an English, and an African diocese companion together, keeping all the matters that challenge our communion before us."

Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves observed, "When we are grounded in Jesus Christ, we are okay, no matter what. He is our foundation. Across all our diversity grounding in an eternal and spiritual reality is something we all seek. That basic human need is one of our most unifying realities."

Bishop Mpango stated, "The good news is that God invites us into relationship now and in the world to come. What is needed is our convictions, our desire to spread the gospel and the Spirit will do the rest."

Answered Prayers

Santa Maria has received generous, much-needed assistance in the past few months, and we give special thanks for the following:

- **CrossRoads 90 grant** of \$3,500 from St. Edward's Episcopal, San Jose, to be used for Studio 17 software and maintenance contracts. CrossRoads 90 funds come from investments made after some of the church property was purchased for a freeway. Each year between \$25,000 and \$30,000 is awarded in grants to projects that members of the congregation support. We are grateful that a SMUM project has been chosen again this year.
- **Silicon Valley Foundation grant** of \$15,000 to help support our food pantry. With hunger increasing in our area, this grant is particularly timely and useful.
- **Wu Foundation grant** of \$1,000 to be used for Studio 17.
- **United Methodist Church of Los Altos contribution** of \$2,398. In September, the church invited SMUM to be the local social service agency profiled for their Buck-a-Month Club in which members of the congregation are encouraged to drop monetary donations (buck-a-month) in designated baskets as they exit the sanctuary. Lawrence Robles was invited to the pulpit to tell the congregation about SMUM's programs and services, and he included a slide presentation. We have been richly blessed by this relationship and are very grateful to the members of the LAUMC.
- **Janes Living Trust gift of \$3,000 and an anonymous gift of \$2,500.** Gifts that are not tied to specific programs are particularly helpful because they can be used for utilities, maintenance costs, and unexpected expenses.

- **Britannia Arms gift**, another generous contribution of 300 turkeys from the British pub on Almaden Expressway.
- **St. Timothy's fundraiser proceeds.** This dinner is described on page 3.
- **Shop for a Cause proceeds of \$775.** Macy's offered cards with discounts from 10 to 25 percent, depending on the item, for shopping at the store on October 18. Cards were sold for \$5 and all proceeds went directly to various causes, including SMUM.



Edy Unthank, SMUM grant writer, sells cards. Images Copyright 2009 by Katy Dickinson and John Plocher

Many thanks to everyone who purchased Shop for a Cause cards or otherwise helped with gifts recently. All are greatly appreciated.

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A Feast of All Things Chocolate For Santa Maria Urban Ministry

The following article is an excerpt from the blog of Katy Dickinson, <http://blogs.sun.com/katysblog/>, who attended the dinner with her husband John. Both are SMUM Board members.

On 17 October 2009, St. Timothy's Episcopal Church in Mountain View held "A Feast of All Things Chocolate," a fund-raising formal dinner and auction to benefit SMUM.



St. Tim's dinner. Images Copyright 2009 by Dickinson and Plocher

Peggy Aoki was the head chef, assisted by Jennifer Ezell of St. Tim's. The cooks clearly had fun putting together the meal, especially the desserts. Both dark and white chocolate fountains were offered for dipping strawberries and cake. My favorite was the ganache in shortbread boats. St. Tim's youth served the dinner and Vestry members were hosts. We won certificates for two custom-made cakes in the silent auction.



Images Copyright 2009 by Dickinson and Plocher.

My husband and I were asked to speak about SMUM and why we support it. Here is some of what we said:

John and I have been helping mentor a dozen or so grade and middle school kids in Studio 17, the after school program, for several years. During the school year, we focus on homework and computer skills. Last summer, we went on field trips to The Tech Museum of Innovation, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, and the San Francisco Zoo.



Some of the Studio 17 kids at work in the lab. Images Copyright 2009 by Dickinson and Plocher

Due to a shortage of regular volunteers, the after-school program is only open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but we *could be* open every weekday if we had more adults available. When we started, John's and my qualifications were minimal - a desire to help, a couple of hours a week, and a willingness to learn Spanish from a first grader! Since then, the kids have stolen our hearts. Our Spanish is improving slowly.

SMUM's after school program has two goals:

1. Every child will feel safe and cherished.
2. Every child will be encouraged to complete high school.

SMUM now has an operating budget of about \$200,000/year, of which less than 15 percent comes from the Diocese of El Camino Real. More than 100 families a week from come to the facility for basic foodstuffs to supplement what they are able to buy with food stamps. Dozens of homeless clients get hygiene packs and clothing as well.