

Money Follows Mission

The standard phrase "money follows mission" is often used for annual pledge campaigns in many church congregations.

However, it's often true that people are more willing to donate for "brick and mortar" items rather than making a pledge towards the annual church budget. Line items like electricity, water, toilet paper, copy paper for bulletins, staff salaries, insurance and other monthly church expenses don't always motivate folks to donate! But the church's bills are due each month.

People are moved by stories of meeting specific needs and will pledge toward a mission, a program, or things the congregation does for the community.

And the standard phrase, "Money Follows Mission" is correct: a strong description of our church mission, and the work we do toward our mission will draw money to fund that mission.

Last summer we had a situation arise at my church (Salem Lutheran – Port Lavaca) when the main HVAC system in the sanctuary went "kaput" just as summer vacation started. Luckily, our Fellowship Hall air conditioner worked so we were able to hold our worship services in the much smaller space. The real problem was we didn't have enough money in our "continuing repair fund" to cover the estimated \$25,000 needed to replace the "unrepairable" old system.

So, while worshipping in our much smaller space, we asked our members to consider donating, above and beyond, towards replacing our sanctuary HVAC system. Their reply was amazing! Within weeks we received more than enough pledges to replace the old HVAC system (proving air conditioning on the Gulf Coast is a must) but we also were able to replenish our "continuing repair fund" for future emergencies.

Our members realized that having a heated and cooled sanctuary greatly enhanced our church's main mission of "Sharing the Love of Christ" in our town and community. They went above and beyond their regular offering to fix an emergency and fulfill an unexpected need. But more importantly, I think we learned that when we work together as the body of Christ, becoming HIS hands and feet in our community, we have more than enough for our mission!

Submitted by Steve Bales, Salem Lutheran Church, Port Lavaca, Texas