

UPDATE to SOS letter printed in the October Newsletter. These figures are the most recent and this version of the SOS letter is the most current to date.

News from the SOS (Save Our Steeple) Committee

September has brought us ever nearer to reaching our goal of \$99,292 for the restoration of the church steeple. Many of you have noted that there have already been changes to the structure. Our contractor Jay Southgate has started the shop work on the belfry and clock tower. He has taken dimensions, created drawings and will be building the new sides to the structure in his shop. The completed sides will be brought to the building site and erected sometime in the next few weeks. Completion of the entire project is projected for the end of October.

If you have looked closely at the fundraising thermometer you have noticed that it is still not all the way to the top. Fundraising for this project has gone very well with support from both our church and community. We have come so far in a relatively short period of time. Here's what's happened for fundraising over the past 10 months:

- *Fundraising Kickoff-Piano Concert by Alison Cerutti
- *Sent an appeal letter to the congregation
- *Sent an appeal letter to the community of Northfield
- *The Village of Northfield sent an appeal out with their April 2011 water bills
- *Enjoyed a community wide SOS dinner
- *Hosted a night of music featuring Peace and Pardon and Mark Lester and a Silent Auction
- *Learned about spring wildflowers in a presentation by Lauren Howard along with a Raffle
- *Rallied to the challenge of a matching donation
- *Had a successful summer Plant Sale
- *Sold Butterfly cards
- *Collected Bottle Redemption donations

The committee has also written 3 grants yielding \$13,750 and approached numerous area business owners for a total of \$6,000. Gifts in memory of Gibby Knapp, Barbara Aseltine and Ruth Patch also brought in a significant amount. When all is accounted for we have raised \$91,673.00 in 10 short months. This is an impressive amount for a small congregation and community. We are nearly there!! **We still need to raise \$12,237. This figure reflects the unanticipated cost of engineering plans that the State of Vermont required before we could complete phase one of the project and collect our Historic Preservation Grant.**

It is crunch time! We have a grant application that is being submitted to the Northfield Savings Bank this month. Grant money from private and public foundations is very scarce at this time. We cannot count on getting our fundraising finished up with grant awards.

The SOS committee is exploring the possibility of another benefit concert; a fundraising harvest dinner; a raffle of a weekend getaway at an inn or B&B; and a letter requesting support from past members, particularly adults that grew up in this church. If you know someone who grew up in our church but are not currently on our mailing list contact one of the SOS committee members with their information. If you are friends with an inn or B&B owner that would donate a weekend getaway let us know

We need your help. Make a donation, offer to help with a fundraiser, tell a friend about our history and how they can help to preserve it. Put a matching challenge out to the congregation.

The Save Our Steeple Committee challenges each of you reading this letter to make a (another) contribution to this project. No donation is too small (or too large!!!). Help us to end this fundraising campaign in the next several weeks so that this project can be completed before the snow flies. It's up to you. Do it today!

Peace and Blessings,

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