

When I was in politics I had to do a lot of fundraising and was known to be very good at it. There was no magic to my approach. I believed strongly, even passionately, in the issues I advocated, and knew that being elected to the General Assembly would give me a chance to fight for them. So the key was believing and working hard. Why was fundraising so important? I knew I would have to have the money to get on television and personally appeal to my fellow Virginians in their homes and ask them to vote for me.

So today I am appealing to you about a need that I feel passionately about. Providence United Methodist Church is led by God through the passionate ministry of Pastor Keith Vernon and Providence is my home church. Under Pastor Keith's leadership, Providence has a vitality and energy that is spirit filled and very exciting. God is moving mightily and our church is growing. As a result of the demographics of the congregation, however, Keith can be found mowing grass, helping to pour and finish concrete and, will be building a ramp to the church office.

The reason I'm writing is that Keith has asked me to raise approximately 17K dollars to address the acute needs of a house across the street from our church. This is the home of a dear person by the name of Jessica. Jessica is a destitute 62-year-old woman on oxygen and otherwise in very bad physical health. She lives in her home alone with her beloved cat, Mr. Dutton. Jessica currently receives \$1000 per month from Medicaid. In addition, Jessica is only able to work part time at home as an employee for a one-call system for a maximum of six hours a day and she is so worn out by the end of the week that she cannot work on Fridays. Jessica's tax return for 2022 shows an income of 12,000 dollars.

So let me say a word about Jessica's home. Jessica has no functioning water heat which means she has no hot water at all. To make matters worse, a plumber whom she paid \$500 dollars for fixing a stopped up water pipe in the kitchen sink, cut the pipe, and after a feeble attempt to find the obstruction, left. Jessica attempted to repair the kitchen sink drain pipe with duct tape. However, the drain pipe continues to leak as result of the plumber's incompetence leaving her unable to use the kitchen sink.

As bad as these conditions are, the room off from the kitchen is worse. There is a hole in the roof about the size of a bathtub where she has placed numerous plastic buckets to catch the rain water that pours in from the enormous hole.

Pastor Keith has retained a highly recommended roofing contractor who has come to the home, gotten on the roof, and inspected it. The bad news is that the entire roof needs replacing, and not just the roof over the room next to the kitchen. At Keith's request, the contractor gave an estimate of 12 thousand dollars.

Now turning to the inside of the house. When I was student pastor at Woolwine, there was an active county wide mission group that took on projects like this one. Now, of the former 10 United Methodist Churches in Patrick, Providence is the only one left. So, if there is still a mission team in the County, Providence would not be eligible for a mission team of these United Methodist churches that disaffiliated.

So why the need for another five thousand? Pastor Keith estimates that the items needed to be purchased to address the needs inside the house would be about five thousand dollars. This figure is exclusive of labor that again, for demographic reasons, Providence cannot provide.

A word about Providence. Our congregation has between 35 and 55 persons attending on Sunday and we are growing at a rapid pace. The per capita income of Patrick County between 2017 and 2021 was \$29,049, with 14.3% living in poverty. While our church is fortunate in terms of the level of giving of our congregation to meet our budget, this project exceeds our ability to finance.

So, we pray that God will send us stewards to help with the cost of the roof, and to help us buy the necessary materials for the inside of the house. Most importantly we pray that God will send us a mission team.

I thank you for your consideration of this appeal and pray God's blessings on you as we all continue to follow the sacred path of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yours in Christ,

Mary Sue