



YOUR FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Stewardship requires a willingness to give of our time, talent, and treasure from the very core of who we are and what we have; from substance rather than abundance.

St. Gabriel is a tithing parish. Ten percent of our offertory goes to various charities. The Tithing Committee helps in deciding which charities receive our tithing monies.

St. Gabriel Finance Council assists the Pastor in the management of the parish's finances. They advise on fiscal matters and approve the budget for the fiscal year beginning in July.

Offertory envelope packets will be sent to your home every month. Your envelope packets will include weekly contribution envelopes and envelopes for special collections that are taken in Catholic Churches across the country (Retired Religious, Churches in Latin America, etc.) **Use of contribution envelopes aids the Parish in assessing Mass attendance and makes for more accurate statements for tax purposes.**

Statements of contributions are sent after the end of every year. **Only registered members receive annual tax statements, along with parish and diocesan mailings.** If you would like your tax statement via email in the form of a PDF release, send a request to jregister@stgabrielchurch.org

E-Giving

We are partnering with Parish Soft, a leading provider of software services to churches across the U.S., to offer this service to you. Registration is a simple matter of logging into <http://stgabrielgiving.org> to complete an easy registration process. The process is menu-driven and fairly simple to follow.

Donations are debited per your direction either monthly or weekly from your bank account or credit card. There is no cost to you as a parishioner. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact our Business Manager at (704) 362-5047, ext. 211 for a registration card.

ST. GABRIEL CRADLE A Developmental Playschool

This ministry at St. Gabriel Catholic Church is a nursery playschool and pre-kindergarten program for children 2, 3, 4, and 5 years old, which runs September through May. The lessons and activities that we teach are centered around a creative, developmental curriculum that is based on the belief that a child's work is play.

Tours are available beginning in mid-January, and registration begins in February for new families. Priority is given to currently enrolled families and St. Gabriel parishioners.

Questions may be directed to the Program Director at the Cradle office: (704) 362-5047, ext. 280.

ST. GABRIEL CATHOLIC SCHOOL

St. Gabriel is a part of the diocesan Mecklenburg Area Catholic School (MACS) system and provides quality education in the Catholic tradition for children in Kindergarten through the 5th Grade. The school is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

For more information see our website at www.stgabrielcatholicschool.org or call the school office at (704) 366-2409. To register, please contact the MACS Director of Admissions: (704) 370-3273.



YOUTH MINISTRY

A great opportunity for meeting friends!

St. Gabriel Youth Group (grades 4-6th and 7-8th)

Activities include Progressive Dinners, Lock-Ins, Talent Shows, Pool Parties, service opportunities, and other safe, seasonal events. Events are supervised and adult volunteers are always welcome to help. For information, contact the Youth Hotline at 704-362-5047, ext. 270.

The High School Venture Crew A group for High School Students who enjoy high adventure, religious team building and life experience activities. This group is youth led with adult advisors. Meets on Sunday evenings at 6:30 p.m. Opportunity for service to others. For information, contact 704-364-5431.



St. Gabriel Catholic Church

*Guide to Parish Life, Faith Formation,
Sacraments, and Education*

Welcome to Our Faith Community!

We welcome you and your family to our faith community. It is our hope that you will make St. Gabriel your second home. We are blessed to have you as part of our parish family.

Registration

If you have already registered as a member of St. Gabriel, we thank you. Be assured that the personal information received on your registration form will be treated as confidential by our church staff. Upon your registration, you will be assigned a parish ID number and the Diocese will be notified of your membership. If you have any questions, please call our Membership Coordinator at (704) 362-5047, ext. 220.

Mailings and Offertory Envelopes

You will start to receive parish mailings in 1-4 weeks and offertory envelopes and diocesan mailings within 6-8 weeks.

Cluster Groups: Within our parish, we have formed Cluster Groups to create small faith communities. As a new member, you and your family will be assigned to one of these groups based on your street address and zip code. We hope that you will find fellowship and hospitality in your group.

Contents of this Newsletter:

- ✚ *Parish life and social groups*
- ✚ *Ministerio Hispano*
- ✚ *Faith formation and religious education*
- ✚ *Sacraments*
- ✚ *Youth ministry*
- ✚ *Preschool and elementary school at St. Gabriel*
- ✚ *Financial contributions and offertory envelopes*
- ✚ *Scouting and athletics*

Our Mission Statement

The one voice of the Angel Gabriel brought God's message of Christ's coming to the world. The many voices of St. Gabriel Church continue to announce God's message. We strive to welcome and engage all in a Christ-centered life to live the Gospel message by actively participating in the celebration of the liturgy, prayer, sacraments, and stewardship. Guided by the Holy Spirit, in fellowship and service, we bring God's transforming love to all.



"Guardian Eyes-Gabriel"
courtesy of artist Rip Kastaris

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PARISH LIFE, OUTREACH, WORSHIP AND SOCIAL GROUPS



Many opportunities are offered for fellowship at St. Gabriel Church. Some, but not all, include:

Coffee & Donuts: Served after the Sunday morning Masses and the 6:30 Spanish Mass. All families are invited!

Faith Cluster Groups: Small faith communities for the enhancement of faith and fellowship, as well as strengthening a sense of family through works of hospitality, care giving, outreach, and evangelization. Please join us!

Christian Mother's Group: Our programs nurture and celebrate our vocations as mothers. We encourage each other through personal and spiritual growth, fellowship and service opportunities. Let us know how we can support you.

Charlotte Newcomers: "Moving On After Moving In" 9-week session offered in the Fall and Spring. Based on the book *After the Boxes are Unpacked: Moving on After Moving In* by Susan Miller, this ministry is designed to enfold, encourage and engage women who are new to the community. We meet weekly to provide each other with personal and spiritual support and to learn about Charlotte and the St. Gabriel faith community. The group enables people to make connections to facilitate their adjustment to their new environment. Meetings are followed by lunch at one of the local restaurants.

MINISTERIO HISPANO

El Ministerio Hispano de nuestra iglesia se formó con el propósito de servir a la comunidad hispana católica de Charlotte.

Desde Noviembre de 2004 hemos venido celebrando nuestra misa dominical en Español, a las 6:30 p.m. Para nuestra celebración eucarística, contamos con la participación de muchos voluntarios y de nuestro coro "Alegría Hispana".

A través de nuestro ministerio, miembros de nuestra congregación participan en varios servicios en español como son: Estudio bíblico, grupo de oración, preparación bautismal para padres, preparación sacramental para jóvenes, liturgia para los niños, preparación pre-matrimonial y retiros espirituales.

Estamos deseosos de servir a Dios y a nuestra comunidad. Todos son bienvenidos, los esperamos!

Reference our parish phone list or website for contact information.

Gabriel Millenials Young Adult Group: Fellowship groups for singles and couples in their 20s and 30s, providing service, spiritual, educational and social activities.

Men's Club: Provides the men of the parish an opportunity to come together for fellowship and service. Volunteer opportunities include helping at the Annual Breakfast, Fish Fry, sports outings, Pasta Dinner, Christmas Tree Sales, etc.

OWLS (Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors): We are an organization for adults 50 years and older. Monthly programs are designed for spiritual enrichment, support and fellowship. We organize trips, social activities and regular meetings.

Ronald MacDonald House: A team of volunteers cooks dinner once per month at the Charlotte Ronald MacDonald House. Many families volunteer together for this wonderful opportunity to serve others.

Memory Makers: We provide programs for seniors of our parish who are 75 years or older to offer fellowship, light lunch and entertainment.

Music Ministry: We offer many opportunities for individuals and families to serve and make a joyful noise through music.

SCOUTING AND ATHLETICS

Boy and Girl Scout Programs: The Scout Programs offered at St. Gabriel encourage skill building and responsibility in boys and girls; they also promote the development of strong leadership and decision-making abilities. All activities are age appropriate and based on developing self-potential, relating to others, developing character, values and contributing to society. Programs for girls include *Daisy Girl Scouts (K)*, *Brownies (1st - 3rd)* and *Junior Girl Scouts (4th - 5th)*. Programs for boys include *Tiger Cubs (1st)*, *Wolf Cubs (2nd)*, *Bear Cubs (3rd)*, *Webelos I (4th)*, and *Webelos II (5th)*.

Athletics: St. Gabriel Athletic Assoc. (SGAA) provides competitive programs for members of the Parish and School. Participants learn the benefits and responsibilities of being a member of a team. Sports offered include *Basketball for girls and boys (grades 3-12)*, *Soccer for girls and boys (grades 3-6)*, *Volleyball for girls (grades 5-8)* and *Cheerleading for girls (grades 4-5)*.

FAITH FORMATION IN ACTION

We offer religious education for all children not attending Catholic schools from kindergarten through ninth grade. Classes are offered weekly from September through April at the following times:

Sundays

3:45 - 4:45 p.m.

6:30-7:30 p.m.

Wednesdays

6:30-7:30 p.m.

Sacramental Preparation for First Holy Communion The Diocese of Charlotte requires two years of preparation before children may receive the sacraments of First Eucharist (Communion) and Reconciliation (Confession). Children who start religious education in the first grade will then receive both sacraments in the second grade.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Children Children in third grade and up who have not received First Holy Communion may enroll in our two-year program, called the *Rite of Christian Initiation*. Children attend class for two years and receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and First Holy Communion at the end of the second year of instruction. **This special class is only offered on Sundays from 3:45 to 4:45 p.m. and 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

Adult Education Adult education classes are offered on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m. Bible studies are also offered on Monday morning and on Tuesday evenings. Special programs throughout the year include our Parish Mission, Annual Women's Day and a Liturgical Ministers' Retreat.

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) welcomes adults wishing to learn more about the Catholic faith. Classes meet Wednesday 6:30-8:00 p.m. from September until the end of June. The parish welcomes our new brothers and sisters into the Catholic Church at our Easter Vigil and at Pentecost.

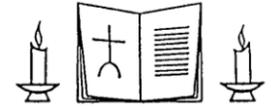
Confirmation Preparation for Children The sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in ninth grade. Children must have at least two years of religious instruction in Catholic school or Faith Formation to receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

Confirmation classes are offered on Sundays at 3:45 to 4:45 pm. and 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Adult Confirmation Adults over 18 years of age who have never been confirmed are invited to attend RCIA (see above).

Vacation Bible School is offered annually, usually in June, for one week. The program runs from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Here our faith is celebrated with young children through song, art, play, prayer and story time.

The fees charged for religious education are used to cover the costs of textbooks and materials. We will waive these fees if they represent a financial burden for a family. All religious education teachers are volunteers who have stepped forward to share their faith with the children of the parish. They do not receive any compensation for their time and we appreciate their service to the parish community.



SACRAMENTS

Baptisms are celebrated every weekend on Saturday at 12 noon and Sunday at 1:45 p.m. Parents must attend a Baptism Preparation class prior to the baptism of their first child. Classes are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. You may register for the class and reserve the date for your child's baptism by calling the church office.

Bautizos En Espanol are celebrated on the 1st Saturday and 1st Sunday of each month. Preparation class for parents is held in the Library on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 5:00 p.m. Contact Mirian Veloz at 704-877-7992 to register for the class.

Reconciliation Saturday 3:30-4:30 or any time by appointment. Penance Services are held during Advent and Lent.

Confesiones en Espanol Domingos 5:00-6:00 pm

First Holy Communion and First Reconciliation Children are eligible to receive these sacraments in second grade if they have completed two years of religious instruction in Catholic school or Faith Formation. (See also: RCIA for Children.)

Confirmation 6th, 7th and 8th grade in Faith Formation or Catholic School are required before the reception of Confirmation in 9th grade. Adults who have not been confirmed and would like to receive the sacrament are encouraged to contact the Director of Faith Formation at 704-362-5047, ext. 210 for information about the adult classes.

Anointing of the Sick Contact the Parish office.

Hospitalized/Homebound Communion Please notify the parish office if you are in the hospital. By federal law the hospitals are not allowed to notify us if you are hospitalized. We have clergy and lay people who visit the hospitals daily with Communion. If you are unable to come to church and would like to receive Communion at home, please call our Pastoral Coordinator at 704-362-5047, ext. 212, and she will arrange to have a lay person bring Communion to you.

Marriage Weddings are celebrated on Saturdays at 2:00 and 7:00 p.m. Arrangements need to be made at least 6 months (preferably 9 months) in advance. Couples are required to complete FOCCUS, our marriage preparation program. Call the Sacramental Coordinator at 704-362-5047, ext. 204 for more information. **Matrimonios en Espanol** are arranged through Mirian Veloz at 704-877-7992.

Remarriages, Annulments, and Convalidation (Marriage Blessing) Many Catholics have questions about the status of their marriage or whether or not they are free to remarry. St. Gabriel would like to assist you in exploring your options within the church. Please call the church office at 704-364-5431 to speak with a priest.