

Dreams and Promises

Preparing a Vision for Ministry

The average line item budget provides no reason for generous giving and countless excuses for token giving.

- Those who prepare line item budgets tend to make very conservative decisions
- Line item expenditures are usually modest
- In line item budgets, new spending is met with suspicion

Linking a pledge drive to a line item budget will focus on incremental increases over previous years.

- Inconsequential increases create the belief that parishioners can give the same or only a few dollars more to cover costs.
- During 1990's: income rose for 90% of American households yet charitable giving per capita decreased.

Conventional wisdom says people want to know how every cent of their money will be spent before they make pledges, (that's a myth).

- People want to know that their money will not be spent foolishly, (few people take more than fleeting interest in line item operating budgets).

Pledge drives should always come before the budget is presented for adoption.

- Giving to a budget does not inspire generosity as a fundamental religious principal, which returns to God some proportion of what we have been given, and building a stronger faith.
- Many churches tend to create yesterday
- Most parishioners trust their leaders to make prudent financial decisions

Inspirational Giving can easily be coupled with a Program Budget:

- Program budgets appeal to your heart and soul. Your gifts will achieve wonderful things. You will be a meaningful part of a meaningful cause.
- Program budgets infer a trust in donors and confidence that money won't be spent on extraneous items and projects.
- Dollar goals never decrease—the more you give, the greater the organization, the greater your personal fulfillment.
- Banners do not read, "Give to us, so we can do about the same as last year."
- Parishioners have powerful emotional attachments to churches. Giving to church is not merely about finances. It is an emotional and spiritual commitment that helps define our relationship with God.

Replace the dreary, lockstep annual budget with a thoughtfully prepared program budget and a list of what the church could do and even what it should do. The issue is not whether the church will survive, but whether it will flourish.

Don't allow the budget process to stifle the hopes and dreams of your congregation and your attempts to implement more effective stewardship initiatives.

Adapted in part from *Creating Congregations of Generous People* pg. 39-45

Your comments and questions are welcome! If you would like to learn more about how Mission Support dollars are making a difference in God's world, or have a story to share or concerns related to personal or congregational Stewardship, please contact, Rev. Scott Schantzenbach, Stewardship Specialist for the New Jersey Synod. 14 Spring Meadow ~ Oxford, NJ 07863 Voice: 908-453-3514 Fax: 908-453-3619 sschantzenbach@njsynod.org

STANDARD LINE ITEM BUDGET

Category	Draft	Subtotals	% Budget
Mission Support	\$18,000.00		
ELCA World Hunger	\$1,500.00		
Local Benevolence	\$1,500.00		
Benevolence Subtotal		\$21,000.00	12%
Altar Supplies	\$300.00		
Instrument Care	\$500.00		
Music	\$500.00		
Worship Supplies	\$600.00		
Advertising	\$700.00		
Evangelism Supply	\$350.00		
Adult Education	\$300.00		
Catechetics	\$1,200.00		
Youth Ministry	\$200.00		
Sunday Church School	\$1,400.00		
Vacation Bible School	\$850.00		
Social Ministry	\$200.00		
Stewardship	\$800.00		
Program Subtotal		\$7,900.00	4%
Office Equip Maintenance	\$1,900.00		
Office Supplies	\$1,700.00		
Postage	\$1,200.00		
Telephone	\$1,500.00		
Technology	\$800.00		
Leadership and Legal	\$1,000.00		
Administration Subtotal		\$8,100.00	5%
Insurance	\$3,400.00		
Mortgage	\$15,815.00		
Property Maintenance	\$4,500.00		
Church Electric	\$3,700.00		
Church Gas	\$4,000.00		
Church Water	\$300.00		
Parsonage Electric	\$1,600.00		
Parsonage Oil	\$1,000.00		
Parsonage Water	\$400.00		
Facilities Subtotal		\$34,715.00	20%
FICA/MCARE	\$1,989.00		
Custodian	\$4,000.00		
Musician	\$17,000.00		
Pastor	\$45,000.00		
Secretary	\$5,000.00		
Music Cont. Educ.	\$500.00		
Pastor Pension/Ins	\$26,500.00		
Pastor Prof. Reimb	\$5,000.00		
Staff Subtotal		\$104,989.00	59%
TOTAL SPENDING PLAN		\$176,704.00	

PROGRAM BUDGET MODEL

Category	03 Draft	03 Subtotals	% Budget
First Fruits Sharing		\$21,000.00	12%
Mission Support	\$18,000.00		
ELCA World Hunger	\$1,500.00		
Local Benevolence	\$1,500.00		
Worship Regularly		\$42,658.00	24%
Program Costs	\$1,600.00		
Admin/Facility Allocation 20%	\$8,560.00		
Staff Allocation 30%	\$32,498.00		
Learn God's Word		\$39,803.00	23%
Program Costs	\$3,950.00		
Admin/Facility Allocation 28%	\$12,030.00		
Staff Allocation 23%	\$23,823.00		
Fellowship & Sharing w/Believers		\$25,425.00	14%
Program Costs	\$1,100.00		
Admin/Facility Allocation 16%	\$6,827.00		
Staff Allocation 17%	\$17,498.00		
Witness for the Gospel		\$21,916.00	12%
Program Costs	\$1,050.00		
Admin/Facility Allocation 8%	\$3,368.00		
Staff Allocation 17%	\$17,498.00		
Work for Justice and Peace		\$25,902.00	15%
Program Costs	\$200.00		
Admin/Facility Allocation 28%	\$12,030.00		
Staff Allocation 13%	\$13,672.00		
TOTAL SPENDING PLAN		\$176,704.00	