



CREATING A NARRATIVE MISSION BUDGET FOR YOUR CONGREGATION

EMENDED BY THE NEW JERSEY SYNOD STEWARDSHIP TEAM
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WHAT IS NARRATIVE MISSION BUDGETING?

- It is the missional story of the congregation.
- One of the most important ways we can effect on-going stewardship education.
- Narrative Budgeting is an essential element in educating the congregation about how money supports the ministry of the church.

MISSION STORY...

- ✘ Just as individuals have stories of God's abundant care for them...
- ✘ ...a narrative mission budget is the mission story of your congregation's ministry and how sharing by participants in the congregation changes and saves lives.

A NEW WAY OF THINKING

- ✘ Line item budgets are accounting tools
- ✘ Narrative budgets are educational and visioning tools
- ✘ We need both but we must be intentional in how we use them

LINE ITEM BUDGETS HAVE LIMITATIONS

- ✘ Line Item Budgets DO NOT:
- ✘ ...show how money is being invested in ministry
- ✘ ...show how volunteer time and talent are impacting parish life
- ✘ ...inspire!

THE NARRATIVE MISSION BUDGET

- ✘ Clearly shows how money is being invested in the various components of congregational ministry
- ✘ Helps to re-frame what the congregation is all about
- ✘ Inspires and interprets how generosity makes a difference
- ✘ Is a tool for growing generous hearts among participants in the congregation

THE NARRATIVE MISSION BUDGET

- ✘ Recognizes that parishioners are not inspired at the prospect of funding administrative costs, postage, heat, cleaning supplies, photocopying, etc.
- ✘ Tells the story of ministry making a measurable impact on peoples lives.

THE NARRATIVE MISSION BUDGET

- ✘ So how does Narrative Budgeting work?
- ✘ Each congregation has several key components to their ministry...

YOUR PARISH'S MINISTRY MIGHT EASILY BE SEGMENTED INTO FOUR TO SIX COMPONENTS:

1. Accompanying Jesus
2. Introducing Jesus
3. Following Jesus
4. Serving Jesus

1. Pastor Care and Fellowship
2. Worship
3. Witness and Outreach
4. Learning and Faith Practice
5. Service and Social Ministry
6. Mission Support

EXPERIENCE SHOWS FOUR TO SIX CATEGORIES SEEMS TO BE OPTIMUM

- ✘ *You will have to make some decisions about what categories are right for your parish.*
- Some parishes like an Education category. You might include education in both a “Following Jesus” segment.
- Or, you could put Education in the “Introducing Jesus” categories if that makes more sense for your parish.

NOTICE WHAT CATEGORY IS NOT INCLUDED IN A NARRATIVE BUDGET

- ✘ Do you see the **ADMINISTRATION** category on this list??
- ✘ Do you see a specific **STAFF** category, or one related to **BUILDING COSTS**?
- ✘ Do **“FIXED” COSTS** appear in one of these lines?

A SMALL TEAM CAN PUT TOGETHER YOUR PARISH'S NARRATIVE BUDGET

- ✘ The steps are as easy as determining:
 1. Staff Allocations
 2. Program and materials
 3. Buildings and Administration
 4. Charting and Recording

STEP #1

- Start by getting your staff to track their time for a month. They can also review their day planners for the previous month.
- Allocate their time among the areas of ministry you have identified.
- Calculate what percentage of staff costs are dedicated to each of the ministry areas.

STEP #2

- ✘ Review your direct program costs for materials, and supplies as they apply to each of your ministry areas.
- ✘ Don't forget to include resources dedicated to Mission Support, World Hunger, Mission Partnerships, etc.

STEP #3

- ✘ The only portion of the budget that you have not yet addressed are costs related to buildings and administration.
- ✘ Conduct an audit of building use. How many total hours is your building in use each week?
- ✘ For what purpose is the building being used? What percentage of your total building and administration costs are charged against your ministry areas?

STEP #4

- ✘ Create a pie chart that reflects the allocation of resources to each of the four to six critical areas of ministry that participants in your congregation are engaged.
- ✘ Create a second pie chart that captures volunteer hours dedicated to these same purposes.

ADDING TIME AND TALENT

- Remember to make charts that illustrate volunteer hours against the categories of ministry
- Participants in the congregation will get a sense of how vital and vibrant the local parish is when looked at in the context of volunteer time
- Many congregations also track time dedicated to community affairs and events (school board service, Volunteer EMT's, Sports coaches, library volunteers, etc.)

IN AN AVERAGE SIZE PARISH

- ✘ When you include all ministries, it would not be uncommon to document 6,000 volunteer hours per year are adding capacity to congregational ministry.
- ✘ That's a significant impact on any local community!!

DON'T GET CAUGHT IN A TRAP

- Many parishes implementing Narrative Budgeting for the first time miss a big point
 - ✘ – they get too caught up on delivering accuracy and don't give themselves permission to treat the Narrative Budget as a **Mission Defining** document.

TELL THE STORY OF INDIVIDUAL SLICES OF THE PARISH MINISTRY PIE

- There is a narrative for Accompanying Jesus, a narrative for Introducing Jesus, a narrative for Serving Jesus, etc.
- Direct the story from the macro story to the micro story

MAKE YOUR MISSION NARRATIVE AS SPECIFIC AS YOU CAN, AND TELL THE MINISTRY SACRED STORIES

- ✘ *Give a specific example or story of the impact of your ministry on an individual or group.*

TELL THE STORIES OF THE REAL PEOPLE TOUCHED BY OUR MINISTRY

- Tell a few stories for each category of ministry
- Participants in the congregation begin to get a better sense of the impact the ministry of the congregation is having on peoples' lives.
- Participants become inspired and take a much greater ownership of the many ministries of the parish

THERE ARE MANY WAYS WE CAN USE TO GET THE STORY OUT

- Congregation Council reports
- Newsletters and email
- Bulletin inserts
- Congregation websites and Face book pages
- Fall Stewardship mailings
- Narrative Mission Budgeting booklets
- Personal contact
- Include in intercessory prayers at worship and small groups

USE SUNDAY WORSHIP TO TELL THE MISSION STORIES

- Put a bulletin insert out each week for six weeks highlighting a different category of ministry
- Pray for that ministry
- Tell a specific story of a person being touched by that ministry

NARRATIVE BUDGETING IS AN EVOLVING PROCESS

- Each year you will get better at this process as you add stories and volunteer time and talent.
- Remember *are on a journey!*
- People will begin to think of sharing in support of congregational ministry in a new way

MAKE THE LINE ITEM BUDGET AVAILABLE

- ✘ ...tell the accountant types in the congregation that there are copies of the completed line item budget available in the parish office and have copies available at the congregation meeting. Do not compromise transparency.
- ✘ As a faith-based organization be determined in your desire to talk about money and ministry in a new way.