

A Message From Church Council

OUR BUDGET CIRCUMSTANCES & REDUCING MINISTERIAL SERVICES

One of our objectives as a Church Council is to reach a balanced budget in order to function well as a church. Unfortunately, our past “status quo” budgeted expenditures far exceed our anticipated revenue for 2024. We find ourselves in a place where we need to face deep cuts to our budget. We ask all members and friends of the church to tune in and actively participate in this year’s financial process.

Thank you to the forty or so members who attended the Winter Congregational Meeting on January 28. Please view the current revision of our **Proposed 2024 Budget with Reduced Ministerial Services** that was presented. Instead of approving the budget, a motion was made and vote taken to defer/table the approval to a Special Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 25. This will provide valuable time to further explore reduced ministerial services to a part-time or shared minister. You may [click here](#) to watch a recording of the meeting.

How did we get here?

We want to provide a review of the last several months:

- A “Status Quo” budget for 2024 was presented at the Fall Congregational Meeting in November 2023. Assuming a pledged income equal to that received in 2022, the proposed budget showed a \$47,832 deficit. While a budget with a deficit has been approved in previous years, the value of the deficit was held in savings as a safety net. Unfortunately, our church savings is no longer able to cover a deficit of this magnitude.
- Church Council presented multiple options for consideration to reach a balanced budget. Considerations included deep cuts to various programs and budget items, reduction in ministerial services and staff, and fundraisers to increase income. Church Council committed to evaluating these options in an effort to support a balanced budget, while monitoring the incoming pledges for 2024.
- Congregational feedback was received through various Listening Sessions held in November, at the Fall Congregational Meeting, and through direct communication. Many people provided suggestions which have been taken into consideration and Church Council has been actively assessing the budget line by line.

Where are we now?

While many members and friends have in fact increased their pledge for 2024, fewer pledges have left us with a larger deficit than anticipated. Church Council feels that the only financially viable and responsible option is to recommend a 2024 budget that includes extensive cuts, a \$5,000 increase in fundraising (which will require additional events and initiatives to be determined and run by volunteers), and a reduction in ministerial services from a full-time minister to a part-time or shared minister.

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OUR BUDGET CIRCUMSTANCES continued...

Next Steps:

In February, Church Council will continue its research into the implications of a part-time or shared minister including realignment of roles and responsibilities and additional volunteer support needed from the congregation as a result.

Examples:

- What are the expectations of a part-time or shared minister?
- What does a typical schedule look like for a part-time or shared minister?
- What church services/programs will need to be reduced, eliminated, or covered by volunteer support?
- What additional volunteer efforts/skills are needed to fulfill the mission of our church if we have a part-time or shared minister?
- What are the expected costs/timeline for interim minister support and new minister transition if our current minister resigns as a result of the change to his Call Agreement?

Listening Sessions:

You are invited to attend Listening Sessions this month.

Sunday, February 4, at 9:00 a.m. (at church)

Sunday, February 11, at 11:00 a.m. (at church)

Thursday, February 15 at 7:00 p.m. (via Zoom)

You may submit questions and feedback if you are not able to be at the Listening Sessions. Please drop a note in the wooden box outside of Fellowship Hall or email Church Council (email address provided below).

Call to ACTION for our Congregation:

1. Please attend a Listening Session on 2/4, 2/11 or 2/15.
2. Please attend 2/25 Special Congregational Meeting.
3. Submit questions and provide input, every voice matters!
4. Prayerfully consider our situation and work with us to help find solutions to support our church's mission going forward.



Questions and concerns can be directed to the Church Council group email address at fcc.committees@gmail.com.

Prepared and submitted with devotion and care
by your Church Council Executive Team,

Jason Jacque, Moderator

Jodi Cowen, Associate Moderator

Rhonda Thompson, Clerk

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