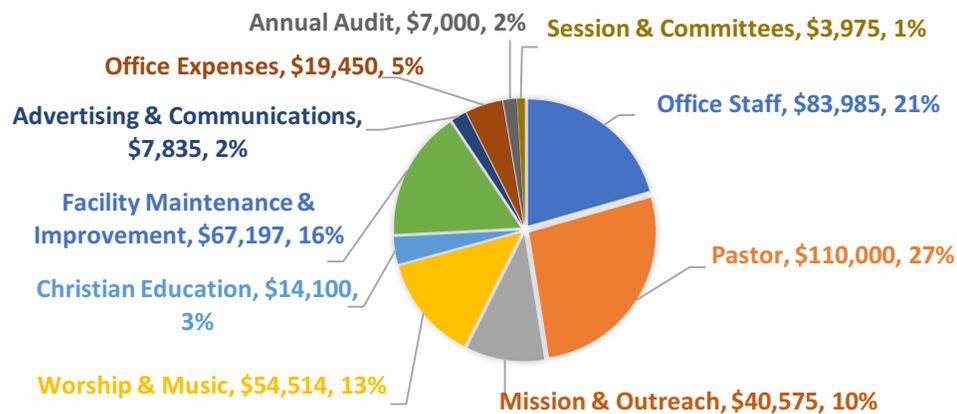


November 8, 2017

Dear Members and Friends of Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies:

We are in the final two months of 2017. This is the time of year when our church committees and Session look at our finances and ask how did contributions stack up against expenses, and how should we balance next year's spending with a realistic projection of the support all of us provide. We invite you to help.

The expense budget for this year is shown below. Our intent was to allocate over half of the total on ministry programs, which we did. This includes our mission and outreach, the worship and music program, Christian education, and the salary, expenses and benefits of the pastor.



**Expense Budget for 2017 - Total \$408,631**

The rest of the budget covers the relatively fixed costs of a small administrative staff, committee expenses, an annual audit, office expenses, maintenance and insurance of our church property, advertising and communications.

Control of expenses has been excellent this year. We have had some surprises, such as an unexpected \$9,000 repair to the exhaust system of our heating plant, but overall, we expect to be under budget for expenses. Part of this is a conclusion that we no longer need a Director of Christian Education. The Session has approved removing the position and its funding.

At this point in the year, we can make reasonably accurate projections of the expenses that will be incurred in November and December. We cannot say the same for contributions. People do not give evenly from month to month, and many make a much greater contribution during December. That may be due to the impact of tax planning or individual preferences for when to meet stewardship pledges. Whatever the reason, December giving often saves us from a budget deficit. For example, here's the giving pattern from last year:



To put this together, here is a summary of the contributions and expenses through October:

Total anticipated contributions for the year:	\$408,631
Contributions expected by this time:	\$340,526
Contributions received:	\$279,685
Difference between expectations and actual:	(\$60,841)
Total budgeted expenses for the year (less DCE):	\$395,901
Expenses budgeted to this point in the year:	\$329,917
Expenses incurred thus far:	\$297,480
Difference between budgeted and actual expenses:	\$ 32,437
 Net result is a current deficit of	 (\$28,404)

As you can see, we are behind on receiving contributions and are ahead on controlling expenses. This results in the current deficit of \$28,404. But if you compare this with the giving pattern shown in the chart, we should come out OK at the end of the year. We might still have a deficit, but strong year-end giving could result in a balance of revenue and expenses.

We do, however, have a longer range problem. Membership and overall participation in churches has been declining for some time. We have not been shielded from this trend. Our membership has dropped by about 24% over the past 5 years. Our rolls show that we now have 270 members. 5 years ago, that figure was 356.

What does that mean for us and for our church?

- First, to sustain the ministry of our church, we all need to contribute what we can to keep this church vibrant and meaningful. As with most organizations, much of the funding for our church comes from a small percentage of our membership. Half of the total budget is satisfied by just 30 households in the church. But we all receive spiritual nourishment from the fellowship, programs and ministry found here. The church needs the contributions from all of us, no matter the amount.
- Second, we should not accept the doom of church life that the overall trend suggests. We participate in our church because it gives us more than is measured in budget dollars. The message and friendship that emanates from the pastor means something profound to all of us. The fellowship provided through small groups, Bible studies, after-church discussions, music programs, Grace and Grub get-togethers, hospitality events, committee meetings and other activities is significant for each of us. We need to share this with others who have not found a church home, and invite them to ours.

We will be in good shape if we have strong year-end giving. That has been our usual experience. Regardless of size of your gift – please make it happen this year as well.

We must also develop a realistic budget for the coming year that will allow us to move forward with a strong Christian ministry. We may be compelled to reduce some funding for church activities. However, we have limited flexibility. We cannot cut back on what it takes to maintain and operate the church facility without setting out on a path of deterioration that will do disservice to everybody. Our pay scales are already low. We have little discretion on paying the bills for utilities and insurance. We need to maintain a presence on the web, in our newsletter and in local advertising to keep everybody informed and to reach out to potential new members. We should not cut back on important mission programs such as our music ministry and mission and outreach efforts. The bottom line is that we need to sustain a healthy flow of contributions from everybody, no matter what the amount, so that we can sustain all aspects of our church. And we need to grow the church through additional members, regular attendees and visitors.

As always, we need your ideas as well as your participation and funding support. Contact any of the Session members directly, or use our website ([pccrusa.org](http://pccrusa.org)) to send suggestions. Click on the *CONTACT* button at the right of the main menu line, then use the form on that page.

*Your Session:*

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Bob Holcomb  
Phil Ingersoll  
Mike Moon*

*Ford Nielsen  
Carol Nussbaumer  
Peter Plaut  
Mark Richards*

*Kathy Sherrod  
Caroline Smith  
Evelyn Wilson*