

**SOTC 2025 Budget Addendum**

In order to provide further information regarding the decisions made in formulation of the 2025 budget, please review the following information. This budget, as presented here, has been recommended by our Congregational Council for review and adoption by the congregation.

Discussion and vote on the budget will take place during our **Congregational Budget Meeting on Sunday, November 24 following worship.**

Overall Notes

* In creation of team budgets, each team considered their 2024 ministry expenses and also considered anticipated expenses for 2025.
* Several team budgets increased for 2025. This is primarily due to inflation of costs that are outside our control (i.e.: utility and insurance costs rising). Specific notes for each team are below.
* Based on pledges received, anticipated regular giving, and rent payments, our estimated revenue for 2025 is about $125,000. This does not include offerings from visitors and those who give on a semi-regular basis.
* On the whole, the overall 2025 budget is $7345.56 more than our 2024 budget.

Detailed Explanation of Portions of 2025 Budget

*Education*

* The line item for Adult Education has been decreased as much of our adult education resources are being curated by leaders within our congregation.
* The amount budgeted for background checks and Bible has *increased* from 2024 to 2025 because we anticipate completing more background checks for leaders in 2025 and distributing more Bibles to our children/youth.
* Costs of devotionals have increased, leading to an increase in our budgeted line item.

*Worship and Music and Altar Guild*

* Budgeted amount for copyright fees has increased to accommodate the two copyright licenses we utilize. These licenses are necessary to print, project and livestream music.
* The line item for musician compensation has increased because we miscalculated the needed amount for musician compensation in 2023. The proposed amount for 2025 covers musician compensation for 4 Sundays a month, plus special services like Christmas Eve and Holy Week services.
* The line item for Supply Pastor has been zeroed as we will continue to empower lay leaders to facilitate worship in Pastor Aleese’s absence.

*Property*

* Budgeted amount for Cleaning Materials/Paper Supplies has been decreased based on receipts from 2024.
* Landscaping has been zeroed as this is not a ministry priority.
* Lawn care has been zeroed as this ministry has been assumed by the Property Team and volunteers in the congregation.
* Floor cleaning was delayed a year because of budget concerns in 2024. To get back on a cycle of regular cleaning, the Property Team suggests cleaning the tile floors in 2025.
* Utility costs have risen, resulting in a higher budgeted amount.

*Stewardship and Evangelism*

* Mindful of the entire budget, the Stewardship Team recommends we continue with our current level of giving to the Southeastern Iowa Synod through Mission Support. This recommendation also comes with the knowledge that other fundraisers (like a portion of Soup Fest proceeds) will be given to Mission Support.

*Technology/Marketing and Communications*

* Online technology subscriptions (like our email service, online video meeting platforms, etc.) have decreased because we have been able to secure many of these subscriptions for a lesser amount/for free as a non-profit organization. The same is true for our website hosting service.
* The Marketing and Communications Team suggests adding a line item for marketing costs to promote the congregation and its ministries in the community.

*Social*

* Based on expenses from 2024, the Social Team suggests decreasing their budget by $100.

*Administration and Finance*

* Like many congregations in our synod, we anticipate an increase in insurance costs in 2025. The Administration and Finance Team recently reviewed our insurance policy and agree that we have appropriate coverage at a reasonable cost.

*Church Council*

* Following an annual review of Pastor Aleese’s performance, Council recommends a raise (based on years of experience) in accordance with Synod Minimum Guidelines.
* In January 2024, as a congregation we voted to have Kathy (office manager) assume more responsibilities (and thus accumulate more hours) as she took on a portion of the treasurer’s role. We did not anticipate this when creating the budget in Nov 2023. Therefore, we *will* exceed the budgeted amount for the office manager's compensation by about $1,600.
* Following an annual review of our office manager, Council recommends a 5% raise (comparable to the raise given to Pastor Aleese). Because of this, along with budgeting appropriately based on the average number of hours Kathy works, Council proposes an increase to the line item for Office Manager Compensation.
* Hourly compensation for our custodian remains the same from 2024.

If you have further questions about the proposed 2025 budget, contact members of the Congregation Council (Delene McConnaha, Gladys Reif, Erin Jorgensen, Linda Adams, Kathy Dunham, Connie Hoekstra, Joanne Drinkall, and Melissa Booth).

On behalf of our Shepherding Teams and Congregational Council, we thank you for your careful and prayerful attention to our congregation’s budget. May God continue to bless us as we share God’s Good News and join in the work of Christ’s Kingdom!