



Alexandria First Presbyterian Church

Narrative Budget - 2024

Alexandria First Presbyterian Church

“Gathered in God’s Grace and led by the Holy Spirit, we joyfully worship, prayerfully seek and gratefully share as a loving family growing in Jesus Christ.”

Every year the Stewardship & Finance Team carefully and thoughtfully produces a planned operating budget that is then reviewed and adopted by the Session. The annual budget is prepared with a great deal of analysis, consultation, and prayer. The budget lists the church’s income and expenses in detail. That line-item budget shows our funds and costs for the work God calls us to do and provides the financial structure for our treasurer, to responsibly manage and faithfully track those figures.

This year we are trying something different. Instead of a traditional line-item budget, what you hold in your hand now is something different, an illustrated “Narrative Budget.” It is our hope that this narrative budget will add to your understanding of the church’s work and finances. It describes the same income and expenses, but it also highlights our activities and accomplishments and shows how our income is gathered and spent across the five areas of the work of AFPC:

- **Inspiring Worship**
- **Engaged Discipleship**
- **Nurturing Relationships**
- **Transforming Mission**
- **Faithful Stewardship**

May this budget both inspire and encourage your continued involvement and generosity for our future together doing God’s work.

2023 Year To Date

In September 2022, Session approved an operating budget for the 2023 year which projected an income of \$200,000 and expenses of \$228,818. Year to date through October (83% of year complete), our expenses are tracking at 84% and income at 90%.

Inspiring Worship

Each week we gather in our beautiful sanctuary for Spirit-filled worship. Our worship together is at the center of our lives of faith and through our hymns, prayers, and the thoughtful reading and explanation of scripture we joyfully respond to God's love. We are fortunate for those who help make our worship possible—from worship assistants, ushers and communion servers to the Chancel Choir that faithfully sings God's praises.



Throughout the year we had special worship services led by our Youth and Sunday School, our Scouts and even our Youth Mission Team. Our worship on holidays like Christmas Eve and Easter are especially important to the life of our church family as they highlight the love of God made real. This past year we even had worship on Christmas morning when everyone was invited to come in their pajamas! Another highlight of the year was the return of the Christmas Concert during which our Chancel Choir, Jr. Choir, Youth Choir and soloists reminded us through music of the joy of Christmas. Our terrific Director of Music Ministry, Stefanie Watson, continues to introduce new music and energy into the life of our church, and we are excited about hearing the new Chime Choir as they ring our newly purchased hand chimes.



The Worship & Music Team keeps our worship organized through the many liturgical seasons of the year ensuring that our sanctuary is decorated and adorned appropriately.

Inspiring Worship is 28% of the budget = \$64,069

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; director of music ministry salary; a percentage of the administrative assistant and cleaning services, facilities expenses and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

Engaged Discipleship

As we grow in discipleship we learn together through thoughtful questions and the study of our faith. This happens at AFPC when our Sunday school classes meet on a Sunday morning, or when adults meet to study a book or discuss a topic. We are blessed with dedicated Sunday school teachers who bring our faith alive to our children and youth. This year we once again joined with two local congregations for a fun-filled week of Vacation Bible School. We also continue to grow through regular studies like our annual Lenten study and our confirmation class. This year we confirmed 4 terrific young people who met weekly throughout the winter and spring to grow in their faith as they examined what they believe and why. Both Jr. & Sr. High Youth Groups met on the first and third Sundays of each month to enjoy both fellowship and study as they discussed how faith impacts our lives. And over the summer, 11 youths and 5 leaders travelled to Scranton, Pennsylvania for a week of service as they learned together what it means to see God in times of hardship and move to a place of hope.



In the year ahead we look forward to growing our preschool aged Sunday school through a series of open house opportunities. Youth groups are meeting, and Sunday school is happening! The mission trip planning is underway and there are plans for a Christmas play and another challenging and insightful Lenten Study.



Engaged Discipleship is 22% of the budget = \$50,340

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; percentage of administrative assistant, cleaning services, facilities expenses and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

Nurturing Relationships

God has gathered us together as a family of faith and challenged us to share God's love in new and creative ways. We share in fellowship with each other and invite the community in to experience God's love through thoughtful events and opportunities. These opportunities take shape after worship around the coffee pot and baked goods during first Sunday fellowship; through fellowship outings like a trip to the roller rink or bowling alley; through gatherings like the Yankee Swap and Cinco de Mayo parties; at fun events like game days, movie nights and car shows; through meals like the church picnic or the monthly Lunch Bunch; and whenever 2 or more of us are gathered in Christ's name.



In the year ahead we hope to continue our favorite fellowship traditions as well as find new ways to gather together and welcome the community in to both know us as a congregation and to know the love of God that we experience at AFPC.



Nurturing Relationships is 14% of the budget = \$32,035

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; a percentage of administrative assistant, facilities expenses, and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

Transforming Mission

At AFPC we have a strong commitment to answer Jesus' call to "care for the least" as we follow His example of service. This work in our church is made real through a variety of service projects that the Mission & Interpretation Team and the Board of Deacons organize and lead. We demonstrate our love for our neighbors through the continual support of several local food pantries; by providing Thanksgiving dinner boxes to local families; donating gifts to local children at Christmas and school supplies at the beginning of the school year. We also demonstrate our commitment to service as we celebrate "Be the Church Day" in January. Be the Church Day is an all-church event where we both worship and serve together, completing a variety of intergenerational mission projects.



This year we were challenged in a new way as we responded to the needs of the Gomez family – a local family that suddenly found themselves homeless. The way in which we responded to their needs was a great exercise in faithfulness and discipleship and allowed us to explore what it means to be a *Matthew 25 Church* in very real and concrete ways.

In the coming year we hope to find new ways to serve as we live out our calling to “love our neighbors.” We hope that others will both be inspired to serve and grow in their faith as we work side by side as disciples.



Transforming Mission is 23% of the budget = \$52,628

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; a percentage of per capita contributions to Presbytery of the Highlands, facilities expenses and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

Faithful Stewardship

As a church family we understand that all we have is a blessing from God, and we strive in our discipleship to be good stewards of those blessings. In particular, we are blessed with a beautiful sanctuary and terrific meeting spaces and classrooms. This includes our recently renovated sanctuary basement where the Sr. High Sunday school and both our youth groups meet for study and fun. However, one of the challenges that comes with the blessing of our beautiful campus is the need for continual maintenance, upkeep and expenses. Our Building and Property Team has been diligent about keeping up with repairs like replacing a large storm window that fell off the sanctuary or filling in cracks in our church parking lot. They also help us keep costs down through continual diligence in examining and implementing cost-cutting measures and services. Recently we switched our internet and phone providers and that move both cut costs and improved our connectivity. We also were the recipient of a grant from the Presbytery of the Highlands (along with gifts from the AFPC Memorial Fund) that helped us purchase a brand-new state of the art streaming system so that those who can't experience worship with us in person can still have a worshipful experience from home.



Like our homes, our church home at AFPC is in constant need of work and devotion and there are countless ways to pitch in and help out, like grabbing a rake and joining a clean-up day or offering to help with a special project or investigate cost cutting measures. We demonstrate our gratitude for the blessing of our facilities when we are faithful stewards together.



Faithful Stewardship is 13% of the budget = \$29,746

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; a percentage of administrative assistant, cleaning services, facilities expenses, a percentage of per capita contributions to the Presbytery of the Highlands and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

Stewardship 2024 – Growing in Generosity

The story of our life of faith detailed in these pages is only a small glimpse into the life and ministry of our church. As we look ahead to the upcoming year of new possibilities at AFPC we invite you to think about your role in the life of our church. What ministries do you want to take part in? How will you explore your faith and call at AFPC? In what ways is God challenging you to grow in your faith? One specific way we can all grow in our faith is through our generosity. In appreciation for all God has given us, both as a church and individually, the Session encourages you to think about increasing the generosity of your pledge. To set an example of leadership, members of our Session have unanimously pledged to increase their pledges for 2024 . . . will you prayerfully consider joining them?



Pledge cards have been mailed out to all members, visitors and friends of AFPC. We invite you to prayerfully consider how God is calling you to support the mission and ministries of Alexandria First Presbyterian Church in the year ahead as you grow in generosity. We will joyfully bring our pledge cards forward during worship on November 19 as we celebrate Consecration Sunday in worship.

The financial figures in this budget represent our current 2023 budget. Once a 2024 budget is approved by Session, the figures will be updated and a detailed line-item budget will be available in the church office should anyone wish to review it.