

The Christian Church of Villa Park (Disciples of Christ) 2014 Narrative Budget



Introduction

Over the last year we have shared many stories. We told stories of our past and dreamed stories for our future. We voiced stories of praise, of cooperation, of discovery. We whispered stories of anxiety, of fear, of too many questions. Our faith in God has permeated all these stories and it is that faith which helps us create a new story for the coming year.

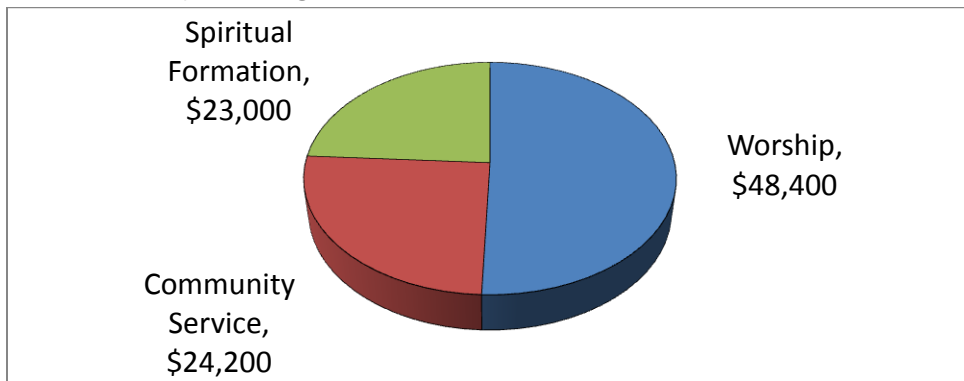
Through some lean “wilderness” years, the people of this congregation gave in faith. It was a way of saying; God is still at work in us, calling us to ministry in this place, even if the bank statements and the attendance sheets reflected a more worldly kind of truth. But those years of faithful stewardship are bringing a new truth, a new kind of abundance, into reality. In a climate of economic uncertainty, in an “unchurched” culture, we put the good news in motion, each and every day.

This story provides just a glimpse of our shared vision for the coming year. The ‘price tag’ will show you what we need to bring it to life. But know that, in addition to your pledge card, there are other invitations to commitment. Along with faithful giving, we also need your attendance in worship, your service to others, and your accounts of God moving in your life. This kind of good news requires the living investment of a whole community. By the grace of God, and by your generosity, we’re looking to a year of fruitful witness to the love and grace of God.

The Stewardship Team along with the CCVP Board decided to tell the story of our budget, because our life together is so much more than numbers on a page. A line-item budget is only a set of figures, a necessary accounting tool. It can tell the “what” of our expenses and income, but it cannot tell the whole story of “how” we create our lives together. This narrative budget attempts to show the fullness of our life together. For our life and ministry are not mere numbers, but the active service of God our creator, Jesus our redeemer and the Holy Spirit our sustainer.

Therefore, we begin with the vision as stated during this year of transition: “We seek to be a faithful witness to God’s love in worship, community service, and spiritual growth”

Expected Ministry Budget for 2014 \$95,600



Worship \$48,400

We began 2013 as a year of transition and hit the ground running. Our Intentional Interim Minister began with Romans 12:2, which challenges us “to be not conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds to show what is the good, and acceptable will of God.” We have done that in our worship services. They have fueled our witness through, prayer, music, and praise.

We will continue to seek to be transformed as individuals and a congregation in our worship. In 2014 we seek a pastor who will help to lead us through a process of transition and transformation. Worship will continue to be a vehicle for opening ourselves to God’s call. Our new pastor will challenge us with new experiences in worship even as we take comfort in the steady rhythm of Word and Table.

Our music program will continue to be an essential piece of our worship life. In 2013, we added a new style of worship on second and fourth Sundays. We also worshipped together joyfully at our first musical concert in October. In 2014, we will evaluate changes already made and continue to move forward faithfully in renewing our worship.



The gift of the Spirit from our renewal has resulted in baptism, new members for our congregation, an increase in our attendance. We will continue creating a worship atmosphere that welcomes everyone as a child of God and renews and transforms hearts and minds for the work of God.

Community Service \$24,200

We are called by God to be servants within our community and witnesses to God's promise for each and every one of God's children. Where we see suffering, we help to alleviate it. Where we see hurt, we provide comfort. Our Disciples food pantry is a wonderful expression of Christian spirit and in 2013 we were able to help feed 9,716 people. By continually rising to the challenge to 'serve the least of these' we will continue to witness to God's grace in our community. In 2014 we hope to continue expanding the number of those served by the food pantry and to begin assisting with additional needs of these members of our community. The food pantry will continue to be a place for connections with other community members and organizations to flourish.

Finally, all of you,
have unity of spirit,
sympathy, love for
one another, a
tender heart, and a
humble mind.
-1 Peter 3:8

Our building enables us to support many ministries and community members. We provide a welcoming space for three AA groups and an NA group to come and experience God as a healing presence in their lives. We provide a safe place for youth and college groups to stay when visiting the Chicago area. These young Christians come to give of their time and ability to the most vulnerable members of our community. In giving them a place to rest, worship, and talk about their experiences we share in the work of their hands. In the coming year we will move toward making our building an even more

welcome and accommodating place through improvements to the parking lot, building, and parsonage.

Our community relationships have grown through the pastor attending meetings with other area pastors in a loose ecumenical partnership. These pastors meet to connect, consult and cooperate with each other in bringing ministry to the area. In the next year we will continue to grow these connections to minister more faithfully with those around us.

In the wider community, a mission team collaborated with the First Christian Church of Paris, IL and Pilgrim UCC and friends to travel to Henryville, IN for the mission work of recovery. In 2014 the mission team will again reach out to a community in need. They will give a week of



their time and the skills of their hands to the worship of God and care of God's children. These work trips are self-funded, but are a witness of this whole congregation.

The mission of the church extends beyond what we could hope to accomplish alone. Members of the congregation also give to the wider church mission through special day offerings of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Individual giving to these offerings supports mission around the world and down the street. It goes to disaster relief, new church starts, anti-racism/pro-reconciliation work, education, camps, and much more. Through CROP Walk, members give to easing hunger around the world and in our backyard. We, as a congregation, also give some to these vital ministries. In the next year, we hope to increase our commitments to these ministries.

We share news, stories, events, and more in our newsletter. We make our life together visible through our website. These will continue to be vital pieces of our ministry and will be important tools in our transformation.

We also reach out to the CCVP community, visiting those who are unable to attend worship and who are in the hospital. We support one another in times of trial and we share joyous events together.

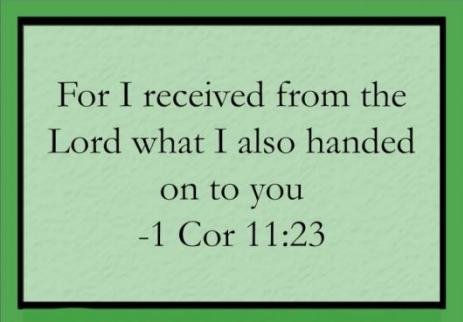
In the coming year we will be discerning new ways in which to witness to God's love and grace in our community. We are full of love for God and look to share it in as many ways as possible.

Spiritual Formation \$23,000

Much of 2013 has been spent working as a congregation to discern the will of God in our lives and for our congregation. As a result of our faithful conversations, we affirmed our congregational unity, our connection to Villa Park, and our willingness to continue discerning God's place for us in our community. We will continue this work in 2014. The renewal and transformation of our congregation is an exercise in spiritual formation. We will continue to pray, read, discern, and grow together into God's vision for us.

In the past year the elders have begun studying together and we have started an adult Sunday School class. We will also explore new ways to move closer in our relationship with God, to explore the questions of our faith, and to equip ourselves for the faithful following of God.

We are called to share the good news and to give as we are able. It is as stewards of God's gifts that we act in the world. In the coming year we will work to improve our knowledge of what it means to be a steward of God's gifts. We will explore how we can more faithfully give of what God has given to us as individuals. We will also delve into how to most faithfully use the gifts given to the congregation.



For I received from the
Lord what I also handed
on to you
-1 Cor 11:23

Conclusion

This story of the coming year is exciting, but we can expect a few unexpected twists and new directions. As we live this story out, it is this vision and these priorities which will guide our decisions throughout the year. As a congregation, we are committing ourselves to be part of this story, to support it with our money as well as with our hearts and hands.

This is our story and it is only together that we make it real.

Please prayerfully consider all that you are able to give to creating this congregation's story. On November 10, we will bring our pledge cards as an act of worship and celebration of our abundance.