
Foothills Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

2012 Narrative Budget



"Spirit, Service, Community: An Open and Affirming Congregation"

Contents:

<i>Our Story</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Spirit</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Service</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Community.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Conclusion.....</i>	<i>9</i>

Our Story



As desert people, we know that God brings about life in miraculous ways; in unexpected places; in spectacular displays of nature. And yet, we can still be surprised. We constantly find ourselves in awe of the Holy Though every element of this landscape points to the power of the Holy; we remain amazed when that new life takes the shape of *us*. In **Spirit, Service, and Community**, that is exactly what continues to happen here at Foothills Christian Church. Time and again, we witness God's goodness on display in an outpouring of wealth, spirit gifts, and hospitality.

Through some lean "wilderness" years, the people of this congregation continued to give 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 the truth is, those years of faithful stewardship brought a new truth, a new kind of abundance, into reality. Today, this place of ministry not only lives—it thrives. Foothills bears living testimony to what God can do with a community of fearless, innovative, and Spirit-led people. In a climate of economic uncertainty, in a transient neighborhood, in an "unchurched" culture, this place puts 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 you'll notice that your pledge card also includes other invitations to commitment. In addition to 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 at a desert miracle kind of year...again.

Rev. Erin Wathen



*"Taste and see
that the Lord is
good; blessed is
the one who
takes refuge in
[God]" - Psalm
34:**

Spirit

We have been called to do God's work through the Spirit. In return we carry the Spirit with us down all paths of our lives. Stewardship is a calling, a calling that is fulfilled through our Spirits in community with one another. Worship fuels every aspect of ministry and growth in this place, and so that's where we begin. In an ongoing effort to provide timely, relevant, and uplifting worship experience in this place, we are adding a second service in 2012. A small group of people have been meeting for prayer and creative visioning, and we are ready to move forward with "Unplugged," our Saturday evening alternative service. This new venture responds to our growing attendance on Sunday mornings, and a growing number of families, students, young adults and active retirees who have other commitments on Sunday mornings. To help grow this service, we've budgeted for additional music and childcare staff, promotional materials, and building use. At the same time, a second service will generate additional income, offsetting the added costs. This service will help Foothills share the abundance of joy that we find in the story of Christ with our neighbors and new visitors.

*"O Lord, you are my
God; I will exalt You and
praise Your name, for in
perfect faithfulness You
have done marvelous
things, things planned*

We also begin 2012 with a group of 8 gifted elders to lead us in spiritual development. They bring a wide range of ministry experience to the table. Resources in this ministry area go towards equipping our elders for energized and forward-thinking leadership. In addition to serving at the table and providing excellent pastoral care, our elders work to prepare a new generation of leaders for ministry. We are proud to announce that over half of these elders are relatively new members to Foothills. This group is a testament to how far we have come.

In response to our growing numbers in worship, we need to provide more opportunities for faith formation. This year we have plans for in-home, neighborhood small group studies; additional youth and children's programming; and growing our young adult ministry around the new Saturday evening worship time. We are strategically planning neighborhood outreach events to help share our abundance with our neighbors.



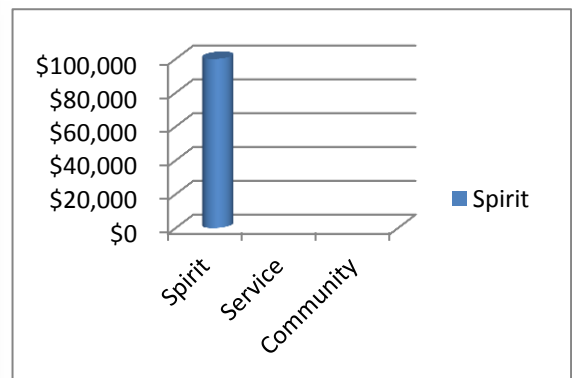
If all this makes you wonder when we are going to add to our ministry staff, you are not alone! Our leaders were just beginning discernment about adding a part-time associate position when we learned about the Congregational Immersion Program at Vanderbilt Divinity School. Through this project, a new graduate is placed in a congregation for an intentional 2-year residency experience. The goal is to give

young pastors a healthy first-experience in ministry, in a congregation that will help them find their pastoral voice and identity. The upside for the mentoring congregation—a grant from the Lilly foundation pays half of the new minister’s salary. Foothills is currently in the application process, so you will see our half of this new staff salary built into the ministry budget, as well. If we are accepted as a mentoring congregation, we will need to have funding in place in order to move forward with a candidate.

All of this movement adds up to an exciting year of worship, spiritual growth, and quality Christian education.

Our working budget for these Spirit places:

\$99,966



Service

In Genesis we are called to be stewards of the abundance. God created us to have dominion over the natural resources provided to ensure we all have enough. Through service at Foothills we ensure that we are acting as good stewards of the abundance. Foothills won an award at the last Arizona regional assembly for our stewardship. That's because a significant portion of our budget goes to ministries of the larger Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). So far in 2011, we've given more than ever before to things like Week of Compassion, Disciples Homeland and Global Ministries. We gradually increase our greater Church giving each year, working toward a tithe—a place, a few years ahead, where 10% of Foothills annual budget goes to our mission in other parts of the world.

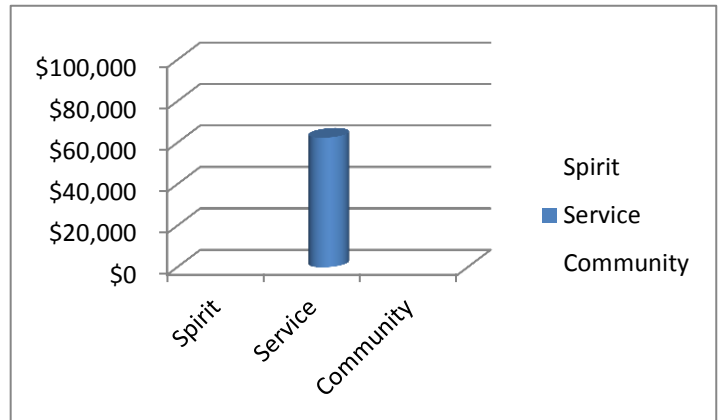
In the spirit of living the gospel “from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth,” our mission and outreach leaders are planning a Foothills mission trip to Joplin, MO for the fall of 2012. You'll see a portion of the cost reflected in the budget. The rest will come from participant contribution and supplementary fundraisers. This trip will allow Foothills to share the gifts, time, and treasures of service and Spirit with those that have been hurt by the aftermath of the violent storm that tore the community apart. Foothills will be answering the call to serve and share our abundance with those in need through this mission trip.

We are blessed to have so many gifted ministers in our congregation willing to serve one another. Our Stephen Ministry program continues to grow, and we've budgeted to train even more caregivers in the coming year. This outreach provides one-on-one, Christ-centered care to those who are hurting, struggling with life changes, or just need someone to talk to. Our Stephen Ministers act as the hands and feet of Foothills daily, traveling to serve those as Jesus has called us to serve.

In this time of economic crisis, more and more of our neighbors call or come to the church seeking assistance with food, rent and utilities. We'll continue to offer grocery cards or referrals to other services, but this year, we hope to add a line-item for crisis care. Funds from this budget area will go to assist people *in our neighborhood* with meeting some of these basic needs. We will develop a system for staff to evaluate and follow up, so that we can make the best possible use of available resources. At Foothills we believe that God has provided more than enough to allow all of us to live abundant happy lives. We are dedicated to sharing our blessings with those

The budget goal for these outward-reaching, serving ministries:

\$62,503



Community

Evangelism is importantly tied to stewardship in the life of Foothills. Every new person to cross our threshold comments on how warmly welcomed they feel by this congregation. We have long known that people in this major metropolitan area, though surrounded by millions, feel more alone than ever. For a church that has a special gift for hospitality, I'd say that epidemic of solitude is an invitation to ministry. I'd say it is a beckoning of the Spirit to fill a void that only the Body of Christ can fill. Our abundance of hospitality is shared with each child of God that walks through our doors. We ensure all receive the abundance of love, faithfulness, and support that our church community has to offer.

In the fall of 2011, Foothills adopted an Open and Affirming mission statement. It was a bold step into the future, it was a prophetic statement of faith and invitation to ministry: and it cost us nothing. There was no bill or invoice, and not a single person has left our fellowship. Through this adoption we have been able to offer the grace God has bestowed upon us to all who enter through the doors.

In the coming year we will continue to have periodic fellowship meals; "Disciples 101" events for newcomers; and now, with 2 worship services, coffee hour and fellowship twice a week! Plus, we have several events during the year, like our Christmas Bonfire, to draw new neighbors into community.

*"Giving as an act of worship
takes us beyond duty to delight."*

*-Mark Allan Powell Giving to God: The Bible's Good
News about Living a Generous Life*

Our evangelism budget goes toward promoting these opportunities via print, social media, our new website, and various news outlets. We have plans this year to do more intentional "branding" as well, using our new worship service, our Open and Affirming identity, and other new ministries as entry points for newcomers. Think Foothills swag!

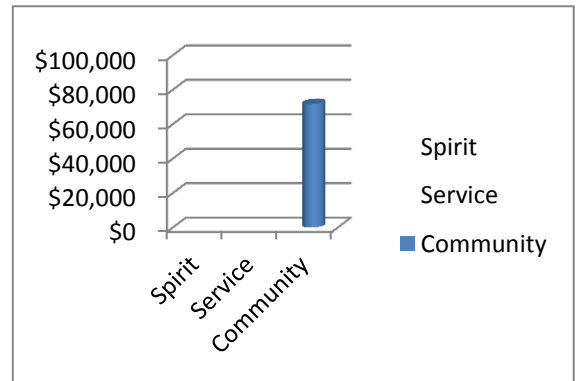
As stewards who are called to support one another in ministry we recognize that our giving is an outward expression of our faith. Through spiritual disciplines and the love that generates from one another we are able to continue to provide for this church community. Through the sharing of our abundance, we are able to welcome the stranger and bring the passion of the Gospel to world.

We gather as the people of God who are called to celebrate with one another. We welcome all to the table as God has welcomed us. With unashamed passion for sharing the love of Christ we strengthen our community daily through the wealth

It costs nothing to be a part of community; and yet, sustaining community is costly. With our great gifts for hospitality, gatherings are a great investment, and a faithful use of our resources.

The proposed budget for Community Ministry this year is:

\$71,706



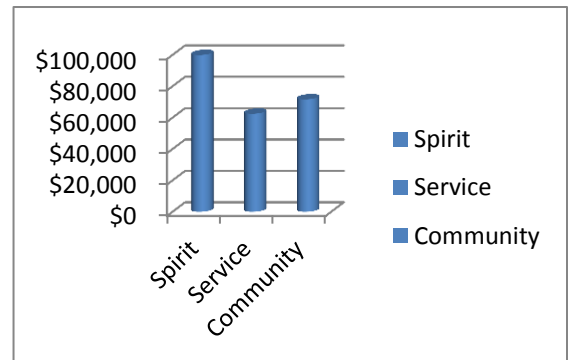
Conclusion

At Foothills, the gospel works in incarnational ways. That means we move the good news OUT into the world, while being good stewards of all the life that God has given us to sustain, right here in our neighborhood. We recognize that God created us in goodness with enough abundance so ALL can be fruitful in this life. Our narrative budget tells the story of a church that is called:

- To embody the good news of Jesus Christ in Spirit, Service and Community
- To share inclusive hospitality and reflect the fullness of God's love at the Table
- To feed our neighbors who hunger in body and soul, giving purpose to those with plenty, and abundance to those in need.

The total projected cost for this year in the life of ministry:

\$234,174



Your pledge card is enclosed. We will bring them forward in worship as an act of celebration of our abundance on Sunday, November 20th.

"Stewardship is about giving to God. It is about turning total control of our lives over to God. It is about taking seriously the words that we so easily pray: 'Thy [Kingdom] come, they will be done.'

-Mark Allan Powell Giving to God: The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life