

OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION

February 5, 2023

There are times as a church family, we need to talk about our finances - today is one of those times. We have been blessed by wonderful oversight of our finances by Elder Jim Croman and our Church Administrator Bob Davey. We've been blessed financially because members of this church family have been faithful to give. But many of those who faithfully gave have died and are home with the Lord. Many others have moved out of state. As a result, things have begun to change financially and the Elders believe it is important the church family be made aware.

OUR 2022 BUDGET WAS REALISTIC AND ACCURATE

Our staff and ministry leaders did a great job staying within their budgets in 2022. As you will see, we spent \$22,000 less than what we approved spending in 2022. To say it another way, we spent 97% of what we were approved to spend. That's excellent for a \$750,000 budget. In creating our budget and in spending our funds we are guided by several principles. We are committed to living within our means and staying out of debt. But we are also committed to being generous to our family members whether it be meeting a financial need or providing scholarships etc.

OUR GIVING DID NOT MEET OUR BUDGET FOR 2022

2022 general budget – we approved spending: \$754,675.00

2022 expenditures - we spent: \$732,024.00

2022 income – we gave: \$674,716.00

Shortfall – diff. between budget and income: -\$79,959.00

Shortfall – diff. between expenditures and income: -\$57,308.00

Is this the new "normal" for our giving? We don't know. That's why we're giving it this year before we make changes to our budget. We have enough in savings to cover another shortfall for one year, but if again in 2023 our giving does not meet our budget for 2023, we will need to make changes to our budget for 2024.

WE CAN DEAL WITH THE SHORTFALL IN ONE OF TWO WAYS

Reduce our expenditures.

If we need to reduce our expenditures, we need to answer this question: *is there a way to reduce expenditures that enables us to continue funding our ministry priorities?*

Pastoral staff salaries are the largest expenditure in our budget. By reducing pastoral staff salaries or by reducing the number of pastoral staff we can reduce expenditures to a level covered by our giving. Some might suggest we reduce the financial support we give to our missionaries. But for us, that would be undermining one of the core purposes for our existence which is to be a sending church. Reducing the financial support of our missionaries would be an option of last resort.

Increase our giving.

The other option is to increase our giving. But this is out of our control as your church leaders. Your giving is between you and the Lord. None of us in leadership – none of the Elders, none of the Deacons, none of the Pastors or Staff, none of the ministry leaders – know what you give.

And we're going to keep this policy; we are not going to start monitoring any one's giving. We're not going to fundraise and we're certainly not going to "harp" on our church family to give. But we do ask that you

make our financial situation a matter of prayer and of personal consideration. Our desire as your leadership is to be a sending church planting the church among unreached people groups through individuals and families from Grace. And we want to raise up and support the next generation of pastor-teachers by helping students pay for Bible college and seminary. All this requires funding.

BE RICH TOWARD GOD (LUKE 12:13-21)

The question to ask yourself is this – “Am I rich toward God in what I give financially to the work of His Kingdom?” Only you can answer that question and it’s not in comparison to others. You must answer that question in the context of your personal finances. Some of us live close to the bone; our income barely covers our needs. The widow was rich towards God when she gave her two mites. On the other end of the spectrum, some of us have barns that are overflowing. Most of us are in the middle. Regardless, if we are committed to obeying and serving Jesus, we need to take seriously what He teaches here: be rich toward God.

PRAY GOD ENABLE US TO INCREASE OUR GIVING

Please make our financial situation a matter of targeted prayer. Please pray about it with your home group. Pray about it in your private devotions with the Lord. Ask the Lord to work in our lives and bring us people such that our giving increases. If you haven’t already done so, take the Crown Financial Class, next time it’s offered.

Let’s trust the Lord and see how He leads us!

GRACE NEWS AND NEEDS

- ***Youth Mexico Missions Meeting:*** Today, 11:15a, Youth Room
- ***Men’s Horseshoe Tournament & BBQ. Sign Up On Patio, \$10***
Feb 11th @ 12 pm, Wellfield Park (by adult softball fields).
- ***Family Desert Trip. Mark Your Calendar***
Feb 24-26 @ Ocotillo Wells. Dinner will be provided Saturday night.
- ***Spring Bible Studies & Home Groups are starting up!***
Groups and studies for everyone. Check the website for info. gccramona.com
- ***Voice of the Martyrs needs for February: Twin sheets & toothbrushes.***
- ***Babysitting Training: Sunday, March 5th, 1:30-5:30in the modular building at GCC.***
Cost is \$45/student. Please contact Jen Hull for further questions and/or to sign up: djhull79@gmail.com