

“WORD MADE FLESH”
Finances at Epworth and How Your Gifts Make a Difference

At Potluck Dinner in March, 2007, Monica Swink, representing the Finance Committee, did a brief presentation of how the money you give to Epworth is allocated. The Finance Committee decided to give a summary of that information on the website, to be sure all saw it and were able to ask questions if they had any.

Giving not only supports our ministry here at Epworth, but beyond our walls, through our connectional giving. You'll see and hear about the apportionments through April and be given a chance to “adopt an apportionment” to further support our community and world. That giving is as important as your giving to the general fund and special projects of Epworth and once again we are setting a goal of 100% payment of apportionments.

Now – just a bit about Epworth’s 2006 spending – note in the chart below that 50% of our annual budget this last year went towards our staff – Pastor Sherron and the other staff who support her and our church. Administration means expenses such as utilities, and office supplies, expenses that keep the activities of the church running. Mission and Outreach includes items such as Worship – candles and new music for the choir – Children’s ministries, as well as our portion of the conference ministries. This is what we actually spent our money on last year. Note the building’s loan is included in these numbers. Because the loan is not actually a part of the operating budget, you don’t normally see it detailed this way, but we wanted you to get the whole picture of what the spending at Epworth entails. We do have pledges to pay this loan off on a monthly basis and it is really not a part of our discussion, but we did want you to see the whole picture.

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|------------------------|-----------|--------|
| Administration | 40,415 | (22%) |
| Ministerial Support | 90,020 | (50%) |
| Mission/Outreach | 21,735 | (12%) |
| Building-loan | 29,500 | (16%) |
| | | |
| Total Budget | \$181,670 | (100%) |
| | | |
| Total Operating Budget | \$152,164 | |

To compare Epworth to the District and Conference level expenditures, and to compare apples to apples, we’ve taken out the building loan payments and calculated our percentages based on the operating budget alone. (See below) The So District and OK Conference numbers are based on 2004 numbers, but are probably pretty comparable to the current numbers. In looking at the numbers this way, you can really see how high their percentage of giving flows into mission and outreach and how our dollars are spent.

| | South OKC District | Okla. Conference | Epworth |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------|
| Administrative | 16.3% | 8.6% | 27% |
| Ministerial Support | 21.0% | 39.6% | 59% |
| Outreach/Missions | 62.7% | 51.8% | 14% |

I would expect our ministerial support to be higher – the local church will have a higher percentage of its funds going towards the actual employed staff. But, as a percentage of total giving, our mission and outreach is much lower. The way to increase this giving percentage, even a bit each year, to be more in line with our church, we need to give 100% of our apportionments again, give more to our local ministries and increase our gifts to our own ministries within our congregation – music, Sunday School, RMN.

The finance committee is still working on an actual budget for 2007. With the change in leadership in that committee, and the lack of a finance campaign in the fall, we are running a bit behind with compiling our operating budget.

We know however, what operational expenses will run, including salaries, utilities, insurance, the costs of maintaining this building and have included some increases in this estimate, mostly for inflationary increases. We would like to increase our percentage of local missional giving – our children’s program, our gifts to the medical and legal clinics, worship supplies and new music for the choir.

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|---|------------------|
| “Bare Bones” Budget (Operational budget only) | \$150,000 |
| Connectional Giving (100% of apportionments) | 30,000 |
| Local missional giving (Including Adult, Children’s ministries, Worship) | 5,000 |
| Other admin expenses increases | 5,000 |
| Total Expenses | \$190,000 |

We all know that giving is an important aspect of our Christian Faith. We see a trend of relying more heavily on special events, which, although they are fun and great community-building events, can also detract from the spiritual aspect of our giving. And they are unreliable sources of revenue.

We can increase our influence in the world beyond by giving beyond the local church as we give 100% to our apportionments. And, our image as a one-issue church is changed when we reach out beyond ourselves, both locally and through the connectional giving.

We appreciate your continued contributions to who we are as a church and how we change the world around us by those prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service.