

Getting Started

1. Work to understand how your financial leadership role advances the vision for ministry in your unique congregation, especially how to get funding priorities aligned with your mission and vision.
2. Set aside time for prayer. Express your concerns, joys, and observations to God, and listen for God's direction for your leadership. Ask God for direction about wise management of the congregation's financial resources. Ask God to increase the understanding you and your congregation have for the role of stewardship in forming Christian disciples.
3. Soon after you are elected, convene a meeting of the finance committee to assess the present situation and plan for the year.
4. Talk with people in your congregation who have (or have had) responsibilities similar to yours. Get acquainted with leaders of financial institutions where congregational funds are deposited and keep abreast of the changes in financial processes (institutional regulations as well as cultural changes such as the trend toward electronic money management). Recruit others in the community and church to help you in fundraising, finance management, and teaching financial stewardship.
5. Evaluate the current budget and record keeping processes of your congregation and implement improvements. training experiences.

The Finance Committee Meetings are held the third Monday of every other month at 5:30 pm in the Robb House Conference Room.



FINANCE GUIDELINES

Handling God's Money in the Church

Finance Committee

An effective finance committee proposes a budget; then raises, manages, and distributes the financial resources of the congregation to support and strengthen the mission and ministry of the congregation.

Spiritual Gifts and Qualifications Helpful for the Job

- The members of this committee benefit from having one or more of these spiritual gifts: giving, faith, wisdom, administration, discernment, helping, leadership, exhortation (encouragement), and teaching.
- Useful skills and experience for this position are the ability to listen to and communicate with people of all ages; skills and interest in financial budgetary matters; a passion for financially supporting the mission of making Christian disciples for the transformation of the world; and the ability to work with individuals and ministry teams.
- The chair of finance needs a strong understanding of biblical stewardship and management of all that God provides. Basic skill with financial matters is helpful and can be supplemented by skills of others on the committee.
- The congregation's committee on nominations and leadership development may establish specific standards for this position.

Responsibilities of the Chairperson

- The finance chair works with the leadership team chair, the church staff, and other ministry leaders to fulfill the mission of the church. The finance chair works with the trustees to handle designated gifts and bequests in accordance with *The Book of Discipline*.
- This person will guide the work of the finance team through the year, including planning agendas and presiding at meetings.
- This leader will gather all budget requests to be reviewed by the committee, ensure that the congregation and pastor(s) are informed about the church's financial situation, and recommend to the church council any changes that need to be made in the budget after it has been approved.
- This leader is accountable to the charge conference through the church council.

Responsibilities of the Committee

- The finance committee annually compiles a budget for supporting

the mission and vision of the local church and submits the budget to the church leadership team for review and adoption. During the year, the finance team recommends any changes to the approved annual budget to the church leadership team.

- This team is responsible for developing and carrying out plans to raise enough income to support the budget that has been approved.
- Both the finance team and individual members need to engage in spiritual practices that attend to God's will and direction. Team members need to hold one another accountable to decisions and actions that fulfill the mission and vision of the church.
- The finance team (or committee) recommends to the church leadership team proper depositories for church funds and carries out the church leadership team's directions about administration and disbursement of funds and about procedures for the church treasurer and the financial secretary.
- There are three tasks not specifically assigned to the treasurer, financial secretary, or the chairperson of the committee on finance by the *Discipline*. Keeping these responsibilities separate is essential in maintaining segregation of duties. These tasks are: (1) approving payments for expenditures; (2) signing checks; (3) reconciling bank accounts. While the treasurer, financial secretary, or finance chairperson may be authorized to do any one of these tasks, no person should be authorized to do more than one. No persons related to one another should perform any two or more of these three tasks.
- This team arranges for an annual audit of financial records and makes a report of this audit to the charge conference.
- In congregations in which there is no stewardship team or committee, the finance committee has responsibility for teaching disciples a biblical understanding of abundance and generosity and stewardship of all resources.
- The finance leaders of the church are accountable to the charge conference through the church council.
- New language was added to the *2016 Book of Discipline* that expands/clarifies the responsibilities of the pastor in regard to giving. Paragraph 340.2.c.(2)(c) now reads: "To provide leadership for the funding ministry of the congregation. To ensure membership care including compliance with charitable giving documentation requirements and to provide appropriate pastoral care, the pastor, in cooperation with the financial secretary, shall have access to and responsibility for professional stewardship of congregational giving records."