

I was waiting for inspiration before doing this article at the last minute, but my muse just texted that she's hanging at the water park today and I'm on my own. The dogs just want me to take them out the door into winter so they can play in the snow. If I asked Steve for inspiration he'd just say something optimistic. I guess there's nothing for it but to start typing and see what happens.

The financial report for May is confusing, with several unusual events:

- Our investments lost \$14,000 on paper due to the market being weird. They've since made all that up and more, so it's a timing thing, but it darkens the report. That market volatility thing is making me a little more insane every month. Finance is seriously studying putting all our investment money in laddered CDs for safety and predictability and I'm about sold on it.
- We had a big refund in Pastoral Expenses that leaves that budget category as having underspent by \$6,000 on a budget of \$500. I don't think I've ever before seen Pastoral Expenses turn a profit.
- There are some monthly expenses that didn't get paid in May, but will catch up.

If I normalize all the wacky stuff, then we had a loss for May of about \$1,100 and we had budgeted to lose about \$1,100. May was the first month of our fiscal year, and I'm not making any predictions off one month. Check back next month.

About 90 members stayed after church today to meet with Dr. Rhodes Logan from Horizons Stewardship, and the Council, to talk about the building remodeling project. Dr. Logan did a feasibility study for us on the building remodeling and the necessary capital money campaign, and Horizons definitely thinks the project is feasible. We used today's meeting to get opinions on what parts of the project are the most important to the congregation. I don't have results on that at this time; it looked to me like there were large numbers of votes for everything except possibly doing much with the old downstairs kitchen, but I didn't have time to actually count them.

We are contracting with Horizons to help us with the capital campaign and also to teach us how to do generosity (stewardship) with you in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It's completely clear that I, at least, have not a clue on how to teach stewardship and fund a church in this millennium. So we're getting help. It's surprisingly affordable help; the capital campaign fee is less than a third of what we paid fundraising consultants for the 1999 building expansion capital drive.

I don't know what the capital campaign or the new stewardship model will look like yet; I'll keep you updated as I find out.