



# **Alexandria First Presbyterian Church**

## Narrative Budget – 2024/25

# Alexandria First Presbyterian Church

“Gathered in God’s Grace and led by the Holy Spirit, we joyfully worship, prayerfully seek and gratefully share as a loving family growing in Jesus Christ.”

Every year the Stewardship & Finance Team carefully and thoughtfully produces a planned operating budget that is then reviewed and adopted by the Session. The annual budget is prepared with a great deal of analysis, consultation, and prayer. The budget lists the church’s income and expenses in detail. That line-item budget shows our funds and costs for the work God calls us to do and provides the financial structure for our treasurer, to responsibly manage and faithfully track those figures.

This year we are again going with a different approach to our budget. For the second time we are sharing a “Narrative Budget” instead of a traditional line-item budget. It is our hope that this narrative budget will add to your understanding of the church’s work and finances. It describes the same income and expenses, but it also highlights our activities and accomplishments and shows (through words and images) how our income is gathered and spent across the five areas of the work of AFPC:

- **Inspiring Worship**
- **Engaged Discipleship**
- **Nurturing Relationships**
- **Transforming Mission**
- **Faithful Stewardship**

May this budget both inspire and encourage your continued involvement and generosity for our future together doing God’s work.

## 2024

A look back at last year:

In January of 2024, Session approved an operating budget for the 2024 year which projected an income of \$222,000 and expenses of \$244,22. Year to date through the end of December 2024 our expenses came in at \$234,017 and income at \$232,769.

## 2025

A look ahead at this year:

In January of 2025, Session approved an operating budget for the 2025 year which projected an income of \$232,000 and expense of \$ 240,853. The Narrative Budget that follows outlines how we plan to use that financing at AFPC as we seek to be the people of God together.

## Inspiring Worship

Each week we gather in our beautiful sanctuary for Spirit-filled worship. Our worship together is at the center of our lives of faith and through our hymns, prayers, and the thoughtful reading and explanation of scripture we joyfully respond to God's love. Together we celebrate the sacraments of communion and baptism as we are reminded of God's grace that binds us together as a family of faith. We are fortunate for those who help make our worship possible—from worship assistants, ushers and communion servers to the Chancel Choir that faithfully sings God's praises.



Throughout the year we had special worship services led by our Youth and Sunday School, our Scouts and even our Youth Mission Team. Our worship on holidays like Christmas Eve and Easter are especially important to the life of our church family as they highlight the love of God made real. Another highlight of the year was an amazing Christmas Concert during which our Chancel Choir, Jr. Choir, Chime Choir and soloists reminded us through music of the joy of Christmas. Our terrific Director of Music Ministry, Stefanie Watson, continues to bring new music and energy into the life of our church!



The Worship & Music Team keeps our worship organized through the many liturgical seasons of the year ensuring that our sanctuary is decorated and adorned appropriately.

Inspiring Worship is 28% of the budget = \$67,438.84

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; director of music ministry salary; a percentage of the administrative assistant and cleaning services, facilities expenses and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

# Engaged Discipleship

As we grow in discipleship we learn together through thoughtful questions and the study of our faith. This happens at AFPC when our Sunday school classes meet on a Sunday morning, or when adults meet to study a book or discuss a topic. We are blessed with dedicated Sunday school teachers who bring our faith alive to our children and youth. This year we once again joined with two local congregations for a fun-filled week of Vacation Bible School at AFPC. We also continue to grow through regular studies like our annual Lenten study and our confirmation class. Jr. & Sr. High Youth Groups met on the first and third Sundays of each month to enjoy both fellowship and study as they discussed how faith impacts our lives. And over the summer, 8 youth and 4 leaders travelled to West Virginia for a week of service as they learned together what it means to see God in times of hardship and move to a place of hope.



In the year ahead we look forward to growing our Sunday school as we reach out to local families. Youth groups are meeting, and Sunday school is happening! The mission trip planning is underway and there are plans for a Christmas play and another challenging and insightful Lenten Study.



Engaged Discipleship is 22% of the budget = \$52,987.66

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; percentage of administrative assistant, cleaning services, facilities expenses and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

# Nurturing Relationships

As a family of faith, we enjoy spending time together, both during worship and when we gather for fellowship activities. These opportunities take shape after worship during first Sunday fellowship, when we catch up over coffee, baked goods and fruit; through fellowship outings like a trip to the roller rink or bowling alley; through gatherings like the Christmas Yankee Swap and Cinco de Mayo parties; at fun events like game days, movie nights and car shows; through meals like the church picnic or the monthly Lunch Bunch; and whenever 2 or more of us are gathered in Christ's name. Our Evangelism and Membership Team is always on the lookout for new members and new ideas about how to have fun together.





In the year ahead we hope to continue our favorite fellowship traditions as well as find new ways to join together and welcome the community in, to get to know us as a congregation and to know the love of God that we experience at AFPC

Nurturing Relationships is 14% of the budget = \$33,719.42

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; a percentage of administrative assistant, facilities expenses, and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

# Transforming Mission

At AFPC we have a strong commitment to answer Jesus' call to "care for the least" as we follow His example of service. This work in our church is made real through a variety of service projects that the Mission & Interpretation Team and the Board of Deacons organize and lead. We demonstrate our love for our neighbors through the continual support of several local food pantries; by providing Thanksgiving dinner boxes to local families; donating gifts to local children at Christmas and school supplies at the beginning of the school year. We also demonstrate our commitment to service as we celebrate "Be the Church Day" in January. Be the Church Day is an all-church event where we both worship and serve together, completing a variety of intergenerational mission projects.



This year we continued to be challenged to respond to the needs of others around us, gathering everything from canned goods and Christmas gifts to backpacks and toothpaste. These items were distributed locally and nationally to our neighbors in need. The way in which we respond to the needs of others allows us to further explore what it means to be a *Matthew 25 Church*.

In the coming year we hope to find new ways to serve as we live out our calling to “love our neighbors.” We hope that others will both be inspired to serve and grow in their faith as we work side by side as disciples.



Transforming Mission is 23% of the budget = \$55,396.19

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; a percentage of per capita contributions to Presbytery of the Highlands, facilities expenses and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

# Faithful Stewardship

As a church family we understand that all we have is a blessing from God, and we strive in our discipleship to be good stewards of those blessings. In particular, we are blessed with a beautiful sanctuary and terrific meeting spaces and classrooms. This includes our recently renovated sanctuary basement where the Sr. High Sunday school and both our youth groups meet for study and fun. However, one of the challenges that comes with the blessing of our beautiful campus is the need for continual maintenance, upkeep and expenses. Our Building and Property Team has been diligent about keeping up with repairs and helping maintain our facilities. They also help us keep costs down through continual diligence in examining and implementing cost-cutting measures and services. Recently we switched our thermostats to smart devices that will allow us to monitor temperatures more closely and help eliminate wasteful heating and cooling of our buildings when they are not in use. The Building and Property team also helped oversee the replacement of our fire alarm system. An improvement that was made possible through your generous gifts!



Like our homes, our church home at AFPC is in constant need of work and devotion and there are countless ways to pitch in and help out, like grabbing a rake and joining a clean-up day or offering to help with a special project or investigate cost cutting measures. We demonstrate our gratitude for the blessing of our facilities when we are faithful stewards together.



Faithful Stewardship is 13% of the budget = \$31,310.89

(This total includes a percentage of the pastor's salary, housing, utilities and insurance; a percentage of administrative assistant, cleaning services, facilities expenses, a percentage of per capita contributions to the Presbytery of the Highlands and a percentage of costs for office supplies, insurance and utilities.)

# Stewardship 2024 – *Staying Faithful*

The story of our life of faith detailed in these pages is only a small glimpse into the life and ministry of our church. As we look ahead to the upcoming year of new possibilities at AFPC we invite you to think about your role in the life of our church. What ministries do you want to take part in? How will you explore your faith and call at AFPC? In what ways is God challenging you to grow in your faith? One specific way we can all grow in our faith is through our generosity. In appreciation for all God has given us, both as a church and individually, the Session encourages you to prayerfully consider your pledge to AFPC. May this pledge be an opportunity to rededicate yourself to God. If possible, please consider increasing the generosity of your pledge so that our church can increase its faithful witness and ministry in our community!



Pledge cards have been mailed out to all members, visitors and friends of AFPC. If you have not yet pledged for 2025 we invite you to prayerfully consider pledging. How is God calling you to support the mission and ministries of Alexandria First Presbyterian Church in the year ahead as you stay faithful and grow in generosity?