



## The Ministry-Focused Budget

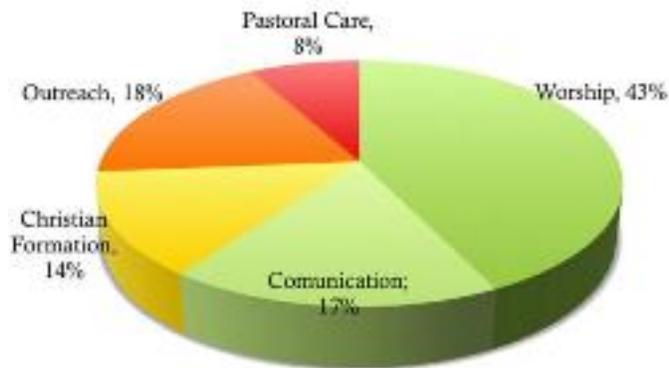
For purposes of definition, a ministry-focused budget is a tool for presenting the operating budget in terms of the ministry it supports. Following the conference, a question arose about whether or not the ministry-focused budget is deceptive. First, the ministry-focused budget is not intended to deceive or camouflage budget realities. In fact, in many cases it more adequately and accurately conveys what the budget is funding. Second, the ministry-focused budget is not intended to replace the line item budget, only to frame it in another way.

*In most churches, the primary tool for communicating how funds are being put to good use is the line item budget.*

The realities are:

- 1) few people know how to read the line item budget and even fewer people care to try,
- 2) the line item budget is completely uninspiring and typically causes the conversation to get derailed into arguments over why we are paying so much for lawn service and completely missing the point, and
- 3) the connection to money and ministry is lost.

By reassembling a church's line item budget into ministry categories such as worship, pastoral care, Christian formation, communication and outreach, the church's budget is depicted in terms of ministry. This enables church members make the connection between their generous giving and the parish's ability to do ministry.



Once a pie chart is created which proportions budget items into ministry categories, a page for each ministry category should be developed that includes the year's major accomplishments as well as a vision for the future. For example, the Communication page may include accomplishments such as a complete overhaul to the church's website and

future objectives such as expanding the email communication to the parish family.

By sharing your budget in terms of ministry, you help people to connect their giving with your ability to do Kingdom building. You let people know you are doing as God has called you to do. Depicting how funds are used to enhance ministry will reveal the impact of contributions and inspire an increase in giving to your worthy causes.

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