

The 150 Forecaster

Wednesday, June 18, 2008 - Volume 61, Number 23

Budget Time



Why our budget is so important and what you need to know. - Page 2



Budget Time

By: Larry Haake, IV

The Congregational Meeting is coming up. Wednesday

July 9, all members of Fairmount Christian Church who are 18 years of age and older get to vote on the selection of officers, Elders, Deacons and the FY2009 Church Budget. The budget has become the centerpiece of the agenda for this annual meeting in recent years. Currently, the proposed budget of FY2009 is \$1,635,759. That is what the leaders of the church have determined it will take to operate Fairmount Christian Church for 365 days beginning September 1. \$1.63 million dollars to spread the Gospel here and around the world. \$1.63 million dollars. Just say it to yourself, \$1.63 million dollars. Sounds like a lot, doesn't it? Now that equates down to \$31,457 per week that should be collected in offerings to meet that budget. \$31,457 is about \$8,000 under what the average person makes in the Richmond Metro Area per year. But we have to make it in a week, and every week for 52 weeks. That's a lot.

But when we convene the meeting on July 9 and the floor is open to discussion regarding the budget there will undoubtedly be someone there who'll question the budget. "How can we have a \$1.63 million dollar budget when we don't meet the current budget?" If no one says it, it will be thought.

What does it mean "to meet budget"? If you took note of the church bulletin recently, you may have noticed

that we are roughly \$82,000 under budget. That's an astounding number by itself. How can we do anything if we're \$82,000 under budget? And we're trying to get ourselves ready for an expansion of the facility? With an \$82,000 hole in our budget? What does this mean? Honestly, **it means nothing**. Not in the literal sense, but in the grand scheme of things. Look at the last page of the *Forecaster* and you'll see we are \$1,723.55 over the weekly budget needs. Over the fiscal year we may be \$82,000 under budget, but when you take into account actual money given and spent, we are \$4,557 ahead of spending. What does that mean? That means that though our budget isn't being met, we aren't spending money like we budgeted either. The giving we have received by you over the past nine months has more than taken care of our needs here at Fairmount - with \$4,500 to spare. We've paid our bills, and we've ministered to the community and the world. Most remarkable, we've to date cut \$745,448 off our debt, and are in the midst of this important step in our expansion plans with "A Bridge to the Future" Campaign. But we don't usually make \$30,457 every Sunday and we'll most likely not usually collect \$31,457 every Sunday next fiscal year. So what?

The point is, the budget is a way to get an idea of what we want to do here at Fairmount. It is a financial map to guide our finite minds into planning the wonderful ministries God has blessed us with. It is in no way a chiseled in stone,

do this or die, plan. It changes, fluctuates, can increase and yes, though seldom, decrease. The budget is a way of being accountable for the money we give to the church. One can always find out where and how money is spent here at Fairmount compared to detail in the budget. Just go to the office and check it out, they'll provide the details.

So many people will fret over the budget, but don't. Looking at the proposed budget for next year, many will see the increase in Salary Expenses. Why is there such a jump? Well it's not due to us paying the staff here a huge percentage more. It really has to do with the expenses of employing 12 full time and seven part time positions. Also, budget for staffs' conventions, FICA taxes, travel and hospitalization. Hospitalization is a huge budget expense with 79% of it going to cover the ministers, but it is listed under "administrative compensation & expenses". So that's a huge chunk of that line item. Bear in mind, though, that the salary line item is 46.5% of the total church budget. Most churches our size budget at least 50% of their budgets for this line item.

Another line item you may notice is Evangelism. It has no budget funds for FY2009. This is only due to the fact that nowadays individual ministries are devoting resources to evangelism, so a specific line item is not necessary at this time.

Community Outreach is another line

The Sadness of a Sermon

By: Chris Santasiere

As an observer of the long, drawn out election primary season to determine each political party's presidential candidate this November; one issue surfaced over the course of the primary contests which has troubled me deeply. Surprisingly, it is not a political issue, a candidate, an attack ad or a news story. I have low expectations of the behavior exhibited by politicians, the media and lobbyist groups during an election campaign.

However, I have very high expectations of the sermons that come from the pulpits of churches each Sunday. What has disturbed and disappointed me tremendously over the last several months of the presidential primary season is the use of the pulpit to politicize and to insult individuals and groups of people; going so far as to even use profanity to do so. The video of these messages can be considered speeches or rants but they certainly do not qualify to be called sermons.

A sermon must have two necessary ingredients: It must come from the Bible and it must point others to salvation through Jesus Christ. Let's start with the biblical origins of a sermon. A sermon is to be considered a word of God from the Word of God. The message brought forth in a sermon is not the preacher's but is God's. The preacher is serving as God's messenger. The role of the preacher is to faithfully, boldly, accurately and obediently deliver God's message to his audience. The other essential component to a sermon is that it must be Christ centered. A sermon leads people to Jesus. No matter the topic, every sermon must have within it the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

When churches fail to preach the Bible and the good news of Jesus, they cease to function as the church and instead begin the transformation into just another social organization. The church is the dispenser of the life

changing message of God that through Jesus Christ there is hope, forgiveness and eternal salvation. That message resounds from the pulpit.

A sermon is not to be taken lightly. It is a privilege and a responsibility for the preacher. It is an opportunity to learn and grow in faith for the listener. There are other times and places for the discussion of politics and many other worthy issues. The sermon is not the time and not the place. All other topics pale in importance to the message of God being spoken in a sermon. I am thankful that Fairmount is a church that deeply values the teaching and preaching of God's Word. May we never as a church waver in that practice and conviction. ■

item you may find new to you. It's primary role is to pay for our Community Block Party we will be holding in September at Cold Harbor Elementary. When we did one in 2006 we received a tremendous response from the community and it brought new families to Fairmount.

Another line item to watch for is "Worship" which is asking for \$1,000. This is to aid in the sermons being delivered to us each Sunday. These enhancements have been used this year for such series as *got fruit?*, although unbudgeted. This money will ensure that the themed sermon series we are growing accustomed to can continue.

Look for an increase in the trailer lease as well. An increase of \$10,500 is needed due to the fact that in late summer we will have a third trailer delivered to Fairmount for classroom space.

Our "Bank Service Charge" line item is now \$0 due to the new bank Fairmount deals with doesn't charge us service charges. Finally, the "Leadership Request" line item is at \$0 for FY2009 because this program has been funded.

This past year we have seen that the growth in all aspects of this church is phenomenal and shows that God is blessing us in staff, programs, ministries and facilities. However, every year there is someone worried about the budget. Folks, we haven't gone into deficit spending, we don't have creditors at the door, we pay our bills, we pay our staff and we minister to the world. Surely, we could always do more if we had the money, but we do what we can with what we have. God has always and will always provide. He has never let us down as long as we remained faithful. We went out on faith and built the expanded facility here and thankfully we

filled it up in five years. Now it's time to build again. Now it's time to keep our faith strong, to realize that we have a responsibility to spread the word to the community at whatever price it takes.

The budget is just a guide; we may not "make budget" but we'll do the work of the Lord AND we'll get another step closer to expanding our facility so we can expand our ministry. It's an exciting time and I hope that everyone looks at our budget and thanks God for the opportunity to have the resources we have to do the will of the Lord. ■



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The mission of Fairmount Christian Church:

To develop followers of Jesus who:

Love God,
Love People and
Introduce the world
to Christ



online@
www.fairmountchristian.org

Our Church: Sunday, June 15, 2008

Welcome to our New Members.

June 4, 2008

Welcome to **Jason & Joseph Collier** of 6393 Shea Tree Circle, Mechanicsville (23111). **Jason & Joseph** were baptized.

June 15, 2008

Welcome to **Hannah Ballowe** of 10000 Revolutionary Place, Mechanicsville (23116). **Hannah** was baptized

Welcome to **Sherry Jones** of 7340 Creighton Road, Mechanicsville (23111). **Sherry** was baptized.

Attendance & Giving.

8:30 Worship Service: 136
Children's Worship: 22

9:30 Worship Service: 428

11:00 Worship Service: 275
Children's Worship: 148
Breakaway: 62

Total: 1071 / Bible School: 600

Budget Requirements: \$30,450.00

Budget Receipts: \$32,173.55

Congregational Meeting
Wednesday, July 9
at 7:00 pm
Dinner served at
5:30pm

Your Church Staff:

- Rick Raines - Senior Minister
- Chris Santasiere - Associate Minister
- Tracy Thomas - Worship/Music Minister
- Joe Thompson - Youth Minister
- Rose Williams - Children's Ministry Director
- Larry Haake, IV - Child Care Program Director
- Jef Powell - Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Barry Will - Technology Director
- Veronica Brewster - Office Manager
- Bob Massey - Business Administrator