

Recommendation to Presbytery re: 2015 Budget

November 12, 2014

Dear Presbytery of Geneva,

On behalf of General Council, I move:

1. **To accept the attached 2015 budget as a first read**
2. **To authorize the presbytery to pay necessary bills and payroll per the “first-read” version of the 2015 budget until the final 2015 budget is approved at the March 2015 meeting of the presbytery with any payroll adjusted retroactively back to January**

Introduction

The Standing Rules describe a budgeting process in which each committee of the presbytery submits a proposal and recommendations to General Council (3.034). It further describes a process for amending and adjusting these proposals through the Program Budget Consultation Group and the Mission Projects Committee. The Budget and Finance committee is responsible “to assist the Council as it carries out Budget Procedure” (3.06).

While many of the committees described in the Standing Rules no longer exist, the idea of committees submitting budget proposals which are consolidated by Budget & Finance is a sound one. Recognizing there is too much in the financial reports for any one person to watch, and too much in the budget for any one person to review, we have divided up the committee into four teams of two with each team assigned one area of the financials/budget and asked to work with a corresponding committee of the presbytery. For this budget, the personnel committee and camp operator team provided input.

- Personnel = John Jones & Jamie Tyrrell
- Mission & Designated Funds = Robin Fitzgerald & Bev Karr-Lyon
- Support Services = Carol Flook & Gary Montgomery
- Camp Whitman = Marilyn Benedict & Jim Yao

Motions

1. **To accept the attached 2015 budget as a first read**

Giving and Other Receipts

- We are recommending leaving per capita at \$44. Because synod and GA each increased their per capita \$0.05, presbytery’s portion of per capita will drop to \$32.93. Our membership has also dropped 335 to 6,000. This means our presbytery’s total portion of per capita giving in 2015 will drop \$11,665 from 2014.
- We are asking churches to pledge the same amount toward presbytery mission and synod mission as they pledged this year.
- We added a new line showing a more realistic amount of presbytery mission dollars that are going to support Camp Whitman. For years, the budget was \$25,000. As we have identified the true costs of operating the camp, we have also recognized much more of our mission dollars are going into the camp. For 2015 this is estimated to be \$142,268.

Personnel

- The committee is still working on details of their budget – individual lines may change, but total personnel costs are expected to remain the same in the final budget.
- We do not think the presbytery can afford an EP, but understand some think we need an interim EP – the budget is for a half-time interim EP

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- We budgeted for a quarter-time Stated Clerk with the assumption we will not be paying anything to the Board of Pensions – if we hire someone currently on the BOP, we may have to pay BOP dues
- We eliminated the Major Medical line from those who had it and added the amount budgeted for 2014 to the cash salary for each person – one exception is the Interim EP: the amount shown is the cost of the dental plan through the BOP
- Except for adding major medical, cash salaries were not increased
- BOP dues are based on the 2015 rate for a family paid 100% by the presbytery
- We did not budget for a communications director

Mission

- We left “Mission priorities of the presbytery” the same as 2014
- We eliminated funding for the two NCD’s – this was already planned for the Corning Chinese Christian Church (CCCC)
- We kept funding for Youth Triennium and Session Endorsed/Initiated Projects the same as 2014

Operations

- Generally, we kept the same budget for each category as in 2014 with some exceptions:
 - EP Discretionary Fund drops from \$2,000 to zero
 - Auditor contract increases from \$5,000 to \$6,000
 - Investment losses don’t belong in this budget so this drops to zero

Camp Whitman

- At the request of the Camp Operator Team, we kept the budget for 2015 the same as 2014

Debt Reduction

- We put back into the budget a line for Debt Reduction which last appeared in the 2010 budget
- We are proposing that any surplus go toward debt reduction to be deposited in a separate savings account

2. To authorize the presbytery to pay necessary bills and payroll per the “first-read” version of the 2015 budget until the final 2015 budget is approved at the March 2015 meeting of the presbytery with any payroll adjusted retroactively back to January

The support services team has noted a number of expenses are too high: telephone, postage, copier, cleaning, plowing, garbage removal, etc. They are working on finding ways to reduce these costs. They do not feel they can accomplish this by January. The committee prefers presenting a final budget for approval that incorporates all the recommendations of this team. So we are waiting until the March presbytery meeting to present the 2015 budget for approval.

Even though we won’t have an approved budget until the middle of March, we still need to pay necessary bills and our staff. We are proposing using the first-read budget as a guide until the final budget is approved.

In Christ,
Jim Yao, treasurer & chair of Budget & Finance