

Write a Bigger Story



July 12, 2010

Dear Church Family,

Picture yourself one year from now and think about how you want to be different. Do you want to be closer to God, closer to your spouse, or closer to your kids? How do you want to connect with God and others better? How will you write a bigger “story” this year? What will you do this year to make a difference in the lives of those around you?

As the staff thought about how we would write a bigger story here at Celebration, it occurred to us that, up to this point, we had talked about our vision areas of sharing Christ, growing in Christ, serving Christ and multiplying the church, but we had operated only by ministry area. David challenged us to develop a more unified focus. Instead of focusing exclusively on our own ministries, he pushed us to involve others in each ministry activity. We looked at each activity and determined which of the four vision areas it fulfilled. Days were spent categorizing ministries and proving that they would be effective in reaching the vision of the church. Ministry plans, the budget, and our accounting system have been altered to group ministry activities into Sharing, Growing, Serving, and Multiplying instead of grouping them by ministry areas (Adult, Students, Children and so on). As a result, our chart of accounts has been changed to ensure our financial statements fully reflect the major emphasis areas of the church.

Each ministry activity has been thoroughly reviewed to determine how everyone in the church family can participate, lead, pray and give in meaningful ways. We hope and pray that this year we will see greater participation, greater involvement in leadership, increased prayer support and increased giving.

To write a bigger story means taking time to invest in others. It means scheduling important family time into our calendars. It means reading the Bible as individuals, couples, or as a family and discussing how best to apply it to our lives. How will your story look a year from now? How will you live life differently, make a bigger impact, and live your life for Christ!

Please join the church leadership on Sunday, July 18th at 4:30pm in the Choir Room for ministry plan presentations and discussion. The budget vote will be held on Sunday, July 25th at 12:20pm, immediately following Worship.

I *money*

Description	Annual Budget
Tithes and Offerings	\$1,828,260
Interest	\$2,288
Shared Overhead Funds [^]	\$47,212
Total Budget Amount	\$1,877,760

[^]Currently the Child Development Ministries (Celebration Kinderschool & After School) share 35% of the expenses they produce.

In the budget process one of the first areas we look at is income. As a church family you have tithed well in 2010. In January pastor David challenged each of us to give regularly – as we receive financial blessings we need to give to the Lord, to give proportionately – we are to give an appropriate amount based on the amount we receive, to give sacrificially – as we give it should cause us to think “Ouch” and to give unencumbered – we need to get rid of our debt so we can give in a way that pleases God.

During January giving averaged 60% of the budgeted needs, but since then it has averaged 88%! The increased giving has allowed for more effective ministry activities and it has shown the pastors that our church is faithful. This facilitated an increased creativity during the planning process for this budget.

Since the beginning of February average weekly giving has been \$31,600. To accomplish the ministry God has challenged us with for next year we will need to give \$32,525 each week which is only 3% more. Can you commit to give 3% more this year?

Sharing

Sharing our faith with those who do not have a relationship with Jesus is one of the most important things we can do as Christians. We want everyone to experience the life change we have and encourage a daily walk with Christ.

This section shows the ministry activities that help share Christ locally, nationally and internationally. The largest items in this vision area are our contributions to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program and the Florida Baptist Association. Together these amounts represent 6% of the tithes and offerings and go to support mission efforts in Tallahassee, throughout Florida, the United States and around the world.

One of the main ways we share Christ at Celebration is through the preaching. This year we hope to see average worship attendance increase to 800 people per Sunday. The expenses to support worship services are special events, bible/tract distribution, bulletin production, special services, TV broadcasts and Rapid Response.

Each of the following ministry activities have been reviewed, prayed over and revised as needed in the hopes of seeing the Holy Spirit's influence increase and many people come to know Christ.

Ministry Activity	Annual Budget
Cooperative Program	\$91,413
Florida Baptist Association	\$18,283
Special Events	\$5,000
Bible/Tract Distribution	\$800
Bulletin Production	\$5,100
Groups Sharing Materials	\$2,800
Men's Sharing Events	\$2,400
Women's Sharing Events	\$800
Fuel & Mix	\$7,700
Special Sharing Events	\$5,600
Adventure Week	\$4,500
Upward	\$750
Fall Festival	\$4,000
Special Services	\$5,000
TV Broadcasts	\$3,240
CD Production	\$4,000
Rapid Response	\$3,000
Total Sharing Expenses	\$164,386

Growing

We believe it is critical to disciple adults, students and children as completely as possible so they will claim their faith as their own and develop a life-changing relationship with Christ. To that end, you will notice that the Groups Growing Materials, the combination of Student Activities and the BLAST amounts are some of the highest.

Since the Children's/Student Ministry only has about 40 hours per year to disciple children, it seems wise to give parents the necessary training to disciple their preschoolers, children and students during the 3,000 hours they have at home. With that goal in mind, you will notice activities like student parent development, Family FX and Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) that equip parents with the necessary skills to disciple their kids.

Ministry Activity	Annual Budget
Sermon Visuals & Research	1,300
Deacon Ministry	2,550
Leadership Planning Retreats	800
Sermon Planning Retreat	300
Member Care	500
Groups Growing Materials	21,520
Connecting Ministry (formerly Assimilation)	1,600
Men's Growing Events	1,200
Women's Growing Events	2,000
Student Sunday Curriculum	3,000
Student Midweek Curriculum	3,000
Disciple Now Weekend	5,820
Camp	5,100
Student Parent Development	500
Student Leadership Development	3,132
Student Devotionals	550
Student Pastor Growth	1,300
BLAST	11,750
BLAST, Jr.	7,200
Family FX	7,500
Family Pastor Growth	500
MOPS	1,800
WCA Resources	5,520
WCA Maintenance	6,000
WCA Subscriptions	840
WCA Special Guest Artist	7,200
Drama	2,400
WCA Set Construction	2,400
WCA Artist Development	1,680
WCA Pastor Growth	984
Admin Pastor Growth	500
Ministry Equipment	4,500
Total Growing Expenses	114,946

Serving

Serving others is important to show Christ's love as often as possible. As we serve others we pray for opportunities to share our faith and how Christ has changed our lives.

Two ministries that serve our community on a daily basis are the Kinderschool/ After School and Summer Camp. These ministries have their own budgets constituting over \$610,000 used to serve the community. They have constant testimonials of how the Lord changes lives in the families they serve and they truly make a difference in the kids' and parents' lives.

We continue to serve the community through our benevolence ministry, by helping with food, necessary utilities and other critical needs. The church gives out about 8 bags of food per week and, on average, assists 10 people per month with their financial needs. We also serve the community through local ministries that we support financially.

Age focused events serve our church and community by providing activities for senior adults and college students. Through the Speeders Ministry senior citizens attend lunches with keynote speakers and participate in periodic trips. College lunches provide a gathering spot for students to connect with God and others.

Wednesday night meals serve the community by providing an excellent low-cost dining experience intended to attract people from the After School Ministry as well as the community. We hope they will come to the meal, connect with our church family and stay for Family FX or one of the other Wednesday evening offerings. In addition, we hope to see more of our church families attend and connect with each other.

Ministry Activity	Annual Budget
Benevolence	15,600
Outreach Projects	4,000
Disaster Relief	2,000
Women's Pregnancy Center	1,000
Baptist Campus Ministry	1,000
Florida Baptist Children's Home	1,000
Gideons	500
Breakfast in the Park	500
Age Focused Events	5,125
Member Development	1,400
Student Service Training	750
Weddings & Funerals	120
Volunteer Appreciation	600
Wednesday Night Meals	5,760
Usher Ministry	240
Total Serving Expenses	39,595

Multiplying

Ministry Activity	Annual Budget
Church Planting Development	2,500
Church Planting Support	10,000
Seminary Scholarships	4,000
Church Plant Kick-off	2,000
Student Church Planting Mission Trip	2,950
Ministry Intern Support	2,000
Ministry Intern Development	500
Total Multiplying Expenses	23,950

God commands us to take His message to all areas and one way we can accomplish that is by planting new churches. There are communities and neighborhoods around Tallahassee that lack strong worship and biblical preaching. We have talked about church planting for several years without applying resources to the task. This budget has several ministry activities designed to move us closer to that objective.

Support

Ministry Activity	Annual Budget
Giving Envelopes	2,400
Copier	2,700
Postage Machine	2,400
PC/Network Support	7,440
Web/Internet	5,550
Property and Liability Ins.	47,582
Vehicle Insurance	9,656
Office Supplies	7,200
Special & Color Printing	8,100
Advertising	12,000
Postage	4,100
Financial Audit	4,800
Subscriptions/Memberships	1,200
Leadership Development	360
Admin Contingency	2,031
Prof Devlp/Office Staff	3,600
Staff Appreciation	2,950
Pre/Post Employment Expenses	2,400
ACH/Banking Fees	4,200
Ministry Equipment	4,200
Total Support Expenses	134,869

The graph at the beginning of this letter showed the allocation of resources with all of the support costs included within sharing, growing, serving and multiplying. However, the sections below are provided to show the details related to supporting ministry.

Support provides the foundation on which ministry is built. Think of it like the slab on which your house or apartment building sits. Without that slab, the structure would be unstable and would not withstand the high winds and rains we often experience in Tallahassee. Support for the church is very similar and is critical to make the body of Christ strong.

Ministry Activity	Annual Budget
Leadership Sal/Housing Allow.	449,648
Min. Staff Social Security Allow.	33,983
Support Staff	163,762
WCA Support Staff	47,226
Preschool Staff	27,000
Maint/Housekeeping	114,641
Food Service	21,016
Overtime	0
Leadership Retirement	44,422
Support Staff Retirement	6,455
Anniv. Recognition	3,662
Health Insurance ^	107,159
Life/Disability Insurance	3,155
Senior Pastor Mileage	1,200
Admin Pastor Mileage	840
WCA Pastor Mileage	840
Christian Living Pastor Mileage	1,000
Student Pastor Mileage	840
Family Pastor Mileage	840
FICA (SS & Med)	29,279
Workers Comp	11,890
Total Personnel Expenses*	1,068,858

^ The current health care coverage is being reviewed to reduce this cost.

* 2.7% increase from current year primarily due to health care coverage increases.

Ministry Activity	Annual Budget
Carpet/Tile Cleaning	7,920
General Repairs	15,000
HVAC Maint./Repairs	3,480
Fire Extinguishers/Stove Hood	2,700
Pest Control	3,480
Janitorial Supplies	17,000
Cleaning Service	37,200
Maint. Equipment	1,500
Capital Replacement Funding	18,000
Lawn & Shrubs Maint.	17,280
Playground Maintenance	1,000
Utilities ^	83,160
Water Disposal	756
Phone Service/Repair	9,600
Vehicle Taxes/Fees	480
Vehicle Gasoline/Repairs	7,596
Vehicle Replacement	5,004
Total Grounds & Facilities Expenses	231,156

Ministry Activity	Annual Budget
Interest	22,802
Principal	77,198
Total Debt Retirement	100,000

In previous budget letters we have been able to compare the proposed budget to the current budget. However, because the current budget is for an 8-month year due to the fiscal year change and because we have changed the entire methodology for the way we organize our budget, including account names and numbers, it was not possible to compare the proposed budget to the current budget amounts.

^ We will continue to focus on conservation this year to stay under this amount.

Note: \$87,680 of the support, personnel and grounds and facilities expenses are used to support the Kinderschool, Afterschool and Summer Camp ministries.

Summary

God is amazing, wonderful and all powerful. We believe that if we execute the above ministry with excellence, He will use our efforts to expand His kingdom. We continue to see increased involvement in each ministry area, but the testimonials provide the greatest affirmation of success and we are blessed to hear them regularly.

September is rapidly approaching and we must get ready. To accomplish the ministry outlined above, each person needs to participate, lead, pray and give on a continual basis. In the area of giving, anyone with income must give regularly, give proportionately, give sacrificially, and give unencumbered. If this is an area of opportunity for you, please commit to begin giving this year. Test God and He will prove faithful.

Think back to the questions at the beginning of this letter – in 2011, how will you write a bigger story? How will your legacy change this year?

All for HIM

John Buck, Administrative Pastor