



TOWN HALL FINANCIAL MATERIALS

JUNE 2025



Town Hall Meeting FAQs (June 2025)

Why has the budget name changed?

The term “Annual Operating Plan” (AOP) is sometimes confusing, so we are no longer using this term. Asbury First has two annual operating budgets: the General Budget and the COC Budget. The General Budget includes all income and expenses related to general operations of the church. The COC Budget includes all income and expenses related to operations of the Community Outreach Center (COC).

Why have the 2025 General and COC Budgets been reforecast?

Following a careful review of first quarter income and expenses, the Finance Committee had a clearer, more realistic picture of 2025 finances, leading the committee to reforecast both the General Budget and the COC Budget. The reasons for doing this included significant decreases in predicted General Budget income, and significantly higher than budgeted Facilities & Custodial non-personnel expense. Altogether, these reforecasts resulted in identifying a deficit of \$264,050 for the General Budget and \$18,500 for the COC Budget.

How did this happen?

A budget is a plan, and as you experience in your own family, circumstances can change, and budgets do not always turn out as planned. When the 2025 General Budget was presented to the congregation, we were transparent that this was a tight budget- with no contingency funds- a tight budget that would likely not be able to withstand unexpected challenges. This was the first time in recent history that we have passed a budget in December (rather than in January) before we had a firm idea of total pledges. Current economic uncertainties may have also affected pledging- and could affect pledge fulfillment. Some Facilities & Custodial expenses were carried over from 2024, some costs increased, some expense categories may have been under-budgeted, and some significant expenses were simply unexpected. Unexpected things happen unexpectedly, as do “perfect storms”- e.g. campus weather-related expenses and repairs hit us during an especially cold few months- including a boiler failure that resulted in loss of heat in the Education Wing and forced the daycare to close for several days.

Is there any good news?

Yes. Much good work is being accomplished. We are a learning organization, and we are learning from the past to make the future better. The Finance Committee has identified this deficit early in the year, and we are managing this situation proactively. We are committed to strengthening our financial reporting and budgeting processes, and we are committed to understanding the reality of what will be required to achieve balanced General and COC budgets for 2026 and beyond. We are also committed to keeping the congregation informed. You received the first of planned regular Finance Committee updates emailed to you in the Asbury First Weekly Reader on June 2 and This Week as Asbury First on June 5. You are always welcome to contact the Finance Committee at finance@asburyfirst.org.

Why is the Town Hall Meeting focused only on the General Budget?

The reforecast COC Budget deficit of \$18,500 was largely due to increased Facilities & Custodial costs. COC pledged and unpledged giving is strong- for which we are very grateful, and by reducing expenses through employing a part-time Social Work intern (rather than an experienced Case Manager) the Outreach Committee has resolved the COC deficit. The 2025 COC Budget is a success story. Through the good work of the Outreach Committee and COC ministry teams and the generosity of the congregation- your generosity- the COC now has a sustainable, fully allocated budget- covering all of its own expenses. We will share more details about the COC Budget in a future update.

What does the General Budget deficit represent?

The General Budget deficit represents a combination of decreased income and increased expenses. General Budget income decreased by \$148,814 due to reduced pledged income (\$86,314) and new information indicating a portion of budgeted bequest dollars (\$62,500) could not be used for general church operations. Expenses are \$115,236 greater than expected; most of this increase (\$110,089) is Facilities & Custodial non-personnel expenses. Please see attached financial statements and explanatory notes (below) for more details.

Why didn't the congregation know about this sooner?

The Finance Committee became concerned in April, and a team immediately came together to study and reforecast the Facilities & Custodial portion of the General and COC Budgets. The reforecast budgets were reviewed and presented to the Governing Board on May 12. The Financial Sustainability Task Force was engaged to help strategize and prioritize ways to communicate, address and resolve the deficit. On May 19, the Finance Committee sent a memo to all Committees and Work Areas asking for voluntary cuts in 2025 expenditures (due by June 6). May financials were promptly evaluated and incorporated into this analysis. The results of all of this work were presented to the Governing Board on June 9. The timing of the June Town Hall Meeting enabled your leaders to do the work of leading- to come to the congregation not just to talk about a problem but also prepared with proposed solutions.

What progress are we making?

Committees, Teams, and Ministry and Administrative Areas, including staff, were asked to carefully examine their budgets, prioritizing expenditures required to keep our campus safe and expenditures with a rapid 1-2 year return on investment (e.g. cost avoidance of replacement rather than repairs). Leaders were asked to "dig deep" and to recognize that the situation we find ourselves in represents a structural deficit in our budget- meaning the cuts identified this year will likely need to be sustained in future budgets. These are difficult conversations and hard decisions, requiring prayer and discernment. Many budgets were already very lean. Thus far, \$38,108 in 2025 cost reductions have been identified. The Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) review of the personnel budget is ongoing at the time of this publication.

What is meant by a structural deficit?

A structural deficit means that for a number of years our total expenses have exceeded our usual income (pledged and unpledged individual contributions, endowment interest draws, and property rentals). For the past several years, fund reserves and one-time government dollars (COVID-19 pandemic relief funds) have been used to bridge this gap; these funds are no longer available.

How will we resolve the remaining deficit?

In addition to expense reductions, we must generate additional income. With your help, we will accomplish this through a second-ask campaign called Second Mile Giving. In partnership with the Generosity Team (previously known as the Giving Team), we will be seeking Second Mile leadership gifts totaling at least \$100,000, to then be matched by an additional \$100,000 from the remainder of the congregation.

Why are we calling this Second Mile Giving?

The term comes from Matthew 5:41 where Jesus teaches, “if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile.” In Jesus’ day, Roman soldiers could legally compel civilians to carry their gear for one mile. Jesus called his followers to freely give more than is required, reflecting a spirit of radical generosity and grace. A Second Mile gift follows this teaching- it’s an extra, voluntary gift given in love to meet a shared need.

Why not fix this problem with Endowment Funds?

The purpose of endowment funds is to ensure Asbury’s long-term financial stability- which these funds have provided for many years. Through the dedicated efforts of the Investment Committee, each year the interest on our endowment funds contributes \$1 out of every \$6 of our total annual income, representing the equivalent of more than 200 additional pledges. Relying on these funds as a “short term fix” defeats their purpose and is not in the best interest of the long term financial viability of Asbury First.

What is the Financial Sustainability Task Force?

Establishing a Financial Sustainability Task Force was one of the church-wide priorities identified in the Dream Team Report. This Task Force has been commissioned by the Governing Board, with Tim Mahan serving as the Chair. Other members are David Allen, Michelle Bogue-Trost, Pat DuPont, Patrick Fulford, Chuck Hanrahan, Rick Phillips and Dawn Riedy. This group is charged with clearly understanding Asbury’s current financial position and taking a broad, innovative look at opportunities to increase Asbury’s revenues, manage expenses and craft a long term financial plan that aligns with both resources and missional aspirations of the congregation. In parallel with these efforts, Rev. Dr. Bogue-Trost and the Generosity Team are also committed to growing our congregation, both in number and in spirit-led generosity. With these combined efforts, we can be on track for greater financial stability in future years.

How can I help?

- Pray for our church, its leaders, and its mission
- Give, if you are able, a Second Mile gift to meet the challenge
- Plan for your 2026 giving to support the ministries of Asbury First. Will you increase your support so no further cuts or appeals must be made?
- Be a part of the conversation- attend the Town Hall Meeting on Sunday June 22 to learn more and ask questions

How will we know how we're doing?

We will provide regular updates on our progress to close the 2025 deficit. This will include updates in worship, in the bulletin, through e-blasts, and by use of the ping pong ball cylinders in the Gathering Space. This is a huge, but not impossible task. We are better together, and we will figure this out together.

I'm ready. How can I give a Second Mile gift?

- **Pledge online** to Second Mile Giving at asburyfirst.org/pledge-online
- **Give online** to Second Mile Giving at asburyfirst.org/give-online
- **Pledge card**- Second Mile Giving pledge cards will be available at the Town Hall Meeting
- **Pledge by email**- email your Second Mile Giving pledge to giving@asburyfirst.org
- **Pledge by phone** by calling John Ormsbee or Holly Temming at 585-271-1050
- **Checks** with memo Second Mile Giving (mailed to the church, or dropped in the offering plate)
- **Cash gifts** in an envelope marked Second Mile Giving (offering plate, or dropped off at Church Office)
- **Funds transfer**, indicating Second Mile Giving (please contact John Ormsbee or Holly Temming at 585-271-1050 if you need assistance)
- **Venmo**- you may give a gift by finding “@givingasburyfirst” (indicate Second Mile Giving)
- **Text to Give**- you may give a gift with a debit/credit card by texting the dollar amount to 206-222-1050

Asbury First United Methodist Church
2025 General Budget Financial Report (June 2025)

	2025 Approved Budget Dec 2024	2025 ReforecastBudget June 2025	Difference	Category	Notes
REVENUE					
Pledged Donations	\$ 1,200,817	\$ 1,114,503	\$ (86,314)	Budget Reforecast	1
Unpledged Donations	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000			
Other Individual Contributions	\$ 26,450	\$ 26,450			
Endowment Draws	\$ 351,707	\$ 351,707			
Rents	\$ 126,085	\$ 126,085			
Drawdown from Recent Bequests	\$ 97,200	\$ 34,700	\$ (62,500)	Budget Reforecast	2
Other Income & Fundraisers	\$ 31,128	\$ 31,128			
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 2,058,387	\$ 1,909,573	\$ (148,814)		
EXPENSES					
PERSONNEL					
Clergy	\$ 395,103	\$ 395,103		Ongoing review	3
Non-clergy	\$ 826,716	\$ 826,716			
TOTAL PERSONNEL	\$ 1,221,819	\$ 1,221,819			
NON-PERSONNEL					
Transfer OUT: Outreach Funding Team	\$ 11,000	\$ 6,000	\$ (5,000)	Expense Reduction	4
Transfer OUT: Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 75,000	\$ 45,000	\$ (30,000)	Expense Reduction	5
Administration- All Other	\$ 122,006	\$ 118,898	\$ (3,108)	Expense Reduction	6
Communications	\$ 20,750	\$ 26,218	\$ 5,468	Budget Reforecast	7
Conference Ministry Shares	\$ 318,190	\$ 318,190			
Worship & Arts	\$ 11,150	\$ 11,150			
Youth & Discipleship	\$ 27,250	\$ 27,250			
Congregational Care	\$ 15,060	\$ 15,060			
Facilities, Custodial & Insurance	\$ 235,841	\$ 345,930	\$ 110,089	Budget Reforecast	8
TOTAL NON-PERSONNEL	\$ 836,247	\$ 913,696	\$ 77,449		
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 2,058,066	\$ 2,135,515	\$ 77,449		
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	\$ 321	\$ (225,942)			

**Asbury First United Methodist Church
2025 General Budget Reforecast (June 2025)
Explanatory Notes**

1	Many new folks pledged this year, and many folks increased their pledge. Still, total pledged donations were \$51,000 short of the budgeted goal. Also, in recent years, pledge fulfillment has varied from 97-102%. Given current economic circumstances, the Finance Committee decided it was most appropriate to budget for 97% pledge fulfillment for 2025. The total reduction in anticipated general pledges income is therefore \$86,314.
2	The General Budget included contributions from two recent bequests. After the 2025 General Budget was passed, we learned that one bequest specified that their gift be split between the General Endowment and the Property Stewardship Endowment. For this reason, \$62,500 from this bequest was removed from the General Budget. \$34,700 from the second bequest remains in the 2025 General Budget to help support this year's instrumental music program. In accordance with the donor's wishes, the Governing Board has placed the remainder of this bequest into an Instrumental Music Endowment Fund to be managed by the Investment Committee.
3	Benefit expenses (e.g. pensions, health insurance etc.) are being adjusted to more accurately reflect actual costs. Our staffing configuration is also under review by the Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC). At the time of this publication, this review was ongoing. An update will be provided at the Town Hall Meeting.
4	The Outreach Committee has agreed to reduce support for off-campus ministries for 2025. Identifying alternative ways to provide much needed support for our off-campus ministry partners and new, emerging needs in our community will be included as the Outreach Committee plans their 2026 budget.
5	The Property Stewardship Committee has agreed to manage 2025 capital expenditures with fewer dollars; however, this decrease is not sustainable. Right-sizing funds available for capital improvements and fixed asset replacements (equipment and technology) will be an important part of the work of the Financial Sustainability Task Force.
6	Other Administration expenses were evaluated and reduced by \$3,108.
7	Expenses through May prompted a reforecast of this category.
8	This category includes utilities, janitorial supplies, maintenance supplies, maintenance contracts, uncovered maintenance/repairs and insurance. By the end of the first quarter, it became apparent that expenses in multiple categories would be higher than budgeted. This was due to a combination of carryover 2024 expenses (e.g. expenses incurred in 2024 but not paid until 2025), cost increases in multiple categories, more activities on our campus (e.g. janitorial supplies) and significant unexpected maintenance and repairs, including unanticipated expenses for sidewalk salting and a boiler failure in the 1040 Education Wing- a failure which resulted in a loss of heat and caused the Asbury Daycare to close for several days.

	2025 Approved Budget Dec 2024	2025 Reforecast Budget June 2025	Difference	Explanatory Notes	2025 Expenses Jan-May	2024 Expenses Jan-May
FACILITIES, CUSTODIAL & INSURANCE						
Utilities						
Gas	29,100	34,000	4,900		23,934	13,258
Electricity	54,500	64,500	10,000	Bills lag usage	29,942	21,373
Water	3,400	3,400			1,250	1,067
City Services	5,350	5,350			265	0
County Services	7,610	7,610			6,189	7,169
Refuse Collection	12,243	0	(12,243)	Moved to Contracts	0	6,526
Subtotal Utilities	112,203	114,860	2,657		61,580	49,393
Janitorial Supplies	8,844	23,000	14,156		11,463	5,905
Maintenance Supplies	8,040	15,100	7,060		8,814	4,737
Maintenance Contracts	61,484	73,400	11,916	Now includes Refuse	35,642	7,686
Uncovered Maintenance/Repairs	20,700	95,000	74,300		68,263	17,464
Insurance/Professional Services	24,570	24,570			10,453	7,624
Total Facilities & Custodial	235,841	345,930	110,089		196,215	92,809