



Church of the Good Shepherd United Methodist
5 W. Washington Street/PO Box 695 Oswego, IL 60543
www.goodshepherdoswego.org
(630) 554-3269
office@goodshepherdoswego.org

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

With the final months of the year upon us, here's an update on how the church finances stand through the first 9 months. Please take a moment to review this information.

Total regular contributions this year continue to be better than last year. While they are 6.5% above last year, the contributions in the last couple of months have been below levels experienced in the same months of 2022. We are still nearly 5% below the contributions that were planned for in the annual operating budget but remain very hopeful that the generally positive trend in contributions will strengthen during the final months of the year.

Our expenses for payroll and other normal church operating costs are higher than last year by close to 7% but fortunately they are below anticipated budget levels by about 3%. This has allowed us to keep all normal payroll and operating expense bills paid on a current basis. Although we were current on apportionment through August, the decline in September contributions prevented paying September apportionment, leaving us now one month (\$2,500) behind on this important obligation. As stated above, our hope is that the level of contributions will increase in the final months to allow us to finish the year with all obligations paid.

Finance is currently working with the other church committees to prepare the operating financial budget for 2024. We have already seen many of our operating costs rise significantly and this will continue in the new year. Our valuable staff has been through several years of minimal (and sometimes zero) pay increases, a situation that needs to be addressed in the 2024 budget. To meet these increased expenses, we will be budgeting for increased levels of contributions. Our goal is to present the 2024 budget to the Church Council for final approval in late November.

Information will soon be provided regarding preparation of your annual "Estimate of Giving" for 2024 contributions. Until then, and as your personal finances allow, please prayerfully consider continuing, or perhaps even increasing, the contributions that are being made on a regular basis this year, either in person, through the mail or by using e-giving. If you are unsure where you stand this year with your personal gifts, please contact the church office to receive an update. With everyone's help, your church will stay up to date in paying all expenses, continue to retain our valuable staff, and continue to bring the Lord's message to everyone.

Yours in Service to the Lord,

Ed Bradley, Finance Committee Chairman