

Policy: The BLC Council shall annually, prior to the start of the January 1 fiscal year, review and recommend an annual operating budget to the Congregation membership at a duly convened congregational meeting. The operating budget shall be proposed to fund identified staff, operating, and strategic initiative costs. Capital campaigns, maintenance reserves, restricted funds or campaigns or other financial plans and initiatives shall also be identified to the Congregation during the annual budget review process.

Guidelines

1. The President of the Congregation will organize an annual process for preparation, review and recommendation of a proposed operating budget.
2. The draft operating budget should address resources for strategic and operating plans and expected operating and personnel costs.
3. The President will ensure that the process includes input from Council members, other leaders of BLC programs and activities, and the Pastor.
4. Each Leader of BLC programs and activities is responsible for collecting input and organizing operating and strategic plan budget recommendations.
5. The President may appoint a budget committee or use such other resources as may be necessary to prepare a consolidated draft budget. The Director of Finances, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary will assist.
6. The BLC Council should include in its annual review consideration of capital budgeting and maintenance reserves, multi-year financial initiatives, and any special financial activities or campaigns.
7. Once the Council has reviewed and approved the draft operating budget, the President will ensure that the draft budget and a narrative explanation is provided to the congregation in advance of the Congregational meeting and as required by notice requirements.
8. Financial campaigns and activities supplemental to the operating budget shall also be included in the budget presentation.
9. The President shall normally offer a budget session or process for review and comment by congregational members prior to the Congregational meeting.
10. Once the annual operating budget has been approved by the congregation membership, the President and the Director of Finances are responsible for managing Council oversight of the budget and providing regular (and no less than semi-annual) reports to the congregation on the budget status.
11. Further, once the congregation has approved the budget and the new fiscal year begins, then monies can be spent within budgeting amounts by paid staff or volunteer leaders with key responsibility for the topic involved.
12. During the budget year, some expenditures may be proposed that are beyond the budgeted amounts or for purposes not included in the budget. Small expenditure amounts (\$500 or less) outside the budget may be authorized by the President or the Director of Finances and immediately reported to the Council. Larger amounts may be recommended by the Council and approved by the Congregation at a special or regular meeting.