

What is a church budget?

Too often, church budgets are seen only as cold, hard numbers. Here are some thoughts from an old essay that has been passed around for years (original source unknown) to make budgets a little more human and meaningful:

A church budget is...

- bread in a hungry child's stomach
- Holy Communion for a member of the Armed Services far from home
- up-to-date materials for parish church schools
- a pastor's prayer at a hospital bedside
- a place to camp in God's great out-of-doors
- a pastoral counselor for a concerned college student
- hundreds of overseas missionaries preaching, teaching, serving
- tender, loving care for an unwanted infant

- a nurse's soothing touch on a fevered brow
- translating the Bible into 1,326 languages and dialects
- theological education for a future pastor
- new hope for thousands of ghetto dwellers living in poverty
- a warm blanket on a refugee's bed.



- the church's mission in financial terms.

A church budget is. . . .

- a church member serving in many places
- works that can't be done by only one
- Christians united in the Lord's work
- a plan that can lift the lives of millions

A church budget is. . . .

- a measure of Christian involvement
- always less than what is really needed
- an opportunity to give more than seems possible and a level to rise above
- putting your money where your faith is.

Devotional offers daily readings for Lent

Too Deep for Words: Devotions for Lent 2014 is a new pocket-sized devotional available from Augsburg Fortress. This 96-page, full-color Lenten companion features daily readings from Romans. Each reading is accompanied by a photo, quote, reflection and prayer. Pastor Joelle Colville-Hanson, who serves the Northeastern Iowa Synod as ELCA Director for Evangelical Mission, is a co-author.

"I hope the thoughts for each day in Lent will allow readers to reflect in a realistic down-to-earth way that helps them grow and connect with God," Colville-Hanson said.

Cost is \$2 for orders up to 99, \$1.50 for orders of 100 or more. A large print version is available for \$5. To learn more or to order online, visit www.augsburgfortress.org/media/email/Lent/TooDeepForWords2014/index.html.

