

The Christian Church of Villa Park
(Disciples of Christ)
How Our Money Becomes Ministry



Called to embody God's love, we seek through the Spirit
to enact the love of God made incarnate in our Savior Jesus Christ.

Introduction

Since Pentecost in May, Pastor Dave Holston has been leading us through a study of the book of Acts – the Acts of the Apostles. We have been considering what the early church was called to do and what that means to us as a congregation today. We believe that God has ministries for us to sustain and expand in our community.

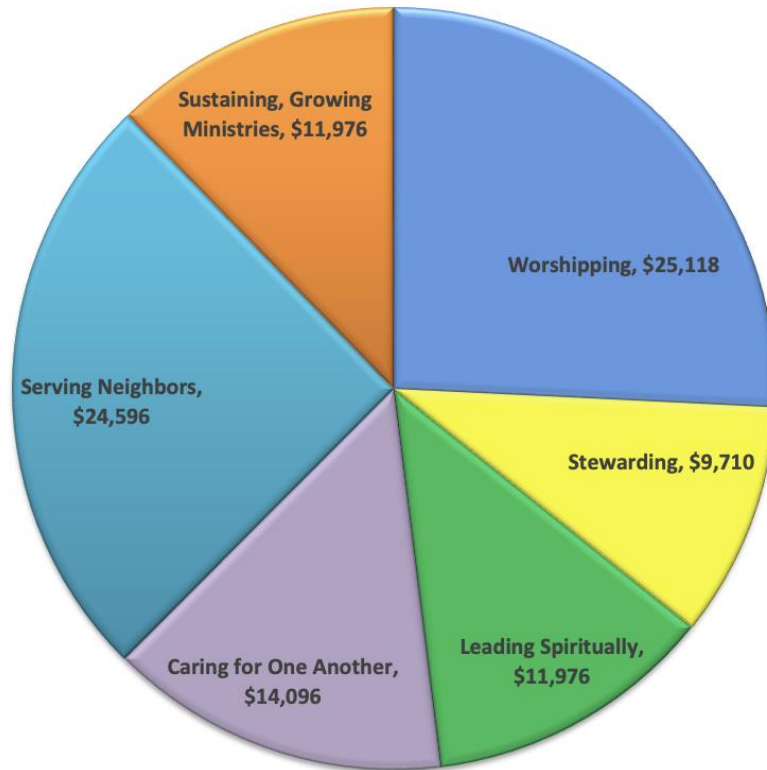
These ministries are possible only through the generous stewardship of the congregation and its friends sharing their time, talents, and treasures.

The story on the following pages provides just a glimpse of our shared vision for the coming year. The 'price tag' will show you what we need to bring it to life. But know that, in addition to your financial pledge, there are other invitations to commitment. We also need your continued attendance in worship, use of your spiritual gifts, and your service to others. By the grace of God, and by the generous use of your time, talents, and treasure, we are looking to a year of fruitful witness to the love and grace of God.

We tell the *story* of our budget, because our life together is so much more than numbers on a page. A line-item budget is only a set of figures, a necessary accounting tool. It can tell the "what" of our expenses and income, but it cannot tell the whole story of "how" we create our lives together. This narrative budget attempts to show the fullness of our life together because our life and ministry are not mere numbers, but the active service of God our creator, Jesus our redeemer and the Holy Spirit our sustainer.

Expected Ministry budget for 2025 \$97,473

Through the Spirit...



Worshipping \$25,118

We continue to evolve in our worship together, especially under the direction of our Pastor Dave Holston and musician Mickey O’Brien. Their gifts and time are essential to what happens in our worship space each Sunday at 10:30am. Prayer, scripture, story, music and song, message, and communion continue to be essential pieces of our worship even as they evolve to reflect who we are.



Caring for One Another \$14,096

We are caregivers. We value time spent in community and affirm our call, as the body of Christ, to share stories and walk alongside all members and friends of our congregation. Pastor Dave spends much of his time with people, listening to them and praying for them.

Dave and Christie Holston hosted a gathering at their home in August. We look forward to more such fellowship, not just at the Holstons’, but with one another in other settings.

Serving Our Neighbors \$24,596

We are called by God to be servants within our community and witnesses to God's promise for each and every one of God's children. Where we see suffering, we help to alleviate it. Where we see hurt, we provide comfort.



Disciples Food Pantry is a wonderful expression of Christian spirit and, over the past 12 months, we were able to help feed many people. The Pantry continues a drive-up service, as chosen by the clients. We are blessed to be able to keep helping our community. The work of volunteers from our congregation and the wider community blesses our neighborhood. The food and supplies the Pantry distributes are fully funded by donations from the community and grants. Pastor Dave has committed himself to being present as often as possible when the Pantry is open, talking to clients and volunteers, ministering to them when requested.

Volunteers from our congregation led the organization of the 10th annual Love Your Neighbor Day in September. Over 150 volunteers from our church and others in Lombard and Villa Park came together to help 33 homeowners who needed help with various projects. As with the Disciples Food Pantry, Love Your Neighbor Day is fully funded by the Villa Park and Lombard communities, but it takes volunteers' time to make it happen.

Four members of our congregation participated in the local CROP Hunger Walk on October 6 to help raise funds to feed the hungry. Of the funds raised, 25% will be distributed to local food pantries, including our own. The remainder goes to national and international programs to help communities obtain food and clean water. In addition to providing walkers, our congregation is one of the sponsors of the Walk helping to cover its expenses.



As a congregation, we support the regional ministries of the Christian Church in Illinois/Wisconsin and the general ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). By giving to our regional and general denominational ministries, we are becoming better stewards and participating in ministries that reach neighbors in our community and across the world

Stewarding \$9,710

We are stewards. God has given us many gifts and it is our responsibility to use them all as God would have us do. The Stewardship Council is called to particularly oversee the physical and financial gifts of our congregation.

June 1 of this year began a new contract of space-sharing with New Life Bible Chapel, the owners of the building. Our monthly contributions to them significantly increased, impacting the cost of all of our ministries.

Our Administrative Assistant, Diana Robbins, is our Bookkeeper. She sees that our day-to-day bills and salaries are paid and the "books" (accounting software files) are balanced.

We are exploring, as a community, what it means to steward all of our resources including our time and our gifts. We seek to be fruitful with the resources we have.

Leading Spiritually \$11,976

We are still learning. As people of faith, we are all called to continue growing in our faith in community. We learn from and grow with one another, receiving wisdom from those who journey with us. We are called to pray, read, discern, and grow together into God's vision for us.

Our Bible study hour on Sunday mornings is an all-ages time of learning. We spend time with the scriptures that Pastor Dave will preach on during worship that day. After an opening activity that involves everyone, younger participants move to a table of their own for activities while Pastor Dave leads a discussion of the Bible passages with the adults.

Pastor Dave's work toward becoming a fully licensed Disciples pastor is ongoing. In addition, he is now taking classes and attending workshops to strengthen various facets of his ministry as our pastor.

Sustaining and Growing our Ministries \$11,976

We are a community. As we are in ministry together, we know that we do not act in solitude, that we are enriched by being in a community of believers and sharing our ministry.

The leadership of the church, as well as any other interested members, have been in continued conversation about our future. A planning retreat was held in April led by one of the Illinois/Wisconsin Regional staff. Recently the Stewardship Council had another Regional staff member attend one of their meetings to discuss possible future paths for our ministries. We will continue to move forward in this discernment process.

Conclusion

We are excited about who we are becoming and looking forward to what comes next! This narrative budget, its priorities and missions, will inform our decisions through the coming year. As a congregation, we commit ourselves to be part of the story, to support it with our financial gifts as well as with our hearts and hands.

This is our story and it is only together that we can continue to tell it.

Please prayerfully consider what God is calling you to give to create this congregation's story. If you are receiving this by mail, your stewardship card is enclosed. If by email, you received a link to make a commitment electronically. On November 10, 2024, we will celebrate God's abundance and the gifts we give as an act of worship having submitted our stewardship cards electronically, in person or by mail.



*God's Gifts,
Our Response*