Feedback on FY21 budget from three Budget Conversations

Thirty one congregants attended at least one of three budget conversations on May 11, May 14 and May 17. The notes from each meeting, along with the agenda and the budget documents, can be found on the FPB website.

What follows is a compilation of the feedback the board received, along with the frequently asked questions.

Given our mission, what works about this budget?

• Shows restraint without sacrificing mission in a unique year to come.
• Sustainable for the next year – nothing dramatic – balanced and realistic.

• Pledges are strong.
• PPP loan helps with 2020 endowment draw.
• Normally concerned about endowment draw, however we are in an unprecedented time.

• We are paying staff adequately, and not laying off or furloughing staff.
• Great to be able to maintain salaries of people we employ. All are critical to maintaining the mission.

• Endowment is invested through UUA, which has a socially responsible investing policy.
• In favor of occasional use of plate collections for local charities and partners = mission-driven

• Reductions are shared – one program/action/committee does not bear it all.
• Reduction in programmatic budget is across the board (RE, music, committee) - nothing drastic, and is a way of sharing the lift.
• Makes sense that B&G has decreased; over the next year we won’t be doing major work to the building.

Concerns:

1. We value music a lot in this congregation and I am concerned about the Sunday service music section being cut by 20% - music has been important in the live stream services.
2. The Welcoming Committee needs $800, not $500 (Gene has a letter from Rev. Eliza)
3. Climate Justice may not have a clear view of next year’s need. It is likely to be more.
4. Rental income is optimistic based on UUA expectations of closed churches.
   The building rentals line estimates we will be closed well into the fall; we have 3 major tenants; expect all 3 will return, but later. To make 36K, the construction company will also need to again rent the upper parking lot. What if the building is closed all year?
5. We were an Honor Congregation until last year: understand why this happens; biggest point of debate last year at annual mtg: now are 8K away from being an honor congregation. On person felt strongly that we should draw an additional 8K from the endowment to get our contribution to the 23K Honor Congregation level – one person made the point that congregations with more financial resources support those who have fewer resources, and that is in alignment with our mission.
6. Think about adding sliding scale RE fees – the person who suggested this had an offline conversation with Charles and wrote to say she wanted to withdraw this suggestion.