



SUSTAINABLE & VITAL CONGREGATIONS:

DISCERNING & PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

We all want congregations that are vital, engaged in the ministry of being the church, proclaiming the gospel, growing disciples, sharing God's love, and making a difference in our community. We also want congregations that are sustainable, in order to continue this important work for the next generation.

Recognizing that many congregations struggle with significant financial challenges which impact not only their ability to focus on the ministry to which Christ calls them, but their ability to be sustainable and vital, we offer this four part series. This series will help congregation leaders look at both income and expense projections to assess their financial situation and explore possibilities and options regarding two of the largest expenses in congregational budgets, their buildings and staffing, and develop a plan that is focused on both the sustainability and vitality of the congregation.

Participants may choose to join a single session, or any combination. Congregations may also encourage different members to join various sessions.

Part I, January 9 - Let's talk finances

Part II, January 16 - Our buildings

Part III, January 23 - Staffing and Salaries

Part IV, January 30 - Making decisions

All Sessions 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Online via Zoom



Each session will feature facilitators comprised of synod staff, synod council members, or congregational leadership each having direct experience with the topics being discussed. The facilitators will vary week to week based on the material being covered.

Part I - Let's talk finances. Do we operate in the red or in the black?

Scott Schulte, synod treasurer, will facilitate this session to help congregation leaders understand the budgeting process, using reserves, making financial projections, and sharing this information with the congregation.

Part II - Our buildings – do they enhance ministry or drain our funds?

We will examine different options congregations have explored and used to make the most of their property. What things do we need to be mindful of as we explore different options.

Part III - Staffing & salaries – wishes, wants, and needs

Providing salaries and benefits for pastors and church staff is expensive. What kind of staffing and leadership does your congregation need to be vital? How much staff do we need? What are different staffing patterns? How do we equip and resources volunteers?

Part IV - Pulling it together and making decisions!

How can we begin to make faithful and wise decisions focused on our purpose as the church? Let's have a candid discussion on making what are often uncomfortable decisions now, that equip us for the possibilities of the future.