

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



Through the Spirit we seek to enact the love of God made incarnate in our Savior Jesus Christ.

Introduction

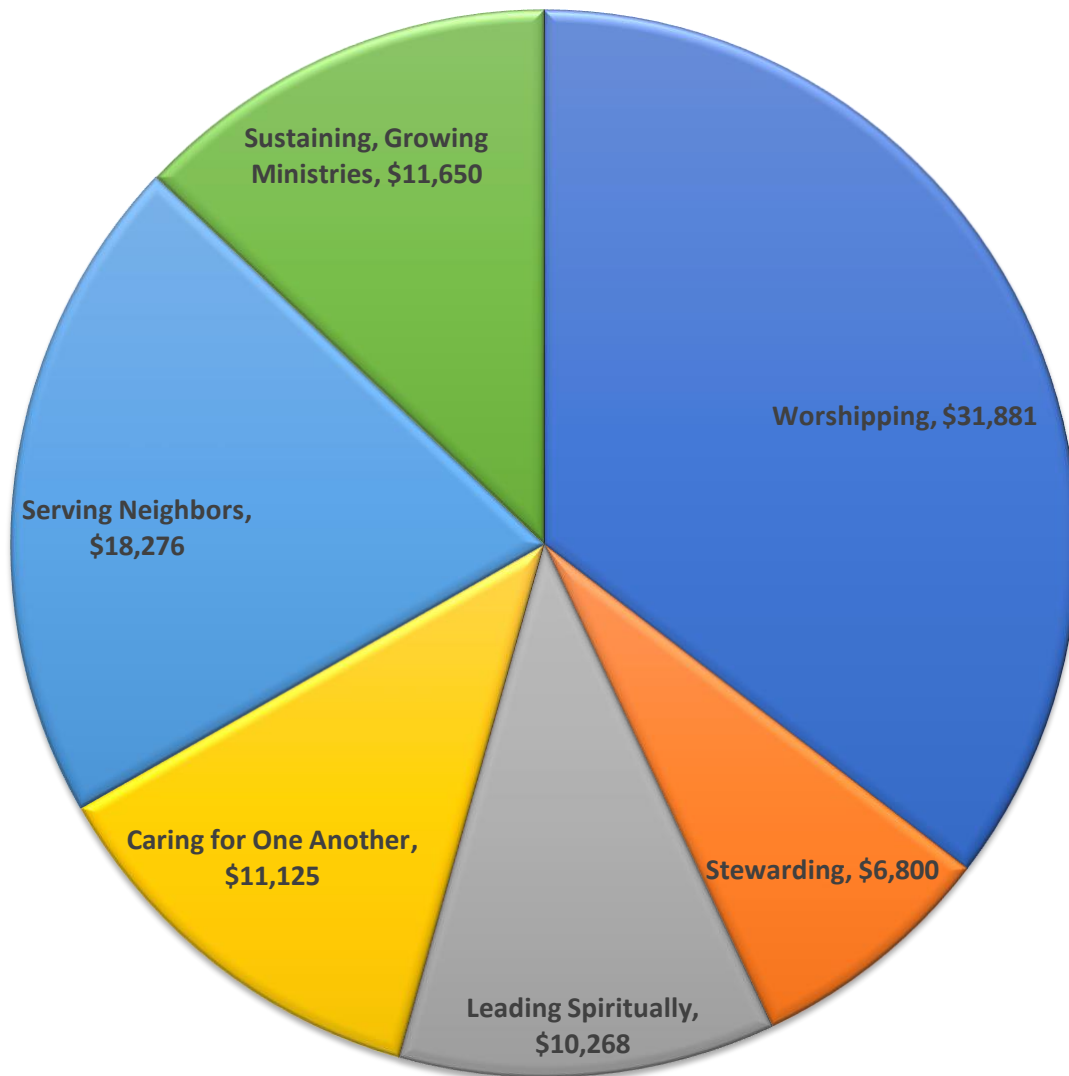
In 2022, we were continuing to explore our call in God. For the first time, our budget reflected what we might do without expending resources on a building. We explored what we might do together with our time, money, and gifts focused in new ways.

As we look to 2023, we hope to continue looking at new ways to use our gifts. At the same time, our space-sharing agreement with New Life Bible Chapel will require a significantly larger monthly payment beginning June 1.

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. We are still in the process of discerning exactly what God is calling us into. So, this story will tell us two tales. One of what we do and will continue to do, the already. The other of the hopes and possibilities that lie before us, the not yet. None of these dreams can come to life without the generous stewardship of the congregation, sharing their time, talents, and treasures. Throughout the shifts and changes of 2022, your gifts enabled us to continue to live fully into our budget and we are confident that, together, we can continue to do so in the coming year. By the grace of God, we're looking to another year of fruitful witness to the love and grace of God.

Expected Ministry Budget for 2023 \$100,380

Our Budget for 2023 \$100,380: Through the Spirit...



Worshipping \$31,881

We are disciples, followers of Jesus. Each week we continue to create worship services that renew and transform our hearts and minds to God's call in whatever space we worship. Worship is an act of the entire gathered community, united physically and electronically.

Already

We are disciples, followers of Jesus. Each week we seek to create worship services that enable us to be fully present regardless of our locations, worship that renews and transforms our hearts and minds to God's call.

Participation of the whole congregation in the leadership and the communal acts of worship is essential to how we understand ourselves. We continue to worship in person and virtually ensuring everyone can worship together regardless of location.

Prayer, scripture, music, message, and communion continue to be essential pieces of our worship even as they look different than



they once did. Rev. Reed continues the practice of developing worship series with the wisdom of the worship committee. Especially for those who cannot join worship live, Rev. Reed continues to link videos of our worship services on the church's website.

Music remains a vital part of our service, and we are joyful that we have returned to communal singing. Our space is multipurpose reminding us that we worship even as we gather for meetings and learning together.

Not Yet

We continue to evolve in our worship together. As we strive to engage the whole congregation in creating worship, we hope to bring more of us together in person on Sunday mornings. We will explore ways to use all of our gifts to praise God and serve together.

We will continue to be creative in how we use our worship space, exploring different orientations of the space and ways that the space can help us worship in new ways.

We have yet to bring back the choir or vocal soloists.

Stewarding \$6,800

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. Many of these gifts are reflected throughout our annual budget. However, we also care for other resources. Although not reflected in the annual budget, they are critical pieces of how we provide witness to God’s grace throughout the world. Monies for these ministries come from a variety of sources including past fundraising campaigns, direct community donations, and donations given in memory of beloved members of our congregation.

Already

Throughout 2021 and into 2022, the Stewardship Council has been engaged in discernment about the best use of the proceeds from the sale of our physical property.

Over the past year members of our congregation continued donations to our many extra budget missions. We gave \$1,181 to special day offerings of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Individual giving to these offerings supports mission around the world and down the street. It goes to disaster relief, new church starts, anti-racism/pro-reconciliation work, education, camps, and much more.

We give our time and money to easing hunger around the world and in Villa Park through the local CROP Walk. Joining with other faith-filled walkers from our area, walkers from our congregation raised over \$1000 in 2022; we hope to raise even more next year. Additionally, over the last 12 months, individuals in the church have given hundreds of hours of volunteer time to the

Food Pantry. The Pantry receives funds from individuals outside the church and from community groups.

After seven incredible years, we again reached out to serve our community through “Love Your Neighbor Day.” We collaborated with more congregations as this grows as a community day of service assisting those financially and/or physically unable to complete work at their homes. Many congregations and members of the community participated with us as more than 140 volunteers cleaned, cleared debris, painted, and helped 34 families in our community.



CROP
Hunger
Walk
2022



The morning of Love Your Neighbor Day 2022

Not Yet

While we no longer own a building, we will enter a new phase of our space sharing agreement with New Life Bible Chapel in June. We have been sharing a minimal amount of the utility costs with New Life each month, but, beginning June 1, we will start paying a full space-sharing amount.

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

Leading Spiritually \$10,268

We are still learning. As people of faith we are all called to continue growing in our faith in community. Life is a conversation, a process of discovery among friends. 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.

Already

In 2022, we continued, as individuals and as a congregation, to explore what it means to give our whole lives to God. God calls us to do more than show up on Sunday mornings and give of our excess. We grow together in reimagining our lives as abundant in gifts, allowing us to share God's love with the world.

The elders continue to meet together, renewing their spirits and living deeply into the roles the Design has called them and nurturing the gifts of every person in our congregation.

Our Sunday school class continues as an all-ages, in-person community. We share stories and conversation, encouraging questions and sharing our gifts.

We affirm that our faith in and relationship with God grow as we converse with those outside of our immediate community. Rev. Reed, continues to learn through conversation with local ecumenical and Disciples clergy as these groups are able to gather.

Not Yet

We are focusing on nurturing the gifts of every person in our congregation. God has brought us together and our gifts complement one another. Without the gifts of each of us we cannot fully follow the call of God.

The Elders will seek to focus on discerning how to best incorporate all of our gifts, to make sure our voices are heard and used toward the ministries God calls us into. They will seek to faithfully gather resources to help them guide and equip other leaders in this congregation and seek new ways to enhance the congregation's spiritual vitality on its journey.

We seek to provide opportunities within the ministries of our congregation to nurture, develop, and hone our various gifts. We also strive to support those seeking opportunities beyond those available in our local congregation. We are all enriched when one or more of us receives knowledge and training elsewhere and returns to share with us.



Caring for One Another \$11,125

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 of community.

Already

Since the pandemic began, we have viscerally experienced the importance of connections with one another. Because of this we have discovered new ways of coming together.

We share news, stories, events, and more in our newsletter. We make our life together visible through our website. These will continue to be vital pieces of our ministry and will be important tools in our transformation. We will share our story in more ways in the coming year and use the many tools of communication to reach out and encourage participation in new ways.



Not Yet

Caring for one another is one of the most essential acts of community. As we look forward, we want to continue to emphasize this and the role we all play in making God's love known in the good and hard moments of our lives.

We will be exploring new ways to come together as community, hoping to get more of us together in person as our community health improves.

We will seek to be more creative in how we connect with one another and share news and stories together. We will strive to create a space where all are comfortable sharing the fulness of who they are and what is happening in their lives.

Serving Our Neighbors \$18,276

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.

Already

Disciples Food Pantry is a wonderful expression of Christian spirit and, over the past 12 months, we were able to help feed many people. Because of the pandemic, this ministry continues to function as a drive-thru service on Wednesday mornings. 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. We give thanks that many have been touched by this ministry, including several clients who have been so moved by the welcome and help they have received that they are called to give back. When possible, we hope to continue expanding the impact of our ministry on our community by returning to inside service. The food pantry will continue to be a place for connections with other community members and organizations to flourish.

Rev. Reed also continued to address emergency needs of our neighbors through the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

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. In 2022, we increased the portion of our budget supporting these ministries. We believe that our God created a world filled with generosity and we believe that living into this generosity is an act of faith. By expressing this generosity to our denomination, we are connecting to other people of faith throughout the entire world.

Not Yet

In the coming year we will be exploring new ways to serve our neighbor and to enhance the ways we already minister together.

Although we no longer own a building, we still find our roots in this community and want to grow them even deeper. We hope to be able to serve in new ways, meeting even more needs than before.

The ministries we already have are places we will start, but, we are also exploring new relationships with community organizations that will allow us to be more effective in addressing the various needs in our community. We remain committed to alleviating hunger and also look to ways we can address underlying issues of food insecurity. We remain committed to helping homeowners who are struggling to maintain their properties and also look to the underlying issues that lead to struggles with housing.



CROP Walk Sponsor 2022

Sustaining and Growing our Ministries \$11,650

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.

Already

CCVP 20/20, our visioning ministry, continues to focus on discerning what new ways God will be calling us alongside other leaders in the congregation. We continued to find renewal, conversation, and ideas in our Ministry Gatherings. The Ministry Gathering is a place not only for current ministries, but a place from which new ministries will arise. We are exploring new ways of meeting and holding these vibrant conversations.

Rev. Reed also continues to live into the importance of sustaining and growing ministry through time together. She continues to seek out spaces of spiritual rejuvenation and deep wisdom, taking a few days apart twice a year. In addition, we, as a congregation participate in wider gatherings of the church.

Not Yet

CCVP 20/20 will focus on where God is calling us as a congregation. Group conversations and discernment will be needed to determine who we are and what is in our future.

Rev. Reed is exploring ways to incorporate sustainability and growth more into the everyday ministries of her work and our congregation's work. It can feel difficult to take time away from all that needs to be done to make space to dwell with God, but taking even a few minutes on a regular basis can give us the space we need to truly hear God.

Conclusion

We are excited about who we are becoming! The narrative budget, its priorities and missions, will guide our decisions through the coming year. As a congregation, we commit ourselves to be part of this story, to support it with our money as well as with our hearts and hands.

This is our story and it is only together that we make it real.

Your estimate of giving card is enclosed. Please prayerfully consider all that you are able to give to creating this congregation's story. On November 20, we will celebrate God's abundance and the gifts we give as an act of worship having submitted our pledge cards electronically or by mail.