**Missouri Mid-South Conference United Church of Christ**

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**Zoom Webinar on Financial Concerns Amid COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Thursday, March 26, 2020**

**11:00 a.m.**

1. Opening Prayer
2. Goal for Our Time Together
	1. Provide resources to Church leaders to begin to develop a financial strategic plan for this “Gap Period”
3. Getting Through the “Gap Period”
	1. I define Gap Period as this time when we are required to stay home and the church is unable to perform its daily business during the COVID pandemic.
	2. This Gap Period could last through May, June or July (depending on the mandates from the CDC, local, state, and federal government.
4. How to Prepare Church Financial Viability During Pandemic
	1. Your Church Council and Finance Committee need to look at the following items of the church budget:
		1. Income
			1. Member Giving
				1. How do you encourage members to continue making their weekly financial contribution?
				2. Are there members who normally give at the end of the year who are able to give their larger donation now?
			2. Rentals
				1. Have you had conversations with those who rent space from your church whether they will be able to continue to pay their rent during this time?
			3. Percentage from Endowment
			4. Other?
		2. Expenses
			1. Personnel
				1. DO NOT REDUCE or ELIMINATE PERSONNEL EXPENSES DURING GAP PERIOD!!!!
				2. This may be the temptation because it is normally the largest percentage of a church’s budget.
				3. You will further harm the livelihoods of your staff (from pastor, music director, and custodian) if you cut off their salary at this dire moment.
			2. Building and Grounds
				1. Some utility and water companies are willing to work with businesses during this time

New York Times article mentions companies willing to work with small businesses during this time.

<https://www.nytimes.com/article/coronavirus-money-unemployment.html?auth=login-facebook#link-384852c0>

* + - 1. Ministry
			2. OCWM
			3. Loan Payoff
			4. Other
		1. Savings/Endowment
			1. What is “liquid?”
			2. What can you pull from your endowment to get you through this “gap period”
				1. Be wise about this. Don’t overly conserve for a rainy day – THIS is our rainy day!
				2. But don’t take all of your money out either. There are other possible funding options for this gap period. Look at all possibilities before removing a substantial amount from your savings/endowment
1. Develop a “Budget Stress Test”
	1. Create scenarios from your 2020 budget where you anticipate losing 10, 25, or 50% of your church income. How does that affect your expenses? Where could you cut back from your expenses and pull from savings/endowment? Are there short-term loans you could apply for to get through the gap period?
2. Small Business Loans
	1. Right now, churches are allowed to apply for small business loans to provide disaster assistance to churches impacted by COVID-19.
	2. Here’s the website: <https://www.sba.gov/about-sba/sba-newsroom/press-releases-media-advisories/sba-provide-disaster-assistance-loans-small-businesses-impacted-coronavirus-covid-19>
3. Wider UCC Support
	1. The Conference Ministers, Executive Officers, and UCC Financial Ministries are quickly trying to develop financial support for local churches during the gap period. There is nothing we have right now.
	2. Cornerstone Fund has suggested they are willing to offer a line of credit to those who have loans with them
4. How to Communicate to the Church About Your Church’s Finance During this Time!
	1. Be honest. Mix our reality together with hope – We are Easter People!
	2. Ask for their Generosity of money and prayers during this time
	3. We will get through this together!
5. Families First Coronavirus Response Act
	1. Effective April 2, and in place through December 31, 2020.
	2. I will post more information on our COVID page of the Conference website about Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion.
6. Final Thoughts or Questions?
7. Next Thursday’s Zoom Webinar will Focus on Pastoral Care, Death of Members, and Grieving Together (11 am)