



PARABLE

# YOUR CHURCH BUDGETING TOOLKIT

*Everything you need to  
lead your church  
through the budgeting  
process; free templates,  
training videos, and  
more!*



# READY TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR CHURCH'S FINANCES & PLAN FOR THE FUTURE?

**If budgeting feels overwhelming, or if you've struggled to stick to a budget or develop a long-term plan, you're not alone.**

With 1 in 3 churches lacking a formal budget and an estimated \$20 billion entrusted to churches being spent without an intentional plan in place, it's crucial to take intentional steps toward healthy financial stewardship. This Church Budgeting Toolkit will provide you with the tools to create, maintain, and grow a budget that aligns with your mission and ensures every dollar is spent with purpose.



## Step One


# GET THE TOOLS & CREATE THE ROADMAP

Creating a church budget can feel overwhelming, especially when unsure of what tools or calculations are required. That's where the roadmap and tools come in.

Our carefully designed templates take the guesswork out of the process, providing the essential tools to start building a solid budget.

Understanding the budgeting process is just as crucial as the numbers themselves. What are the key timelines? How long should each phase take?

The Roadmap will guide you through the entire process from the initial team meeting to the finalized budget.

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BOOKKEEPING & ACCOUNTING FOR CHURCHES

### Budgeting Process Roadmap

*\*How-to videos available [here](#).*

ITEM	WHO	DATE
<b>Step 1 - Preparing</b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> (Parable only) Schedule Budget Kickoff Meeting ( <a href="#">email template</a> )		Date scheduled: <input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Generate necessary reports to complete budgeting - Statement of Activities (P&L) showing totals for last 12 months (Excel file) Statement of Activities (P&L) by month for last 3 years (Excel file) Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) as of last month closed (Excel file) Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) showing ending balance for last 3 years (Excel file)		<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Enter historical data in Budget Template "General" tab "Assessment" tab "Giving" tab "Budget" tab		<input type="text"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> (Parable) Suggest categories for Ministry Budget Request Templates, General Budget Templates, and which will be directly entered.		

Access Template

How-To Video

### How to Use Them:

Get reports of historical data from your accounting software. Then input that data into the templates so you know where your ministry has been. Complete the Roadmap and put in key dates so you can keep the process on track.

## *Step Two*

# CLARIFY YOUR MISSION & PRIORITIES

In many churches, there can be a divide between the pastoral and financial sides of ministry.

The pastoral team often dreams big about all the things they want to accomplish, while the financial side is tasked with determining what's possible based on available resources. This can create tension and miscommunication, leading to frustration and a lack of unity in the church's mission.

**When a budget isn't followed, the church may overspend, or even worse, miss out on fulfilling its God-given calling because the necessary funds weren't planned for.**

That's why it's essential to review your mission, goals, and ministries to ensure you're prioritizing the right areas.

**By aligning your budget with your projected income and the most impactful ministries, your church can focus on funding the best things—not just good things.**

[Access Template](#)

[How-To Video](#)

### How to Use Them:

Review your mission, goals, and ministries to make sure you are prioritizing the funding needed for them.

Use the [Budget Template](#) ("Mission," "Assessment," "Results" tabs).

## Step Three

# PROJECT YOUR INCOME

To create a realistic and effective budget, it's crucial to understand how much income your church is receiving.

Without a clear picture of what's coming in, it's impossible to know how much can be allocated for ministry, staff, and operations. That's where the giving tab in our budgeting toolkit comes in.

The giving tab walks you through your church's historical and current income, helping you analyze past trends and project your income for the upcoming year. This provides a solid foundation for making informed financial decisions, ensuring your church can confidently plan for the future while staying aligned with your mission.

Historical Giving Info										
<i>*Consider removing any large one-time gifts, or giving campaigns that are not likely to happen again so they do not skew future projections.</i>										
	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Prior Year (not Current Year)	\$0									
2 Years Prior	\$0									
3 Years Prior	\$0									
3 Year Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
% of Total	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Current Year Giving (Year-to-Date)										
	Total	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Current Year Giving	\$0									
Projected Giving for Current Year	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Determine the Projected Giving Amount for Next Year										
	Current Year (Projected)	Prior Year	2 Years Prior	3 Years Prior	One Year Growth (\$)	Average Growth over 2 years (\$)	Average Growth over 3 years (\$)	One Year Growth (%)	Average Growth Over 2 years (%)	Average Growth Over 2 years (%)
Total Giving	#DIV/0!	\$0	\$0	\$0	#DIV/0!	\$0	\$0	0%	0%	0%
One Year Growth (\$)	#DIV/0!	\$0	\$0							
One Year Growth (%)	0%	0%	0%							
Projected Growth (%)		<i>*Complete "Other Factors" tab to consider additional factors that might impact giving</i>								
Projected Growth (\$)	#DIV/0!									
Projected Income Next Year	#DIV/0!									

[Access Template](#)[How-To Video](#)

### How to Use Them:

It's time to look at your projected income, which is what you will build your budget around.

Use the [Budget Template](#) ("Giving" tabs).

## *Step Four*

# CREATE YOUR SUB-BUDGETS: STAFFING, MINISTRY & MORE

Now it's time to dive into specific templates, such as the [Staffing Budget Template](#) and [Ministry Budget Request Template](#).

These tools empower ministry leaders to take ownership of their budgets by allowing them to outline their financial needs. It gives your team a sense of buy-in and ensures that the budgeting process reflects the needs and priorities of each ministry.

As you build your budget, start by reviewing projected staff costs, including any new hires. Then, work closely with ministry leaders to gather their budget requests, categorizing them as “Need,” “Want,” or “Dream.”

**Don't forget to account for other key expenses, such as your mortgage, property upkeep, and utilities.**

While some of these costs are fixed, like your mortgage, others fluctuate, like utilities. Our [General Budget Template](#) can help you project these variable monthly expenses with greater accuracy.

Staffing Budget

Ministry Budget

General Budget

Budget Template

Capital Expenses

How-To Videos

### Helpful Tool:

The [Capital Expenses Budget Template](#) helps you calculate how much you'll need to save to hit a certain goal by a specific year. (i.e. We need a new roof by 2028, how much would we need to save each month to hit that goal?)

# CREATE INITIAL DRAFT & REVIEW

Review the numbers to see if your church can afford everything or if cuts need to be made. If adjustments are necessary, determine where to trim and by how much to stay within your projected income.

For things you'd like to fund if God provides, move them to a wish list for future consideration!

[illegible]

## *Step Six*

# FINALIZE YOUR BUDGET

Once the budget is finalized, it's important to communicate any changes. Inform ministry leaders about the approval status of their budget requests, making sure to note any adjustments or updates.

Prioritize the wish list items, so you're prepared if additional funds become available, and set clear expectations for the year ahead.

After receiving leadership approval, enter the finalized budget into QuickBooks Online (QBO) to keep everything organized and ready for the year.

As you move forward, set reminders to pray over your budget regularly, trusting God to provide and guide your financial decisions throughout the year.



You did it!  
Budgeting process  
complete.  
You made it look easy!



# ARE YOUR DOLLARS TRULY ON MISSION?

It's one thing to create a budget. It's a whole different thing to create a budget that is aligned with your mission and supports the most important things God is calling your church to. This budgeting process will help you create a budget that is aligned with your mission!

If you don't have a financial operating system in place yet, check out our [Financial Toolkit](#). This is foundational for setting your budget up for success!

## Looking for more help with your budget?

Find out more about our Advanced Budgeting service. We guide you through our budgeting process to help your church create a budget on mission – a budget that focuses your spending on the most important things for your church to do to fulfill the mission God has given you.

Reach us at [liveyourparable.com/contact-us/](https://liveyourparable.com/contact-us/).