

Mountain Sky Conference of The United Methodist Church 2019 Budget Commentary

Our 2019 budget reflects the overarching goal of the Mountain Sky Conference of The United Methodist Church: to live in God's grace and abundance as we lead a re-energized movement to reclaim the life-changing love of Jesus Christ for ALL people. The organizational structure and priorities of the Mountain Sky Conference support our mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local churches and extension ministries of the Church provide the most significant arenas through which disciple-making occurs (§120, *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2016*).

The budget intends to support the successful implementation of the Mountain Sky Conference vision, mission and organizational structure. The following describes budgeted items in each component.

REVENUE

We give thanks to God for leading us into a new vision of the Mountain Sky Conference of The United Methodist Church, and are committed to achieving this vision throughout our multi-state region. Our revenue target of \$6,655,000 is an achievable goal, and a stretch goal. We will achieve this goal through mission shares/connectional giving by our local churches, faithful stewardship by our conference office and staff, and an intentional capital campaign effort called "Dream Big, Love Boldly, Give Believing". This campaign will assist in reaching our crucial missional and financial goals for 2018-2019 and beyond, in addition to laying the groundwork for the future vitality and witness of the Mountain Sky Conference as we lead a re-energized movement to reclaim the life-changing love of Jesus Christ for ALL people.

The mission shares/connectional giving budget assumes that the Mountain Sky Conference will use the income-based apportionment formula currently used by the Rocky Mountain Conference. The mission shares/connectional giving budget of \$6.5 million is based on an apportionment formula that is 13% of local church adjusted gross revenue.

The combined 2019 budgets for the Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone conferences total \$6,702,736. This 2019 Mountain Sky Conference budget of \$6,655,000 is \$47,736 lower than that combined total.

EXPENSES

Local Churches, Circuits and Districts

District Superintendents

- Salaries and benefits for seven full-time District Superintendents.
- Vehicle expenses, airfare, lodging and meals for District Superintendent ministry activities. This line item also includes telephones and other business and professional expenses.

- Cabinet expenses are all expenses incurred in the conduct of Cabinet-related business, including Cabinet meetings, seminary visits and recruitment activities.

Other District Staffing

- The 2019 budget includes seven part-time Congregational Resource Ministers (CRMs). We are assuming that five CRMs will be employed for the full 12 months of the year, and two CRMs will begin July 1, 2019.
- There are five District Administrators (one full-time, four part-time), to provide administrative support for our seven District Teams.

Other District Teams Expenses

- District Office expenses include the cost to rent office space in three churches, expenses incurred for district meetings, and other district operating expenses.
- Reimbursements of expenses incurred by clergy during an introduction.
- Coverage of moving expenses to support clergy itinerancy.

Congregational Vitality

New Church Development

Our new church development budget prioritizes investing in people and programs at the ground level. These investments are multi-year commitments typically spanning 3 to 5 years. The budget is predominantly used to support salaries of our church planters, who are instrumental in ensuring the successful launch of new church ministries.

Congregational Vitality

This budget is a tangible expression of our conference commitment to equip our local churches to be healthy and vital. Meeting this commitment requires an investment in holistic practices that equip and support leaders at a local level. We do this by inviting people to pray, partner and practice. Support is available to new and existing churches in the areas of:

- Intentional discipleship
- Invitational evangelism
- Missional engagement
- Worship excellence
- Simple and effective local church governance
- Stewardship and finance
- Cultivating call

Blackfeet United Methodist Parish

This budget item continues the critically important Yellowstone Conference commitment to support the Blackfeet United Methodist Parish ministry.

Staffing

- Superintendent of Congregational and Community Vitality (full-time)
- Worship Developer (part-time)
- Administrative Assistant (part-time)

Community Engagement

Ministry Commitments

This area focuses on equipping our faith communities, affiliated organizations, and annual conference to meaningfully connect with communities for mutual transformation. The budget includes funding to sustain existing ministry priorities, as well as dues and commitments with partner organizations that foster community engagement within our conference and jurisdiction, nationally, and internationally.

Program Development Resources

The Community Engagement Committee helps local churches, circuits, districts and the annual conference to first identify needs, then resource and engage in ministries with their communities. The program development budget allows the committee to listen and learn, and then respond with trainings, resources, coaching, and overall support.

Staffing

- Director of Community and Congregational Engagement (full-time)
- Hispanic/Latino Ministries Developer (full-time)
- Vital Missions Coordinator (part-time)
- Administrative Assistant (part-time)

Leadership Development

Board of Ordained Ministry

This budget reflects our conference priority to recruit, develop and support clergy excellence. Included in the budget is the cost of psychological evaluations and background checks, travel expenses for candidates, travel and interview expenses for Board of Ordained Ministry members, meeting expenses and training events.

Board of Lay Ministry

This budget supports the board's work to foster the training and development of laity to achieve the mission of the church. The budget includes:

- Support for lay participation at Annual Conference
- Laity leadership development and training activities
- Support for elected lay leader activities, travel and memberships
- Support for Lay Servant Ministry and Certified Lay Ministry programs.

Young People's and Campus Ministries

This budget reflects our conference priority to engage and develop youth leaders. It also includes support for six United Methodist Church-affiliated campus ministries within the Mountain Sky Conference as well as local partnerships between congregations and commuter schools.

Leadership Development

Support for leadership development opportunities to ensure that both lay and clergy throughout the Mountain Sky Conference have the qualities, assets and skills to achieve our

vision and mission. The Leadership Development Committee will assess needs, then develop and implement shorter- and longer-term strategic work plans.

Camping and Retreat Ministries

This Team promotes and encourages participation in outdoor ministry as an extension to local and conference ministries. It provides a supportive network for leaders on local camp boards and for camp staff, and coordinates services for camps including promotional materials and training opportunities.

Quadrennial Training and General and Jurisdictional Conferences

These budgeted items are accrued annually to help cover the costs of conference members to attend training activities and conferences that occur each quadrennium.

General Agencies of The United Methodist Church conduct quadrennium trainings for conference leaders who volunteer in areas such as the following:

- Conference Secretary
- Conference Statistician
- Commission on Equitable Compensation
- Trustees, Finance, and Pension and Health Benefits
- Board of Ordained Ministry

We also provide support for General and Jurisdictional delegates to participate in the General and Jurisdictional Conferences and training events.

Staffing

- Superintendent of Leadership Development/Director of Connectional Ministry (full-time)
- Young People's, Camping and Retreat Ministry Developer (full-time)
- Youth Ministry Coordinators (two, part-time)
- Administrative Assistant for Leadership Development and the Board of Ordained Ministry (full-time)

Responsible Stewardship

Conference Office Business and Operating Expenses

This budget item includes the following operating expenses to conduct business and maintain the Conference office in Greenwood Village, Colorado:

- Telephones and Internet
- MissionConnect database purchase, maintenance and upgrades
- Technology support and financial software
- Technology equipment and supplies – computers, printers, servers
- Office equipment leasing and maintenance
- Office supplies
- Utilities

- Office maintenance and cleaning
- Building repairs and maintenance
- Banking and payroll processing
- Professional memberships and licenses
- Staff meeting expenses

Board of Pension and Health Benefits

The expenses for this board include the costs of regular meetings as well as the cost to send one or two board members to the annual training sessions sponsored by Wespeth Benefits and Investments.

Retiree Health Subsidy

Through December 2019, the Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone conferences will retain their current Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) subsidy arrangements. The combined total cost of the 2019 HRA liability is approximately \$450,000. The operating budget covers \$150,000 of this liability. The remaining \$300,000 will be paid from an account invested with Wespeth to fund retiree healthcare liabilities.

Legal Services

This budget covers fees and expenses incurred by the Conference Chancellor(s) for services provided to the conference and member congregations.

Audit Services

This budget includes the independent financial audits of the year ending Dec. 31, 2018 for both the Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone conferences. It also includes the cost of a combined retiree medical actuarial valuation report for the year ending Dec. 31, 2018.

Property Management and Administration

This budget includes Mountain Sky Conference property and liability insurance premiums. It also includes expenses for property management and owners association dues for our office building in Greenwood Village, Colorado. Property tax exemption filing fees and payments are included in this line item.

Staffing

- Treasurer (full-time)
- Benefits and Human Resources Manager (full-time)
- Accounting Manager (full-time)
- Accountants (two, full-time)
- Administrative Assistant (part-time)

Communication

Communication Expenses

The Communication Team oversees the technology and storytelling capabilities of the Mountain Sky Conference. This includes managing the website(s), databases, online

communication platforms, equipment, and communication training materials for circuits and local churches. The budget will primarily be spent on:

- Subscription to Brick River Technology for the website(s)
- Communication equipment and software/online licenses
- Communications training and promotional materials for local church use

Staffing

- Director of Communications (full-time)
- Database Manager/Information Technology Support Technician (full-time)

Mountain Sky Roundtable

This budget includes costs associated with roundtable meetings and other conference administrative functions, as well as conference support for the Episcopal office.

Staffing

- Event Coordinator (full-time)
- Administrative Assistant/Hospitality Coordinator (part-time)

Note: The Senior Executive for Transition and Conference Culture functions as the conference chief of staff to provide leadership in establishing a culture that reflects best practices for organization, work environment, customer service and evaluation; and ensuring strategic alignment of resources and personnel. Through 2019 the compensation and expenses associated with this position are funded outside of this operating budget.

Connectional Support

Both the Rocky Mountain and Yellowstone conferences paid their General Church and Jurisdictional Apportionments at 100% in 2017. Each conference is proud to fully support the connectional ministries of The United Methodist Church, and plans to do so again in 2018. The Mountain Sky Conference intends to continue to fully support this connectional commitment. The budget reflects payment of our General Church and Jurisdictional Apportionments at 100% in 2019.

SUMMARY

In this first year as the Mountain Sky Conference, we believe it is important to fund ministry, missions and our organizational obligations at the levels needed to ensure successful progress toward achieving our vision. Our Council on Finance and Administration will monitor income and expenses throughout the year and make adjustments as necessary. To sustain all that God is calling us to be and do as the Mountain Sky Conference, we recommend this \$6,655,000 budget for your approval.