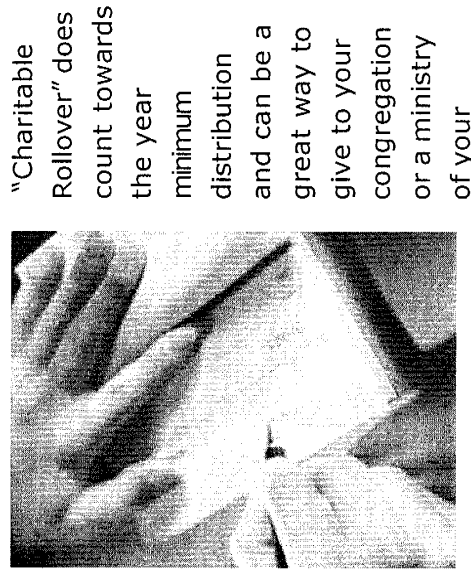


Your Chance to Give is Expiring

Last year Congress passed an act that allows those over 70 1/2 to give up to \$100,000 directly from their IRA to a charity without paying taxes.

This



"Charitable Rollover" does count towards the year minimum distribution and can be a great way to give to your congregation or a ministry of your

choice. There had been some hope that this would be extended but since Congress has not acted this marvelous opportunity will end December 31, 2007. Since the processing of these rollovers can take time, you must act now to ensure your gift will occur.

You can find further information on this gifting possibility by contacting Patricia Larsen, Oregon Synod's Director of Planned Giving. She has forms which will speed the process for you in making a wonderful gift to ministry. Don't let your chance expire.

Oregon Synod Partner Ministries Supported

- ELCA- churchwide
- Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
- Luther Seminary
- Pacific Lutheran University
- Campus Ministry - 8 sites
- Lutheran Community Services Northwest
- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
- Consultation to Clergy
- Lutheran Education Network Support (LENS)

Oregon Synod Ministries

- Synod Mission Initiatives
- Mission Strategy
- Candidacy Committee
- Communication Committee
- Outreach Committee
- New Congregational Starts
- Latino Strategy
- Multicultural Committee
- Congregational Ministries
- Church and Environment
- Global Missions
- Education Committee
- Youth Committee
- Worship Committee
- Stewardship Committee
- Endowment Fund

We Are Gifted is a stewardship publication of the Oregon Synod.

WE ARE GIFTED...

OREGON SYNOD
Quarterly Stewardship Mailing
2007 Winter



A Narrative Budget

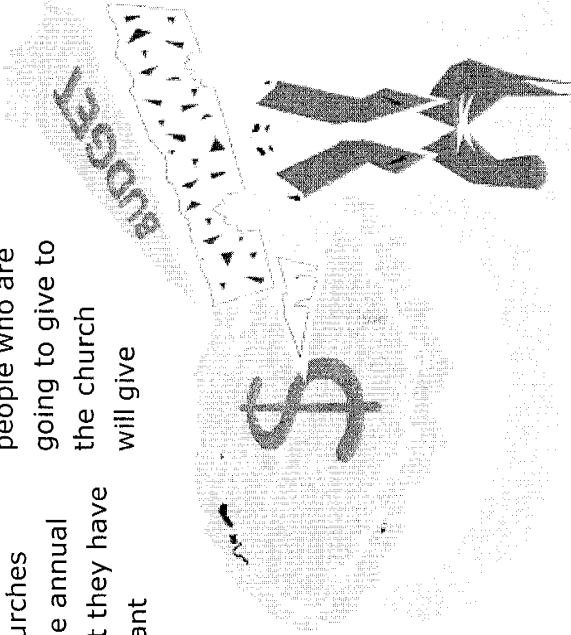
Adapted from "The Narrative Budget", by David S. Bell. Copyright © 2004 The General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church. Used with permission.

Budgets can enable congregational leaders to be faithful in their stewardship of the church's resources. Budgets do not, however, motivate the majority of people to give. A surprisingly small percentage of the American population can read and understand a line-item budget. Too many churches distribute copies of the annual budget, believing that they have communicated important information. However, upon closer examination, it becomes clear that very little communication has occurred. People do not give to budgets. They give less from the head than from the heart.

happy. Budgets miss these key targets.

Most of what is contained in a line-item budget is of little interest to the majority of people who attend church. Moreover, many church leaders find line-item budgets confusing to interpret and to understand. Most people who are going to give to the church will give

upon closer examination, it becomes clear that very little communication has occurred. People do not give to budgets. They give less from the head than from the heart. People give to other people, to needs, to causes — to things that make them feel good and



A Narrative Budget

a certain amount to support the facilities. People realize that there are costs to maintain the building, pay the insurance and utilities, and to support the pastor. However, they primarily will give to the mission and ministry of the church.

A narrative budget is one way to give people — especially those in leadership positions — an opportunity to experience the mission and ministry that are achieved through the various line items. It focuses less on the financial numbers and more on what the income accomplishes. It is a one- to two-page presentation that explains: (1) what the church hopes to accomplish and (2) why the funding is needed to reach and exceed its goals.

Note three things about the narrative budget. First, it lists the programs and missions of the church first. Often, pastoral support, building maintenance, insurance, apportioned funds, and salaries are listed first in a line-item budget. Apportionments have been incorporated into the mission and ministry of the

church, since they are an extension of the local church's ministry throughout the world. Mission and program budgets fund the work of the church. It is important to highlight these needs first. These programs and ministries are what most people care about deeply. We do ourselves a great favor when we list these things first.

Second, a variety of dollar amounts are listed in some areas: a low, a medium, and a high goal.

The low figure is the minimum needed to do the work that must be done. The middle figure is a dream figure that would allow doing more than the minimum. The

high figure is also a dream figure that allows providing a vision for what we could do if actual income was greater than the projected income. Many people who read a narrative budget are so inspired by the medium and high goals that they will "go the second mile" to make the dreams a reality.

Third, certain budget amounts receive no description. These are fixed costs, such as insurance, utilities, and maintenance that do little to motivate increased giving. Few people plan to give more than is needed to cover the fixed costs of running the

facilities. Categories for listing in the program budget could include,

- (1) **Missions**, which would list all of the current ministries of the congregation as well as hopes and plans for future ministries if funds are available,
- (2) **Programs**, which would list all church education and programs as well as hopes and plans for future congregational programs if funds are available,
- (3) **Pastoral Support**, which would include salary, housing allowance, health insurance, pension, continuing education, and travel expenses,

- (4) **Other Staff and Salary** and
- (5) **Building and Grounds**, which would include mortgage, insurance, maintenance and any as well as any desired maintenance and/or improvements if funds are available.

This is just a sample of what a narrative budget might contain and the way it might be presented. Dollar figures are round and easy to comprehend. No totals and no bottom-line figures are provided. Instead, there are estimates of costs and dreams for what more might be done if money is available. Narrative budgets do a better job of speaking a language that the majority of people can understand. All these things increase the appeal and effectiveness of the narrative budget over the traditional line-item budget.

