**SESSION SUMMARY**

**Session Title:**  Budget Discussion **Station #:** 6

**Convenor:** Darby Benroth

**Particpants:** Darby Benroth, Greg Ring, Gene Long, David Moser, Dick Ramseyer, Stan Clemens

**Summary of Discussions:**

*The group discussed the concerns of year after year withdrawals from the church’s reserve account/s. The goal, to offer a more balanced budget going into each new year.*

*Reasons for the annual shortfall primarily were attributed to the drop in the number of giving units. Lynn Miller provided data supporting that our church was far more generous than the “typical” congregation. Therefore, the suggestion of asking people to give more could prove difficult.*

*Some possible ideas for a balanced budget approach:*

* *Educate the congregation on new ways to give (ie. straight from retirement funds, stocks, etc.)*
* *Education the congregation on how much a needed per giving unit (on average)*
* *Increase the number of giving units*
* *Lower commission and committee expenditures*

*The group explored and discussed that while staff salary expenses do make up a large part of the budget, this is an expense that is necessary, and we should explore any other means to balance the budget.*

**What will we do now? What needs to happen next?**

*Education of the congregation:*

* *How to give*
* *Where to give*

*Understand Expenses:*

* *Ask the church commissions to thoroughly evaluate line item budget items. Are we passionate about each line item or is it something we’ve simply always done?*

*Increase giving units:*

* *We feel FMC is unique and has something special to offer that may be missed in other churches. How do we promote our welcome to those who may be lost and/or looking for a new home to worship.*