

Thursday, October 26, 2023

## Beloved HUMC Community,

Last year about this time we held a State of the Church meeting to share about how we were having a difficult year in terms of our finances at HUMC. We had some expenditures that caught us by surprise, leading to a nearly \$80,000 projected deficit, and you responded. You helped to close that significant gap by the end of the year.

As a result we pushed our budget planning until the beginning of this year, when our members and regular attendees received Estimate of Giving cards and returned them back. Your generous planning and giving have astounded us. **You have increased your giving from 2022 to 2023 by nearly 10%! Thank you!**

### **2023 has been an amazing year in the life of Hilliard UMC.**

This year we have welcomed some local guests to utilize our **studio space** over in Warehouse 839 (the former Tae Kwon Do space), generating some revenue.

Speaking of [Warehouse 839](#), we returned to worship in that space about a year ago, gathering once and then twice a month, and last Sunday we celebrated the relaunch of *weekly* worship in our non-traditional worship space.

We saw some big changes in our **music staff** this year. In January we bid farewell to our longtime Accompanist, Debbie Detrick, who retired after decades of faithful service. In August we welcomed [Tony Hagood](#) as our new Accompanist, who plays for the 9am and 10:30am services. We also hired our new Director of Contemporary Worship, [Jeff Rone](#), who works with Jody Hepp to lead music at 10:30am and leads the Warehouse 839 band at 11:15am.

Last week we announced that the [Hilliard Food Pantry](#) will be utilizing the studio space to serve those with food insecurity while their space is being rebuilt following the summer fire.



**We celebrate that through the end of September we have seen a nearly 9% increase in regular contributions to the operating fund.** We celebrate that increased building usage by outside groups has also yielded nearly \$10,000 in income for our operating fund so far this year.

While our expenses are down over 2023 through the end of September, however, including the additional music staff salaries and a significant roof rainwater drainage project for the Warehouse 839 building, **we find ourselves at the end of September with about a \$20,000 deficit in our operations budget.**

Some of this can be explained by the fact that, due to some unfortunate circumstances, we have had a double salary for our Finance Administrator. We had unexpected turnover, and our outgoing administrator Sheri Meier had to train not one but two people between April and September, leading to overages in budgeted salaries.

**I don't say any of this in panic or to cause a stir, but to say that without your generous giving, we would find ourselves in a deeper deficit.**

We also know that November and December tend to bring increases in end-of-year giving.

**I am praying and trusting that as we go where God leads that God will continue to provide, because we are seeking to be the hands and feet of Christ in this community and beyond.**

Thank you to those who give regularly. Thank you to those who give when and as you can. Thank you to those who may have been thinking of giving and have not yet but may be feeling led to contribute in this season.



**Many of you who are constituents and members of HUMC have begun to receive this year's stewardship letter**, written by our incoming finance chair, Scott Merillat, along with an estimate of giving card for 2024, which [you can also fill out online](#), confidentially, on our website. We've included that letter below here.

**We are asking that you prayerfully consider how God is leading you to give in support of HUMC....**

...to help us continue to provide top notch music in all three worship services...

...to help us continue to offer life-changing and enriching Godly Play and Children's Ministry for our children...

...to provide God-encountering and life-changing opportunities for our youth and adults...

...to provide welcome spaces for preschoolers and their families...

...to provide free meals for those in need at our Wednesday Community Supper and weekend food packs for some of the most vulnerable children in our district...

...to support for [our fabulous staff](#), who lead to make all of this possible...

...and so much more!!

**Pray, ask God to lead, and return your card to worship over the next two Sundays.** We will bless these gifts in worship on Sunday, November 5, at all three services of worship. We will pray over each commitment you make to help us in the guidance of our ministry for 2024.



With much gratitude,

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