

The Story Behind the Numbers

Our annual budget is one of our church's most important theological documents. South Main's budget guides our work each year. It directs us. It represents not just our values, but how we interpret God's very call upon our lives. The numbers you see in the budget itself — the dollars to be pledged, then given by all of us as our offerings to God — are no less sacred than the work they envision, but it's sometimes hard to see the beauty of a story in a budget document.

Therefore, what you hold in your hand is a narrative description of the numbers and columns of the budget. We hope this document will help you see the beauty of the story the budget tells.

It represents not just our values, but how we interpret God's very call upon our lives.

Please read this budget paying special attention to the things that matter to you most, then plan on being present for our Quarterly Business Meeting on January 27 in the Fellowship Hall. At that meeting, we will take questions on it, vote on it, then together, begin to carry out the beautiful and meaningful story it foretells.

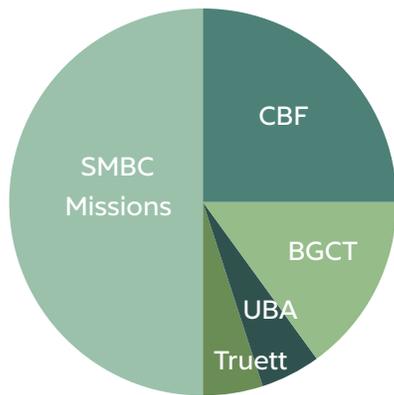


Photo: Lauren Benesh

Missions

Global & Local Partners, Hispanic Ministry, SMILE

2019 Proposed	\$427,500
% of Budget	10%



This is a generous congregation which is intent on making a difference in the world. Nowhere do we see this with such clarity than when we look at the Missions Giving part of our budget.

While **10%** of our annual budget goes to missions, and when we add our substantial non-budget missions giving (annual Missions Offering, designated gifts for missions work, etc.), close to **15%** of all dollars the church receives goes to support mission efforts either locally or globally.

Let's take a closer look to understand the scope of this. Imagine first, a pie cut down the middle. Let's call one half Baptist Mission Partners and the other half SMBC Missions.

Let's talk about the Baptist Mission Partners half first. That half (5% of our overall budget) is sub-divided into 4 pieces — 50% goes to the Cooperative

Baptist Fellowship, which we've done strategic work with for over two decades. 30% goes to the Baptist General Convention of Texas, another organization we've worked with for decades. Finally, 10% of the Baptist Mission Partners' half of the pie will go to a new partner, Truett Seminary at Baylor University, and another 10% will go to the Union Baptist Association, a diverse Houston-area organization with which our church has historically worked, and which helps local churches in need.

The second half of the pie — the other 5% of our overall budget — is directed each year by the Missions Committee to South Main's global and local mission partners including Operación San Andrés, Sodzo International, the Emergency Aid Coalition, SEARCH, Gracewood, Amazing Place, and MacGregor Elementary, as well as to our ongoing "in-house" ministries, like SMILE, our Hispanic Ministry, Manna, our Construction Team, and our Benevolence funding.



Worship & Music

Worship, Choirs, Handbells, & Broadcast Ministry

2019 Proposed	\$391,610
% of Budget	9%

Worship is the ongoing theme of our story, and it's reflected in our budget as a central priority. Led each week by Carey Cannon, our congregational voice in worship has grown more beautiful, more resonant, and more symphonic. Currently, we have 90 congregation members in our sanctuary choir consistently.



Photo: Lauren Benesh

Each week the choir, the ministers, and all those leading our worship invest many hours of thoughtful preparation, study, and practice so that each of our church's one-hour worship services represents the best we have to offer to God. Every Sunday morning, and at each special service at South Main, our congregation has come to expect, and indeed experiences, music that's excellent, sermons that are thoughtful, and expressions of worship that are inspiring, provocative, and life-changing.

In addition, the value of worship is taught at South Main. God is the intended audience and the congregation is not merely a group of spectators, but active participants. These notions are modeled to the 152 children and

youth in our church who are enrolled in choir. Then these kids are asked to participate in leading worship through one of our 8 separate age-graded singing ensembles, or as part of one of our church's 6 children and youth handbell choirs. Still others are asked to read Scripture or offer a prayer in worship on behalf of the congregation.

Simply put, worship is the golden thread that moves through our story at South Main, and music is its soundtrack.



Photo: Lauren Benesh

Family Ministry

Babies, Children, Middle & High Schoolers — and their Parents

2019 Proposed	\$451,948
% of Budget	11%

The innovative Family Ministry at South Main under the leadership of Dolores Rader and her energetic team is tending families with kids — infants to high schoolers — in a unified and well-aligned way with great purpose.



Photo: Lauren Benesh

The ministry aims to strengthen families and create in our children and youth a lasting faith that's truly their own — one that will withstand the challenges of all they face as young people and as adults.

Our Family Ministry is not only preparing our kids spiritually and practically for the future, but it's attracting young families in our community to the Gospel of Christ. In fact, it's no overstatement to say that kids and their parents coming to South Main through our Family Ministry is driving the overall growth of our church. We had 14 new families join in 2018 and now have 240 (babies, kids, and youth) enrolled in Sunday School from 148 families.

As we support the Family Ministry programs robustly, we anticipate this numeric growth will continue, but even more importantly, the growth isn't just numeric, but spiritual. We have 23 distinct Family Ministry Sunday School classes in which 63 adults volunteer as teachers and leaders each week. Each young person present is receiving thoughtful lessons from Scripture, as well as support and spiritual life lessons tailored to their respective ages and situations.

The discipleship efforts of our kids are continuously and systematically deepened each week, each month, and each year, as reflected in the fact that 15% of our stewardship pledges came from children 10 and under in 2018.



Photo: Lauren Benesh

Adult Discipleship

Sunday School, Stewardship, & Retreats

2019 Proposed	\$202,828
% of Budget	5%

As a fellowship of believers, the ongoing practice of Sunday School, our South Main at Home groups, our family retreat and seniors' retreat, as well as our devotional readings during Lent and Advent, all provide unique paths for South Mainers to deepen our discipleship.

This past year Matt Walton joined our staff as Minister for Discipleship and he has set in motion a new and exciting set of priorities for our congregation's spiritual development. Matt's work in developing consistent training and helpful support for Sunday School teachers, community leaders, and South Main at Home coordinators, will nurture our whole congregation's spiritual growth, as well as stimulate fellowship in small groups throughout the church, as we move toward maturity in Christ.



Photo: Lisa Marie McLaughlin

Further, our ambitious Servant Leadership Development Program and our ongoing Discovery Day initiatives both continue to help those participating find ideal places to use their gifts as they serve our church and community.

Finally, our budget reflects our intentions to do a better job drawing people on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, to better connect guests and new members into the life of the church, and into a consistent path of life-changing discipleship.

Pastoral Ministry

Pastoral Care, Memorial Services, Grief Ministries

2019 Budget	\$436,248
% of Budget	10%

Every year, many in our congregation face trials — challenges due to illness or accident, the death of a loved one, a financial, family, or legal crisis, or some other kind of unexpected life interruption.

The church in general, and South Main's pastoral care ministries in particular, walk these difficult paths with our congregants when they arise. This care may come in the form of a shoulder to lean on for support, guidance, or simply to cry upon, or simply an opportunity to talk and begin to regain control of one's life.

Our pastoral ministries serve those in need in all sorts of ways — providing companionship to longtime South Main members who can no longer attend church in person (MainTies); personal visits to those who are in the midst of medical care (Deacon Hospital Visitation); an offer of resources to those who are elderly and living alone (through Amazing Place's Faith Care Connection); or compassionate help for those dealing with grief over loss (Walking through Grief).



Photo: Lauren Benesh

In addition, our budgetary support in this area includes support for the work of our ministers who preach, teach, visit, and counsel congregants, providing presence in times of loss, and help through difficult days. All these efforts are designed to link us, weaving among us both the hope of the Gospel and the social fabric we need to navigate through the storms of this world.

Fellowship

Hospitality, Coffee, Sunday Lunches, & Free Ice Cream

2019 Proposed	\$195,413
% of Budget	5%



Photo: Lisa Marie McLaughlin

Food is not only central to Baptist life, but forms a beautiful picture of the church as a congregation gathers around a table to share a meal and meaningful fellowship. For more than a year now, we've engaged with one another around tables in our renovated Fellowship Hall on Sundays and Wednesdays, enjoying delicious and comforting meals prepared and served by our dedicated kitchen staff. On other, difficult days, our church family has gathered in Fellowship Hall to share memories of loved ones, exchanging hugs and tears during a memorial reception. These are all moments of communion with God, God's Word, and God's people and are the central reason for our assembly.

Operations

Facilities, Utilities, & Maintenance

2019 Proposed	\$724,800
% of Budget	17%

We continue to be one of the largest landholders in midtown, providing the Houston community an oasis of beauty in the heart of the city. Our sanctuary is not only a sacred place to gather to worship, but as renovated, a gem unmatched in the region with respect to form and function. Both the buildings and the grounds are expensive to maintain, but their beauty and sacredness continue to magnetize people looking for a church home where they can worship, discover, and share.

Administration

Ministry Support, Communications, & Facilities Staff

2019 Proposed	\$1,444,653
% of Budget	34%



Our print publications — such as South Main Today and the Worship Guide — are of the highest quality, and embody South Main's standard of excellence. We continue to reach new audiences through our expanding print and digital marketing efforts. For instance, if someone in the area Googles "Baptist Church in Houston," South Main consistently appears near the top of the first page of organic search results.

Finally, it's been said that "the people are the programs" and it's true. South Main employs 69 people, more than a third of whom work in ministry support, maintenance, properties, communications, and security and their salaries and benefits are all reflected in this section. We are especially blessed that your gifts allow us to use a "living wage" (as determined by the M.I.T. Living Wage Scale for Harris County) as the starting point for our hourly employees.

The Bottom Line

A spending plan to fulfill SMBC's mission in 2019

A great deal of prayer and study has gone into the preparation of the church's proposed budget. The Finance Committee has compiled, examined, discussed, reviewed, and prayed their way through several drafts of what's being proposed.

In addition, the Personnel Committee, Missions Committee, and Diaconate, as well as your staff, have also made great contributions to this spending plan. Each of these groups has listened for God's guidance, discerned the Spirit's direction, and considered the financial capacity of the congregation in the year ahead.

Indeed our annual budget is one of our church's most important theological documents. We now ask you to join those who've worked on these documents thus far, as we prayerfully consider, discern, and then begin together to travel the path ahead in 2019 with God's guidance.

2018 Budget	\$4,067,719
2019 Proposed Budget	\$4,275,000
% Change	5.1%

2019 Proposed Budget				
	2018		2019	
Income				
Total Income	\$	4,067,719	\$	4,275,000
Expenses		% of Budget		% of Budget
Missions		406,772 10%		427,500 10%
Worship & Music		383,877 9%		391,610 9%
Family Ministry		455,098 11%		451,948 11%
Adult Discipleship		142,081 3%		202,828 5%
Pastoral Ministry		429,311 11%		436,248 10%
Fellowship		157,024 4%		195,413 5%
Operations		689,185 17%		724,800 17%
Administration		1,404,371 35%		1,444,653 34%
Total Expense	\$	4,067,719	\$	4,275,000
Total Income Over/Under Expense	\$	-	\$	-