



Bent Tree Elder Report – Spring 2010

We’re already well into the year, and summer is fast approaching. We continue to be amazed and thankful at how God is at work in and through the body at Bent Tree. While we are so grateful for what God has done in so many lives, we really believe our best days as a church are ahead of us. So, we pray and look forward with expectant hearts.

As a church, we look forward to an unknown and uncertain future, but we do it with total confidence in a known and certain God who has a plan and purpose for each of us as individuals and as a church.

Scripture tells us, “Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails.” (Proverbs 19:21)

Our prayerful desire is that we walk more surrendered each day to God’s plan and purpose of our lives. Our hope is that we will be totally satisfied and content with whatever results He produces in us.

We want to use this report primarily as an opportunity to provide a financial update for Bent Tree with a little more detail than what was presented in our services on May 2.

2009 Financial Recap

2009 was a very difficult year because of the continued economic downturn and made things challenging for many of our families as well as for our church operating budget. In 2009, we “tightened our belts” as a church family. This meant making some difficult staffing decisions and deferring some needed capital improvements, all with the goal of finishing the year on budget.

Our actual spending in 2009 was below our planned budget by \$285,000. This savings was from a combination of deferred expenditures and actual reductions. The actual reductions allowed us to be able to absorb a \$130,000 increase in our health benefit costs for 2010 and provide some salary adjustments, including long-delayed cost of living increases. The deferred expenditures include replacement hires that were added back in the 2010 budget.

In total, we were able to finish 2009 with giving slightly ahead of actual expenses. The year-end surplus was used for some expansion debt reduction, as well as a few select capital improvement projects that were needed.

Summary of giving for 2009:

General Fund	\$6,411,000
Faith Promise	\$1,252,000
Benevolence.....	\$ 168,000
Building Expansion	\$ 805,000

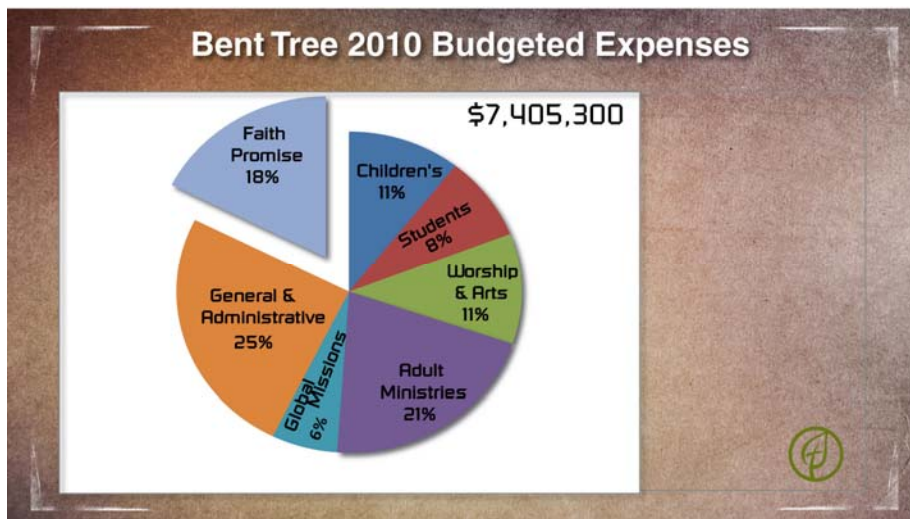
2010 Financial Update

2010 Budget

Our General Fund budget for 2010 of \$6,100,000 is a 4% increase over our 2009 budget and reflects the restoration of two items which had been deleted for extraordinary cost cutting measures. These are the 403.b matching benefit to our staff, and an equipment replacement reserve allocation.

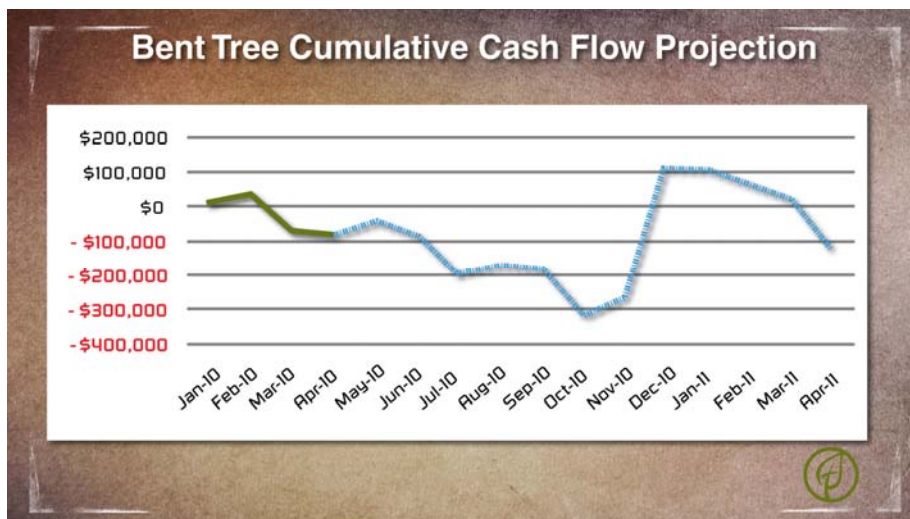
Summary of 2010 Budget

General Fund	\$6,105,000
Faith Promise	\$ 1,300,000
Total	\$7,405,300



2010 Giving

General Fund giving so far in 2010 is lagging behind giving for the same period in 2009 by \$328,000. We are closely monitoring expenses, but through the end of April, our actual expenses have exceeded the contributions to the general fund by \$78,000. The areas for discretionary expense reductions are limited to about 7% of our budget, which is not a lot of room to maneuver.



The solid line represents actual cash flow thus far, and the dotted line represents our projections based upon budgeted spending and our best estimate of the giving trend, which has clearly been down over this year compared to last year. December is usually the biggest giving month, but historically we don't like to count on it. Where we are at this time of the year is unusual for us.

We were at a similar crossroads last year, and we made some adjustments to spending without giving our body a chance to respond. We recognized that we could have communicated that information more effectively and earlier in the process. So, part of the intent of this report is to give you the current status on giving so you can join us in praying and responding to God.

The current giving trend is concerning, and the need is real. But, more importantly, our desire is that we process this as a family. If giving trends don't change, we will need to make some adjustments to our budget as we are committed to live within the resources the Lord provides.

Our greatest concern is the condition of our hearts as it relates to our stewardship of God's resources. While our body is generous in many ways, we recognize that many that call Bent Tree home are still missing out on God's provision for their lives.

Here's a couple interesting facts that will illuminate our concern regarding giving:

- Of the 3,866 family units that are Bent Tree members or regular attendees, *only* 46% contributed \$.01 or more to the general fund – *in the entire year*. That means 54% don't give anything in the course of a year.
- Of those who did give, 16% of our families gave 75% of all funds to the general fund in 2010.

Our prayer is that stewardship will be a huge area of growth for our body as we each individually pursue God's direction for our time, talent, and treasures.

Expansion Budget

Our expansion debt repayment will continue to be a high priority for the next couple of years. The ongoing debt service on this is almost \$60,000 per month. As of April 1, 2010, the balance on the expansion note was \$4,702,800. Expansion giving on an ongoing basis has been sufficient to meet the debt service requirements of our loan, but our prayer is to have this debt completely paid off by the end of 2012.

Remember that 10% of every dollar given towards the expansion project is tithed into a separate fund that we call Building the Church-*There*. Those funds are being used for various overseas mission projects.

2010 Faith Promise Budget

We received over \$1.3 million in pledges from our Body for Faith Promise (our Missions fund) for 2010, and that is how we set our budget. This is the highest amount ever for our Faith Promise budget. Currently, giving to the Faith Promise budget in 2010 is down about 4.6%.

New Executive Position

In January, Mike Wiltz was hired as Staff Catalyst to bring action to Bent Tree's mission statement by providing directional and strategic leadership for the staff and coordination of church ministry. Mike is responsible for leading the corporate structure of Bent Tree and managing its related functions.. Mike is a long-time member of Bent Tree and served as an elder for the past four years. You can read his profile on the Bent Tree website at btbf.org/mikewiltz.

New Elders

Josh Ihde and Lyle Cox were recently added to our Elder Board. Both are long-time members of Bent Tree and served in a variety of capacities over the years including being Life Group leaders and mentors. You can find out more about all of the elders, including Josh and Lyle, by visiting btbf.org/elders. We continue to pray about adding additional leaders to our Elder team. We'd like to add one or two more this year.

Prayer for the Body

As elders, we continue to seek God's will for Bent Tree for today and for our future. We continue to pray that God will grow us up as a praying, loving, and giving church with Jesus right at the center of all things. Our abiding prayer for all who call Bent Tree home will continue to be that they know and experience Christ fresh and anew each day.

God Bless!

- Kurt Baxter, Gary Young, David Dobat, Josh Ihde, Lyle Cox, and Pete Briscoe

If you would like to discuss any of this information or any other topic, we'd love to hear from you. Elders are typically available on Sundays between services at the Bent Tree Prayer Room. Direct email addresses are also available on the elder page at btbf.org/elders.