

2021–2022 Summit Budget Recommendation

The Summit Church directional elders recommend approving the 2021–2022 budget of \$36,383,723. Members will have the opportunity to vote digitally at summitchurch.com/members from Thursday, Aug. 26 to Sunday, Aug. 29. [We encourage your questions](#) and want you to be as informed as possible as you pray and prepare to vote to approve the [budget for the coming year](#).

As covenant members, when you vote on the budget, in essence, you are affirming the leaders who have recommended it, the mission it will fund, and your willingness to carry it out in the coming year. It is a vote of approval and participation. Three aspects that can help you vote for the budget with confidence—knowing it's responsible, effective, and funding the right things—are the process, the leadership, and our mission and ministry effectiveness, all of which are outlined in more detail in the following content.

Voting on the Budget

To vote, you must be a [covenant member](#) of The Summit Church. As you prepare, here are the answers to a few frequent questions related to the annual budget process.

Why does the congregation vote on the budget?

The congregation is required to vote on the budget because of our bylaws, as we are a Jesus-ruled, elder-led, and congregationally accountable church. That means that while the elders provide leadership and oversight for the church, they are accountable to the congregation. Also, while church oversight is the responsibility of the elders, carrying out the ministry and mission of the church is the responsibility of the entire body (Ephesians 4:11–12).

As covenant members, it is our responsibility to 1) approve the budget, 2) to fund the budget through generosity, and 3) to carry out the mission of the church through our participation in ministry. When we vote on the budget, in essence, we are affirming the leaders who have recommended it, the mission it will fund, and our willingness to carry it out in the coming year. It is a vote of approval and participation.

How can I vote for the budget with confidence, knowing it's responsible, effective, and funding the right things?

This is an important question, and there are three important aspects to it—the process, the leadership, and our mission and ministry effectiveness.

1. The Process

Each year, we begin the budget process by forecasting our attendance and revenue. By looking at historical trends, we are able to better anticipate revenue for the coming year. Based on our analysis, we have projected a three percent increase in tithes and offerings from the previous year.

Once we have our estimate, we set aside a percentage of the projected revenue for our **growth and expansion reserve**. The remainder becomes what we use to plan our **ministry programming budget**. Over the course of several months, our directional elders, executive team, ministry leaders, and accounting team work diligently through a process of planning and review to come up with a budget that meets all of our fixed costs and adequately funds all of our ministries and **sending** (missions).

2. The Leadership

While the directional elders oversee this process, there are many other leaders who are involved in the details, from our accounting team to the ministry leaders at each campus who oversee the specific ministry areas. Every area of our budget has multiple eyes on it because accountability is the highest priority. The Summit is an [ECFA-certified church](#) (Evangelical Council of Financial Accountability), so we go through an external audit every year.

3. Our Budget and Mission Effectiveness

Growth and Expansion Reserve - \$9.5M

Our **growth and expansion reserve** is used to pay on our existing debt and save money for future building projects. While launching campuses in mobile locations is a cost-effective way to begin reaching people, in order to sustain long-term ministry, the transition to permanent buildings is our goal.

Our growth and expansion reserve strategically enables us to build cash on hand, allowing us to be less reliant on outside financing to fund future building projects. We collaborate with financial consultants who work with some of the largest churches in the nation to help us continually update our long-term financial strategy. Our financial position is one of the strongest among churches of our size.

One of the greatest blessings we have is that our congregation is so generous that our per-person giving average is one of the highest for churches in the nation. We see this as your response to God's generosity, putting him first in everything, and believing in the mission he has given us. Our strategy of reserving a significant percentage of each year's annual income for debt reduction and saving for future growth helps us be better prepared to continue to reach people today and in the future. **This year, we are setting aside 26 percent of our income for growth and expansion.**

Debt Servicing

At the end of 2020 The Summit Church refinanced the outstanding existing debt to gain not only cost savings on interest expense due to the reduction in interest rate but also flexibility with our liquidity, allowing us to capitalize on opportunities that arise to reach all people with the gospel.

In June 2021 we received notification that our Paycheck Protection Program funds (part of the CARES Act in response to the COVID-19 pandemic) were fully forgiven.

Ministry Programming Budget - \$26.9M

Ministry programming is the budget it takes to run the church, pay the salaries and bills, and fund all of our ministries, including **sending** (missions). **This year, we have allocated 74 percent of our revenue, or total budget, for this area.**

We want to make disciples, not just converts, and that involves ministry for all ages, for families, small groups, and more. Our central and campus ministry teams work together with every member who serves to fulfill our mission of being a disciple-making church. If you have grown as a disciple at the Summit or know any of the 12,000 people who regularly engage with our ministries, that, in some way, is this budget at work. Of course, the people who carry out the

ministry are the most important asset we have, but there are a lot of resources that are essential and helpful to all that is done in our very active church body.

Sending (Missions) Budget - \$4.7M

From our ministry programming budget, we have allocated 17.3 percent to sending (missions). At the Summit, we believe every member is sent, whether that's internationally or to serve our local community.

Your Generosity at Work

The Summit Church exists to create a movement of disciple-making disciples, in RDU and around the world. As disciples, we are called to be generous stewards of all God has given to us. Here are some ways your generosity is and has been at work at the Summit. Because of your generosity:

We've prioritized the gospel above all.

In June 2021 we held **our largest VBS ever**—with more than 1,000 kids and 400 volunteers participating in person and 170 families participating online. Our kids played and worshiped Jesus together as they learned that he knows us, makes us belong, forgives us, and chooses us to make a difference.

This year we've also given **\$53,000 toward translating the New Testament for an unreached people group**, making our total contribution over the last three years \$160,000.

We've done whatever it takes to reach all people.

Summit Online is sharing the hope of the gospel in RDU and around the world. More than 15,000 people regularly engage with one of our services, and in 2021 we've already had more than 176 people make a profession of faith in Christ and over 173 people connect with us for prayer.

Even while we were unable to meet in person, **our Blue Ridge and Brier Creek campuses received updates to their facilities**. We also **broke ground for our North Durham campus facility** and are **continuing to plan for our Alamance County campus facility**.

In our community, we've given **\$202,000 to our local outreach partners** to assist with pandemic relief and **\$106,000 for prison reentry**, helping prisoners from around RDU with housing, transportation, and small groups.

We've sent every member.

Our vision is to plant 1,000 churches by 2050, and we're over a third of the way there. Since 2002 **we've sent out over 1,319 members** to serve long term in church planting.

Despite our limited sending ability during the pandemic, we **sent staff on member-care trips** to encourage our missionaries, contributing \$55,000 to this vital work.

In addition, **nearly 150 Summit College students were sent out** this summer with our City Project, Second City, and City Life programs to learn, serve, and go.

We've made disciples, not just converts.

This year **we launched a new discipleship curriculum, *Groundworks***, with versions for adults, Summit Students, and Summit Kids. Over 75 percent of our adult small groups and 100 percent of our Summit College groups have completed the study as we continue growing in the five identities of a disciple—worshiper, family member, servant, steward, and witness.

We also **encouraged all of our members to commit to My Discipleship Commitment**, asking the Holy Spirit to guide us as we grow as disciple-making disciples. And nearly 3,900 of you have committed to taking your next step.