



Foothills Unitarian
LOVE UNITES US ALL

2025

Operating Budget



Presented by

Rev. Gretchen Haley

Rev. Sean Neil-Barron

Katie Watkins, DFO

The Foothills Board of Trustees & Finance Team

With Controlling Services by Jigsaw Operations



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Staying the Course: Our 5 Year Plan



Our financial position continues to be impacted by destabilizing events in the country, and in the world. Culturally and politically, the United States is in unprecedented territory. The economy remains fragile and unpredictable; the imminent need for Unitarian Universalism and our faith community to boldly equip and deploy spiritually grounded social justice leaders couldn't be clearer.

As we vote on the 2025 Budget, the second year of planned deficit budgeting, it's tempting to consider a safer plan. However, it's important to remember the faithful response we voted on in 2020, when we approved our building project, and then again in 2021, when we voted again to keep moving forward with the expansion.

Despite significant impacts due to the pandemic, we affirmed the plan yet again in 2023, when we could more fully evaluate the impact, and make a decision to keep moving forward, knowing we would need at least 2 years of deficit budgeting to fill the church we built. And, hopefully, you've noticed - it's been full! We've averaged 560 attendees so far in 2025, 20% more than we forecasted.

To change course, and instead pass **a balanced budget in 2025, would mean that we would need to immediately lay off 4-5 full time staff. Our church would drastically change**, and what we could offer would be reduced to a minimum, while still paying the mortgage.

We know that **this bold and important work is worth risking our comfort and security**. It implores us to craft a longterm plan that eliminates the debt, while continuing to offer important, urgent and emerging ministry to our community and beyond. It won't be easy, but our **Board of Trustees and Executive Staff affirm this plan, because it is faithful**.

We are committed to shouldering the work as a whole congregation even and especially as the world around us capitulates to the dangerous, power mongering national leadership. **Now, more than ever, we must be faithful to our mission of unleashing courageous love.**

Funding Our Mission:

What Our Budget Makes Possible



52 Sundays of collective worship providing an average of **500 adults and children** both online and in person with **comfort, courage, and meaning-making** in these days of disorientation and disconnection



A Community of Care that reaches at least **300 people every month** through acts of care - **caring listening, caring kits, meals, and end-of-life support**

An abundance of **Small Groups** that provide **belonging, spiritual growth and that practice resilience and community care for more than 400 people every month** - including Journey Groups, Wellspring, My Grandmother's Hands, Sisterhood Groups, Courageous Families, Millennial(ish), Meditation, Tai Chi, Earth-Based Path, Caregiver Support, Natural Connections, Jewish/Jewish Group, BIPOC Group, Trans Inclusion, TransParents Group, Brotherhood, Unpacking Religious Baggage and more.



Powerful and diverse music ministry every Sunday, and through our Adult Choir, Comfort Choir, Kids Choir, and other offerings throughout the year.

Support for people in **preparing for end of life**, including workshops to plan your memorial, Death Cafes, and grief support groups



Funding Our Mission:

What Our Budget Makes Possible



Mutual Aid through **micro grants of support for individuals**, as well as our **Pop-up Food Bank**, **delivery of food** to homebound individuals, an **annual Habitat build**, **housing families in our building**, **supporting trans individuals and their families** in fleeing hostile states, and **accompanying individuals seeking reproductive care** in partnership with Planned Parenthood.



Faith-based community organizing grounded in our values both specific to Northern Colorado and also in coalition across the state through our partnership with Together Colorado.

Support for more than 100 families at every stage, especially with our Summer Day Camp and Buckhorn Family Camp, Small Groups for Kids & Youth on Sundays and Parent Circle



Comprehensive values-based sex education through Our Whole Lives (OWL) provided to 60 youth and their families.

A building (built with sustainability at its center) that is a resource to the whole community at a time when gathering space is more critical than ever.
And of course, our community garden!

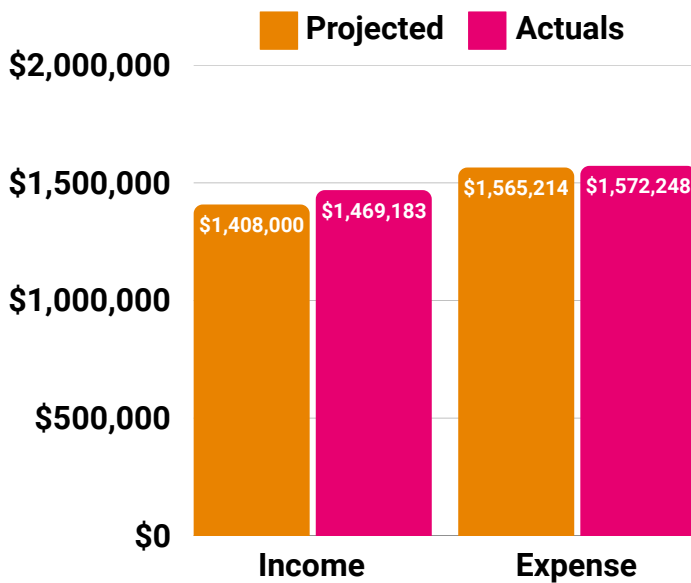


Continued **participation in a legacy of dissent and change makers**. We follow in the footsteps of our founders, as well as all **UU ancestors and those that have stepped up** in times like these **to fight for the dignity and rights of all**.

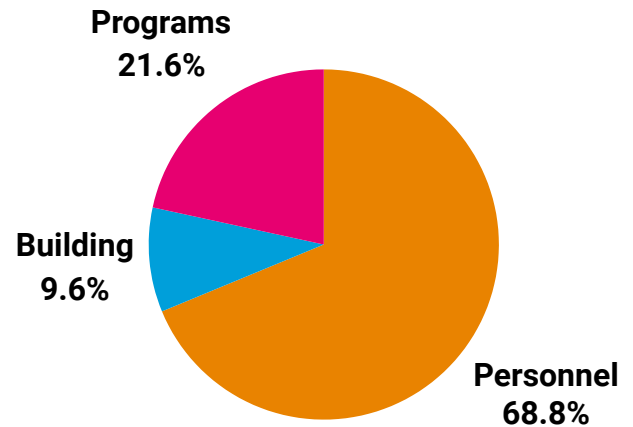
2024 Year End Results



Projections vs. Actuals



Breakdown of Expenses



Update on \$300K Cash Need Identified in Dec 2024

- +\$83K Year End Donations
- +\$194K Additional Committed
- 13% Increase in January Pledge
- \$277K Response in Donations
- \$60K Early Pledge Payments

 **Cash Position = \$337K better than projected at December Meeting.**

 **2024 Mortgage Interest Expense: \$207,189**



2025 Full-Year Budget

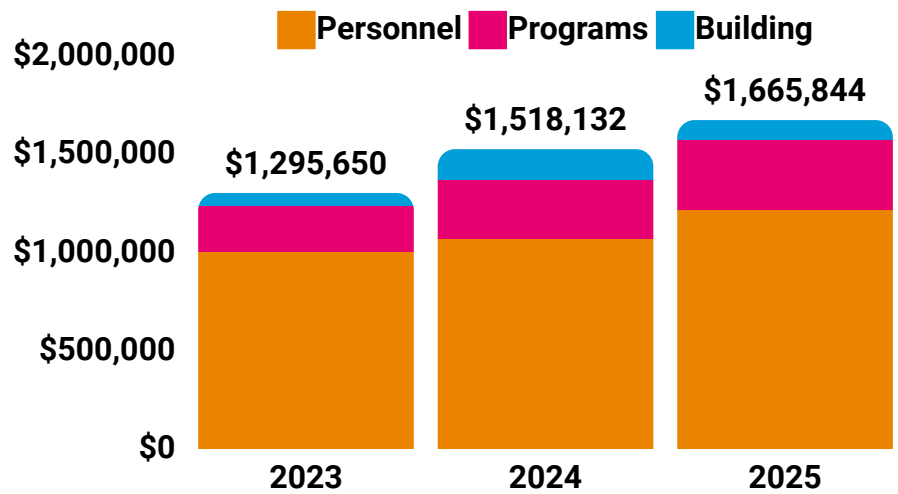
For the 2025 budget, we've planned responsibly based on 2024 actuals. Our FTE change year over year is less than 1 FTE (.75), which includes sabbatical coverage during Rev. Gretchen's sabbatical. Some of the specific areas of expense that create the expense increase over prior projections are:

- Property Insurance: +\$55K
- Health Insurance: +\$20K
- Operating Supplies: +\$20K
- Building Expenses: +\$25K

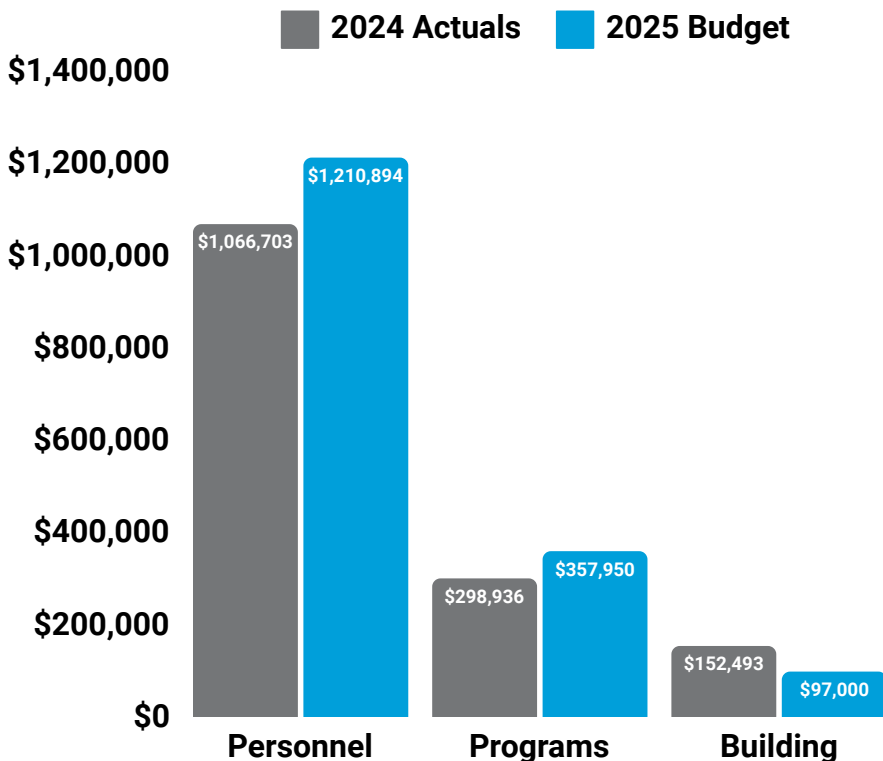
Anticipated Operating Loss before mortgage:
\$167,644

Total Planned Deficit: \$467,800

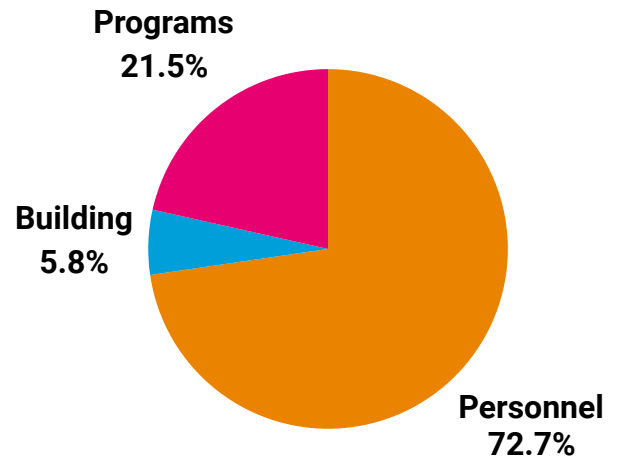
Expenses Year over Year



2025 Budget v. 2024 Actuals



Expenses By Type

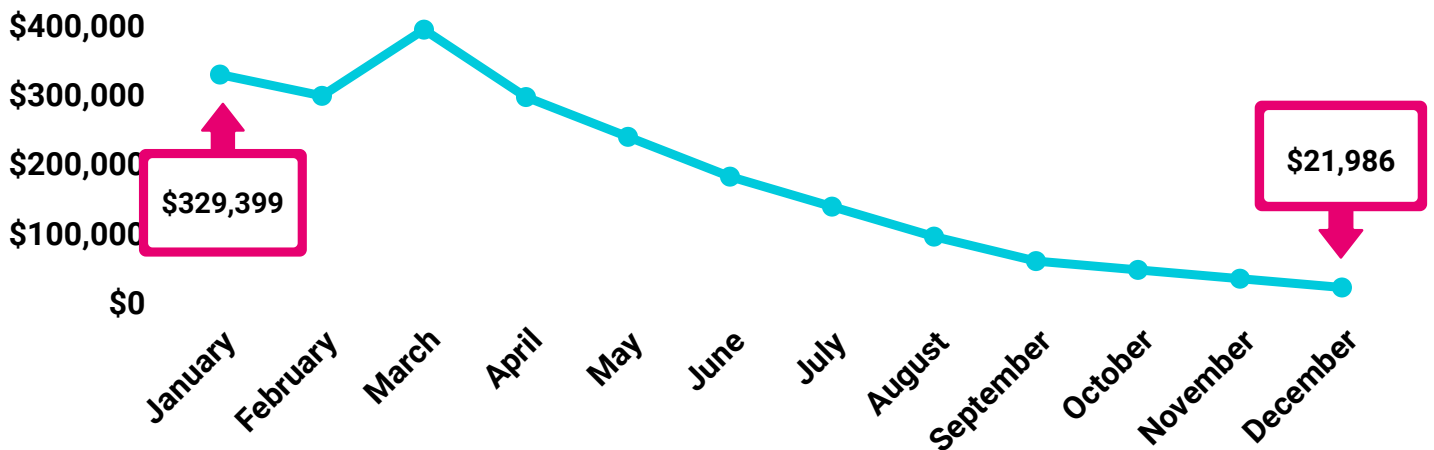


Updated Assets & Cash Flow



The generous support of our fundraising push to secure cash flow for 2025 has enabled us to start the year strong. However, the proposed **deficit of \$467K will significantly impact our cash flow over the course of the year.**

2025 Cash Flow Projection

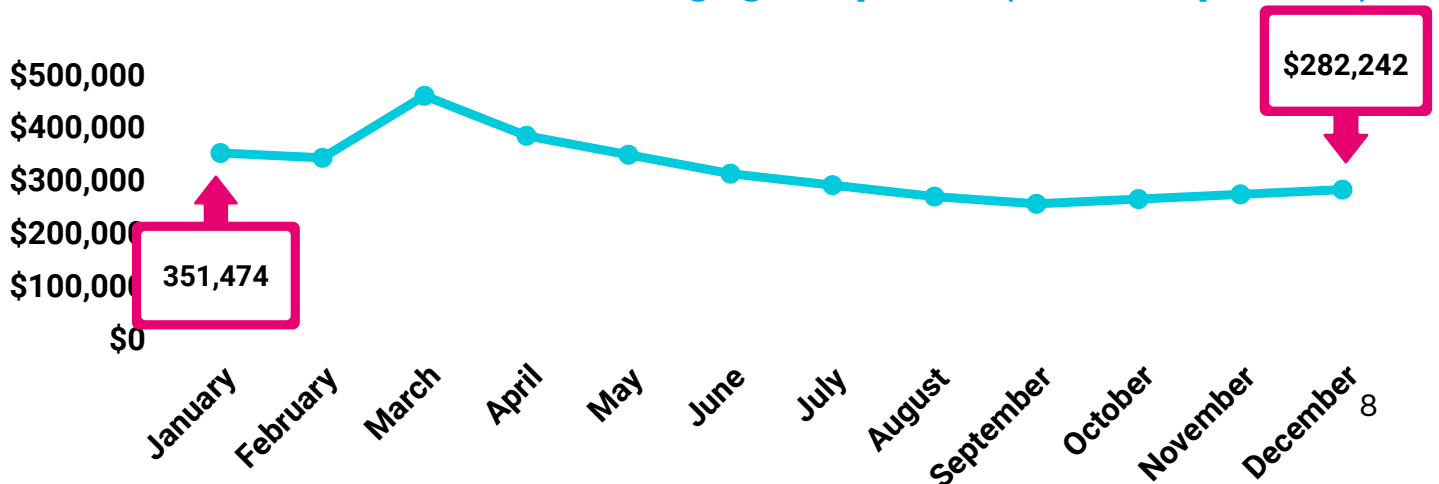


Monthly Mortgage & Deficit

Our 2025 budget proposal averages loss of \$38,983 per month, of which, \$21,688 is our mortgage expense.

Our typical cash flow trending, without mortgage expense peaks around April, and then we see cash gain begin again by October. However, in this planned deficit year (above graph), we see the cash flow drop all year as we make mortgage payments.

2025 Cash Flow Without Mortgage Expense (For Comparison)



Updated Assets & Cash Flow



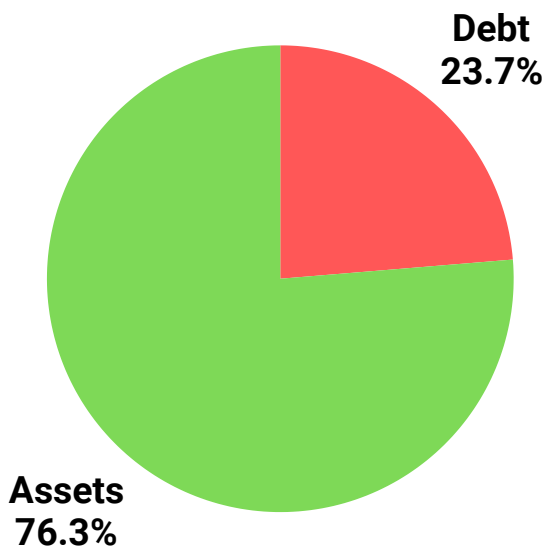
In addition to our cash, Foothills also has several assets. We continue to monitor our debt to asset ratio to ensure we are healthy. Here are some of our most valuable assets as of January 1, 2025:

Fixed Assets (includes Building & Land): \$10,453,230

Endowment: \$244,256

Cash: \$277,667

Total Debt (Long-Term Liabilities): \$3,413,168



Foothills Debt to Asset Ratio is .24, well below the .3 -.4 that most financial institutions consider “healthy.”

Other Important 2025 Cash Factors

\$200K legacy gift to be disbursed in 2025. Dates and final number will not be known for a while, pending probate.

We still anticipate that it is unlikely we will get the IRS credit for our solar panel installation, but we are proceeding with submitting documentation. If received, this would be between **\$50-\$60k**.

2024-2028 Interest Expense: \$962,667



Campaign to Retire Debt

In our 5 year plan (approved by congregation in Dec 2023), we hoped to wait until 2026 to conduct any major fundraising efforts in order to attend to donor fatigue and to have time to build up participation to levels that indicated new potential donors.

Updated 5 Year Plan w/ 2024 & 2025 Actuals

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Planned Deficit	✓	✓			
Major Fundraising		✓	✓	✓	⊗
Anticipated Sunday Participation	410 432	451 560	496	511	521
Pledging Households	365 376	380 403	400	417	431

***Content in blue indicates change from 5 Year Projections

However, our attendance has far-exceeded our expectations. With the current political climate, we can only assume that this trend will continue. Increased attendance means increased costs. Without retiring our debt, we will continue to have cash flow challenges. Furthermore, the financing expense is significant, so the sooner we can deal with the debt, the sooner we can invest more funds into the work of our shared mission.

The Foothills Unitarian Board of Trustees and Executive Staff will be proposing a plan that responds to the impact of current circumstances. The plan will **launch a campaign no later than October 2025 to retire the debt.** The campaign will be between \$3-\$5M total, depending on a feasibility study over summer 2025.



Foothills Finance Contributors

Staff Team

Rev. Gretchen Haley
Rev. Sean Neil-Barron
Katie Watkins, Director of Finance and Operations
Vanessa Way, Bookkeeper

Board of Trustees

Mary Klecan, President	John Hill
Beth Adams, Vice President	Diana Hutchinson
Sue Bloomfield, Treasurer	Peter Moore
Susan Williams, Secretary	

Finance Team

Jeff Barnes, CPA, Former Board of Trustees President
Erik Martinson, Tax Advisor (EA), Former Board of Trustees
Tom Rhodes, Retired UU Minister, Finance Consultant
Joe Long, Experience as Treasurer, Finance Chair and President of other UU

External Controller

Kendra Hull, Jigsaw Operations

We are excited to share that Kendra Hull, who is a Foothills Unitarian member, and previously served on the Finance Team, has been providing external controller services as of January 1, 2025. Kendra is the sole proprietor of Jigsaw Ops, LLC, a consultancy firm that provides financial services. She is an experienced Controller with an emphasis in grant accounting. Kendra has a strong background in financial management and compliance. As a consultant, she is the lead accountant at the International Sustainable Energy Foundation (ISEF). She is excited that her career has enabled her to contribute to Foothill's mission as a consulting Controller. Her role as a member, gives her unique and valuable insights into the particular needs of church accounting. Her work is already improving our reporting.

If you'd like a copy of our detailed financial statements or budget, please reach out to Katie Watkins at katie@foothillsuu.org.

Sabbatical Staffing Coverage

All of our ministers earn 1 month of sabbatical for each year of service. Our Senior Minister, Rev. Gretchen Haley, will celebrate her 13th year at Foothills this year, and in 2019 took 4 months of sabbatical. She was due to take sabbatical in 2024, but delayed in order to ensure the successful transition to the new sanctuary. She will be taking 5 months of sabbatical from March 3 - July 31, 2025. To help cover her absence, Rev. Elaine will move to full time. We will also utilize contractual support for some pastoral care and for guest preaching. Look for more information about this in the next few days.

Here is an overview of the staffing plan during Rev. Gretchen's sabbatical:

All staff are full time through July 2025 unless otherwise noted

Executive Team

Rev. Sean Neil-Barron, Acting Senior Minister

Katie Watkins, Director of Finance and Operations and Chief of Staff

Reporting to Rev. Sean

Rev. Elaine Aron-Tenbrink, Minister of Community Care

Sophia Miller, Director of Music and Worship Production

Reporting to Katie Watkins

Jenn Powell, Operations and Facility Manager

Holly Ayala, Facilities and Tech Coordinator (.8 FTE, reports to Jenn Powell)

Vanessa Way, Bookkeeper (.8 FTE)

Reporting to Rev. Elaine

Eleanor VanDeusen, Director of Family Ministry

Lauren Farley, Engagement Manager (reports to Eleanor VanDeusen for Family Ministry)

Caitlin Seifert, Groups Coordinator (.8 FTE)

Childcare / Family Ministry Support Staff (.3 FTE, reports to Eleanor VanDeusen)

Reporting to Sophia Miller

Lauren Kenning, Worship Production and Operations Coordinator (.8 FTE)

Kyle Harper, A/V Coordinator (.3 FTE)

Benjamin Hanson, Choir Director (.3 FTE)

Julie Koenig (.2 FTE)

Kara Shobe (.1 FTE)

Rev. Christopher Watkins Lamb (.1 FTE)

Hsin-Hsuan Lin (.1 FTE)