



# CHARLESTON ATLANTIC PRESBYTERY

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**DATE:** October 1, 2023  
**TO:** Pastors, Clerks of Session, and Treasurers  
**SUBJECT:** Financial Planning Information for 2024

As God's Church, we are a part of the Body of Christ at work in the world. This idea comes from one of the best New Church Development Preachers, General Presbyters, Stated Clerks, Pastor to Pastors of all time, who said, **"Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it."** (I Cor. 12:27) He also said, **"But God has so arranged the body giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it."** (I Cor. 12:24b-26)

Over the past years, Charleston Atlantic Presbytery has not asked for an increase in giving. As many of you, we have used budget cuts to make do, but we have run out of cuts that could provide any significant changes in outcome. We are as noted above a "connectional church." Some of you have been richly blessed with increased income, even an increase in membership. Others (often smaller older congregations) have lost members and income.

We are working to provide all with the opportunity to share what you have received as God's blessings with us and other congregations thus allowing us to continue to support the ministries of the larger church. The following are just a few things we are doing:

- over the next three years, we plan to increase our Per Capita giving to 100% of our obligation for Synod and GA. At present, we are at 50%, with a 9.7% increase included for next year.
- Some of you have submitted traditional and "thinking outside of the box" proposals to increase income or decrease spending (some did both). For this, some have received a "Vision Award."
- We continue to investigate designated and restricted funds, working to utilize them as they should be for the mission and ministry of Charleston Atlantic Presbytery.
- There have been several task forces at work related to leadership, per capita, technology and a new ministry team related to property.

**Included with this mailing** are forms to remit funds to presbytery, report designated benevolences to charities, report changes in Terms of Call, and a Letter of Intent. Please submit your Letter of Intent by **Friday, December 1, 2023**. The Stewardship of Financial Resources will be submitting the second reading of the 2024 spending plan at the Fall (December) Stated Meeting of Presbytery on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 based on your submission.

The following information is included to assist in the overall planning for our work together during 2024:

- **A detail page** that shows information about your giving & membership over the past years, and asking for this year. If you have questions about any of this please feel free to call me (Achim) at (803) 417-9775 or email me at AchimDaffin@gmail.com.
- ***The Presbytery Books will close on Thursday, January 4, 2024 at 3:00pm*** *This will be the final day for crediting 2023 contributions you make to the presbytery.* Please send all final Designated Giving to GA and our Institutions by this date as well. Please make sure that all final payments for 2023 are **dated and postmarked** no later than **December 31, 2023**. Otherwise, it will be credited for 2024. ALL contributions **must be RECEIVED BY JANUARY 4, 2024** (not post marked).
- Go to [www.pensions.org](http://www.pensions.org) for important information regarding Board of Pensions changes.
- **The Change in Terms of Call Form** for your pastor(s) included in this packet is due in the presbytery office **as soon as those terms have been accepted by your Session**. Please return the form even if there are no changes in terms of call for 2024.
- **Updated 2024 Minimum Compensation for Pastoral Calls, and Christian Educator Compensation and Minimum Salary Guidelines** are included for your use. Recommendations regarding presbytery staff are included in the 2024 budget. Your session/personnel committee will need to make recommendations to the congregation for changes to your pastor's terms of call.
- Presbytery's **Minimum Salary Requirements** include a 50% reimbursement of self-employment Social Security Tax paid by clergy. FICA and Medicare rates for employees remain at 7.65%, and reimbursement for mileage at the most current IRS rate. Also, each church should implement a responsible voucher system for travel allowances.
- Please remember that due in the presbytery office by **Friday, December 1, 2023** is the **Letter of Intent**, advising the presbytery of your undesignated amounts pledged for 2024. We ask each church to prayerfully consider growing in their giving. If each church gives just a little more, we will meet our ministry goals.

In closing, some words from one of my favorite theologians. They come in this short little book of his sayings, with a few words on each page, two pictures (one large and one small focus picture) and a focus word. Under the focus word **“Strength”** is the large picture of massive roots & trunk of a tree, the small focus picture is of a leaf on the roots. The words are, **“Not only do the weak need the strong, but also the strong cannot exist without the weak. The elimination of the weak is the death of the community.”**<sup>1</sup> Ponder this, and jot me a line about what you think. And by all means communicate with me as it relates to our asking and your giving this year.

Respectfully,



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<sup>1</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, **Wondrously Sheltered**, Augsburg Books, Minneapolis, p. 36.

**ENCLOSURES:**

2024 Detail Page – showing giving and membership information over past years  
2024 Request for Changes in Terms of Call  
2024 Minimum Compensation for Pastoral Calls  
2024 CE Guidelines and Minimum Salary Guidelines  
2023 YTD Undesignated Mission Giving by Churches (as of 9/30/2023)  
2024 Presbytery Asking Budget, (first reading approved 9/16/2023)  
2024 Mission Giving Requests  
2024 Letter of Intent  
Designated Benevolence Report Form