



There is a Movement at Rock Spring.

Can you feel the energy?

The Sanctuary is full on Sundays with people greeting one another with joy and recognition, coming early and staying late because relationships have formed.

People are showing up for one another in times of need with tangible support and gathering around tables for deep conversation.

Children are being baptized.



The Choristers, Sunday School, and youth groups have nearly doubled in size since this time last year. Youth once again went on a summer mission trip and a new confirmation class is forming.

We ordained a new pastor and are supporting a Member in Discernment as she pursues ordination.

Established groups, like Handmade Ministry, Reading the Bible in Pandemic, and our choirs are welcoming new people with openness and care.

Boards and committees are doing reflective work on the anti-racist local church audit and doing creative problem solving on issues ranging from fixing sewer lines to ethical investing. We are sharing the story of our Net Zero efforts with the community, so others can join in.

People of all ages are serving and playing together – baking pumpkin bread, assembling care kits for refugees, and packing 15,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger.



So what's it all about?

*Jesus said, "I was hungry and you gave me food.
I was thirsty and you gave me drink.
I was a stranger and you welcomed me.
I was naked and you clothed me.
I was in prison and you came to me.
I was sick and you visited me"
"When did we see you in need and minister to you?"
"Inasmuch as you did it to the least of these, you did it to me."
Let all you do be done in love.*

These familiar words from Matthew 25 are Jesus' call for us to live our faith – to use our hands, feet, minds, and heart to make God's love real for our community and the world around us. They represent a movement that engages all of us as givers and receivers in an ever-increasing circle of love.



You may have been the stranger. You may have been the one who made a newcomer feel welcome or who engaged in Courageous Conversations.

You may have been the one who was sick. You may have been the one who delivered a prayer shawl, a homemade meal, or the Sanctuary flowers.

You may have been the person who was hungry for meaning. You may have been the one packing produce, writing voter postcards, or teaching Sunday School.

You may have been the one thirsting for spiritual nurture. You may have been the one to companion someone as a Stephen Minister or engage in online programming.

We are each both host and guest, stranger and friend, teacher and learner, with needs to be met and gifts to offer.



Moving forward in faith.



Coming after three years of pandemic-related shutdowns and holy experiments, the resurgence of vitality we are experiencing at Rock Spring is reassuring and important. It is reassuring because nobody knew just what would happen following the pandemic. It is important because we aren't merely counting noses – we are seeing lives being touched and transformed.

This resurgence wasn't inevitable. In fact, just last summer all indications suggested that Rock Spring was experiencing a plateau. Churches all around us were in decline. Yet the

congregation moved forward in faith, adopting a stretch budget and a staffing model that were designed for growth, so that we could continue to nurture, prepare, and sustain ourselves as we live out our faith in this difficult, fractured world.

When we adopted the budget, we said that we would need 3 years to fully live into it and prove that it could be sustainable. To help with this, Council and the Congregation charged the Finance Board with developing financial forecasting models to enable longer range planning and budgeting that accounted for a variety of income/expenditure scenarios.

Our most significant expenses are people, property, programming, and a commitment to give away 20% of every pledged dollar. Council and the Finance Board have examined a variety of scenarios and have great confidence that, with the congregation's support and the strategic use of some of our savings to supplement the operating budget over the next couple of years, we can continue building this movement in a sustainable way.

Matthew 25: Join the Movement

A movement is only as strong as its people, and this movement needs **you**! We have two goals this year.



The first is to **add 19 new pledging households** to the 166 households already pledging. If you are new to Rock Spring, or if you have been a member for years but haven't pledged, we want to hear from you! Pledges provide the single most important data point as we plan our budget. Do you have questions about pledging – like how it works, why it's important, or how to decide what to give? We have a group of Rock Springers who are glad to talk with you via email or one-on-one or in small groups at coffee hour, choir rehearsal, at YoRS pickup time. Look for the "Join the Movement" name tags and a list of contacts in the next Rock Spring News.

Our second goal is **for current pledgers to grow their pledge**, helping to fuel the movement with the resources needed to keep the momentum going here at Rock Spring.

Here's how to Join the Movement.

Make your [pledge online](#). We will dedicate pledges in worship on Thanks & Giving Sunday, November 19. Paper pledge cards will be available in the Sanctuary for those who prefer to pledge that way. You can also contact the office to request that a pledge card be mailed to you.

Rock Spring *is* a Matthew 25 church. This movement is happening within us, among us, and around us. It calls us into community, as we find the places where, working together, we can help to bring about the world we believe God intends. Please join the movement with us by making your pledge.

With gratitude,

*Kathy Dwyer, Don Kusler, Ashley Martinage, Sam Nolan, Cheryl Ramp, Rob Rudin,
Peter Thielen, & Eric Yeo*

2023 Stewardship Committee

Rock Spring UCC
FY24 Budget Goals Budget

	Current Year	Next Year
	FY23	FY24
Income		
4000 Pledges and Identified Gifts	\$ 941,494.00	\$ 994,913.82
4025 Plate Offerings	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 5,200.00
4050 Facilities Usage	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 51,500.00
4075 Interest	\$ 149.00	\$ 149.00
4125 Endowment Income	\$ 235,000.00	\$ 226,000.00
4151 Holiday Flowers	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
4160 Savings Re-investment	\$ 60,876.00	\$ 63,333.33
4300 Recital Series/Concerts	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Total Income	\$ 1,291,019.00	\$ 1,342,596.15
Expenses		
5000 Personnel	\$ 675,481.20	\$ 710,134.33
6010 Christian Education	\$ 24,250.00	\$ 22,800.00
6050 Church Council	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 2,800.00
6075 Deacons	\$ 8,600.00	\$ 8,600.00
6125 Finance	\$ 27,500.00	\$ 28,325.00
6175 Music	\$ 27,015.00	\$ 30,033.45
6200 Social Action & Mission	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 4,200.00
6300 Annual Giving Campaign	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
6500 Office and Property	\$ 330,857.00	\$ 335,172.75
7000 Rock Spring's Wider Mission	\$ 188,299.00	\$ 198,982.76
Total Expenses	\$ 1,289,252.20	\$ 1,356,587.30
Net Operating Income	\$ 1,766.80	-\$ 13,991.14