Northern Synod

BUDGET TASK TEAM

Report

1. COMPOSITION, POLICY AND OPERATION

1.1 Task team members

The following persons served in the four annual task teams in the past term. Rehan Rheeder (task team leader), Pieter Brynard, Andries Smal, Wynand Swart, Theresé Cilliers, Arend Hattingh, Wynand van Niekerk, Paul Grobler (ex officio).

1.2 Context

The Northern Synod consists of all the congregations in its region. All synodal funds belong, in the final instance, to the congregations. At the session of the synod, the congregations decide on a strategic direction and certain focus areas that are important to the synod. These focus areas are prioritised by the SSC which annually draws up the budget with the focus areas and priorities as points of departure.

1.3 Sources

The synod's budget is financed from three sources:

- Money received from the congregations in the form of contributions towards joint work.
- Returns on investment. The investment also serves as guarantee fund for the medical subsidies for those emeriti who qualify. This investment did not arise from funds directly received from congregations but from the sale of properties such as the Synodal Centre in Visagie Street, a share in the Van Riebeeck Building, as well as the farms Kranskop and Bethesda which were sold to the State due to land claims.
- Other possible donations.

1.4 Zero-basis approach

This concept implies that every item on the budget is weighed annually, de novo, in terms of priority and affordability, while taking labour law guidelines into account.

2. INCOME-DRIVEN

The budget is drawn up only after it is known what the estimated disposable income is in terms of joint work and the returns on investment.

3. BUDGET CATEGORIES

The synodal budget consists of two categories:

- **Ministry,** which among other things includes joint work (diaconate, youth, the DRC as denomination, medical subsidies to qualifying emeriti, and the DRC family, et cetera), as well as ministry support to congregations.
- **Operation,** which include things like administration, remuneration, and provisions (leave, synod sessions).

At present the division between ministry and operation is 70-30. The ministry is funded from contributions by the congregations and the operation from the investment.

4. TASK TEAM

4.1 The members of the task team are annually appointed at the last SSC meeting of the calendar year, to draw up the budget for the next financial year.

4.2 The Presbyterial Representatives for Finances (PRFs) of all the meet annually in November to give their input regarding the budget.

4.3 Afterwards the budget is presented to the moderamen (SSC Executive Committee) for input, and then the budget is put before the SSC for approval.

4.4 The SSC takes the budget into consideration, amends it if necessary, and approves it when satisfied.

4.5 The budget can afterwards only be amended by the SSC at the executive committee's request.

5. PRESBYTERIAL REPRESENTATIVES FOR FINANCES

For the purposes of networking with regard to finances between the SSC and the congregations, each presbytery appoints a Representative for Finances (PRF). The following is important:

The PRF is preferably appointed for four years, from synod session to synod session.

5.1 For the sake of healthy communication touching finances, the presbyterial committee involves the PRF in all matters pertaining to finances.

5.2 In any case where the Task Team for Ministry Support is constituted to deal with an application by a congregation of the presbytery, or for whatever reason relating to finances, the PRF is ex officio a member of the task team.

5.3 In any matter concerning finances, the PRF is the first point of reference for either the presbytery/congregation or the Synod House

6. FUNCTIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAL REPRESENTATIVE (PRF)

The PRF handles the process that determines and collects contributions for joint work as further defined. She/he

6.1 assists the presbytery regarding financial enquiries and applications for ministry support by congregations;

6.2 offers support to congregations for preparing budgets for, and completing forms (e.g. BGW 2) for timely submission to the Synod House;

6.3 assists in collecting the financial statements of congregations within their presbytery in a timely manner after year-end audits.

6.4 is the Synod House's financial officer who assists in collecting the semester reports of congregations in his/her presbytery in a timely manner after the end of August;

6.5 checks that financial reports of congregations within his/her presbytery are presented at presbytery sessions and advises the presbytery regarding the finances of congregations;

6.6 checks that congregations within her/his presbytery comply with their duties to SARS under the Income Tax Act;

6.7 manages all other communications concerning finances between congregations and the SSC.