2026 Proposed Budget

Lovers Lane
United Methodist Church

Dear friends,

God is doing exciting things at Lovers Lane! With the transition to a new Lead Pastor, we are already experiencing fresh energy, growth, and hope. As we look ahead to 2026, we believe God is calling us to invest in ministries that make disciples, care for our community, and ensure a strong future for our church.

To faithfully support that work, the Finance Committee and Staff Leadership have prepared this preliminary draft of the 2026 budget. We want you to see and understand both the numbers and the story behind them. While this draft budget shows a deficit, our plan is to present a balanced budget at the beginning of 2026 with a revised revenue projection based on our 2025 year-end results. Sharing now allows us to move forward together and finish this year strong.

This draft budget includes $4,075,000 in revenue, requiring another $334,000 to meet budgeted expenses. This is slightly higher than the $4,200,000 2025 budget, which included special Ministry Development funds.

Here are the main areas where the budget reflects new opportunities and challenges:

- **Apportionments:** We are increasing our commitment from $80,000 to $125,000 as we continue the journey back to paying 100% of our apportionments.
- **Capital Campaign Preparation:** $100,000 has been set aside to launch a campaign in 2026 that will focus on debt retirement and facilities upgrades and improvements—a whole-church effort that will free funds for ministry far into the future.
- **Facilities:** Expenses are up by $112,000, reflecting increases that many of us also see at home.
- **Staffing:** The budget rises by $175,000, but staffing remains only 42% of our budget—significantly lower than most churches our size.

  Additions to staffing include:

  - A full-time **Communications Director**, to help us tell our story, welcome people into ministry, and support the Capital Campaign.
  - A part-time **Director of Discipleship**, to strengthen our Power of One emphasis and help us grow as followers of Jesus.
- **Ministries:** Budgets now include former self-funded ministries and all worshiping communities. Our priorities continue to be Kids and Student Ministries, reaching new people through Evangelism, and connecting people in Discipleship opportunities such as small groups and classes.
- **Walnut Hill Church:** Continued investment in our second campus as an essential part of our mission.

While some expenses rise, we are working hard to steward resources carefully and keep the budget as flat as possible. The reality is that we are currently projecting a deficit, but we are hopeful that strong year-end giving will allow us to increase revenue projections. If not, we are committed to balancing the budget, which could mean adjustments in staffing or programming.

That is why this moment matters. Each of us has a part to play in ending 2025 strong and stepping boldly into 2026. Together, through prayer, generosity, and participation, we will bring this budget to life.

We are deeply hopeful about our future, and believe God is guiding us into a season of growth, health, and impact. We invite you to join us in praying that God will continue to lead, guide, and direct us as we follow Christ and live out our mission together.

Blessings,
Rev. Kay Eck
Executive Pastor

Lovers Lane
United Methodist Church

2026 Narrative Budget Summary

Every dollar you give helps us live out our mission of loving ALL people into relationship with Jesus Christ.

Here's how your generosity will make ministry possible in 2026:

	2025	Percent of Budget
Worship & Discipleship	$1,055,00	18%
People & Leadership	$2,512,000	42%
Facilities & Campus	$1,330,000	22%
Connectional & Community Investment	$250,000	4%
Future & Stewardship	$844,500	14%

Worship & Discipleship

- Weekly worship in multiple communities
- Kids and Student Ministries
- Small groups, discipleship classes, and Power of One emphasis
- Congregational care, missions, Friends of Music, and evangelism

People & Leadership

- Pastors, ministry leaders, and support staff
- New Communications Director to tell our story and engage the community
- New Discipleship Director to strengthen spiritual growth
- Staff support for hospitality and nursery

Facilities & Campus

- Utilities, insurance, security, and repairs across our multi-building campus
- Safe, welcoming spaces for worship, discipleship, and community gatherings

Connectional & Community Investment

- Apportionments: Supporting ministries of the Horizon Texas Conference and the UMC worldwide
- Walnut Hill Church: Continued investment in our second campus

Future & Stewardship

- Debt service (TMF and line of credit)
- Capital Campaign preparation to retire debt and tackle deferred maintenance
- Foundation support that strengthens long-term ministry sustainability
- Administrative systems that keep finances accurate, transparent, and efficient

Where We Stand

Projected Revenue	$5,657,500
Projected Expenses	$5,991,500
Current Gap to Fill	$334,000

We are committed to presenting a balanced budget in January.
A strong year-end giving will help close this gap and ensure we step boldly into 2026 with momentum.

Together, through prayer, generosity, and participation, we will bring this vision to life and continue to see lives transformed through the ministry of Lovers Lane UMC.