



Course Syllabus

Pastor and Church Finance: Developing Financial Acumen for Church Leaders

Course Duration: 9 weeks (9 one-hour sessions)

Course Description:

This training program is designed to provide church pastors with financial acumen not typically covered in seminary. Participants will learn about the corporate duties of the church governing body, how to address toxic leadership, the importance of segregation of duties in the financial system, protecting the church's tax-exempt status, understanding IRS-defined accountable plans and housing allowance, reading financial reports, presenting budgets with a missionally driven narrative, and preventing fraud in the church.

Each session is designed to be dialogical in nature. Some will begin with a PowerPoint presentation followed by group discussion. Others will be group discussions facilitated by the course facilitator.

Facilitator: Keith Clark-Hoyos

Session 1: Duties of Church Officers

- Understanding the roles and responsibilities of church officers
- Collaboration among church leaders for effective governance
- Legal and ethical obligations of church leadership

Session 2: Pastors and Toxic Leadership

- Identifying and addressing toxic leadership within the church
- Strategies for promoting healthy leadership and church dynamics
- Navigating challenging leadership situations

Session 3: Segregation of Duties

- The importance of segregation of duties in financial management

- Best practices for ensuring financial controls and transparency
- Preventing fraud and financial mismanagement

Session 4: How To Lose Your Tax Exemption

- Common pitfalls that can jeopardize a church's tax-exempt status
- Best practices for maintaining tax-exempt status
- Legal and financial consequences of losing the exemption

Session 5: Accountable Plans & Housing Allowance

- Understanding IRS-defined accountable plans for expense reimbursement
- Housing allowance considerations for pastors
- Compliance with IRS regulations and reporting

Session 6: Financial Statements 1

- Introduction to financial statements and reports
- Interpreting the Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Activities
- Identifying key financial metrics for decision-making
- Group Evaluation of financial reports of various anonymous churches.

Session 7: Financial Statements 2

- Introduction to financial statements and reports
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- Identifying key financial metrics for decision-making
- Group Evaluation of financial reports of various anonymous churches.

Session 8: Budgets That Inspire Giving

- Creating budgets that reflect the church's mission and vision
- Strategies for inspiring stewardship and giving
- Allocating resources for mission-driven activities

Session 9: Preventing Church Fraud

- Recognizing common types of fraud in churches
- Implementing internal controls and fraud prevention measures
- Issues specific to smaller congregations

Course Materials:

Course readings and materials will be provided in each session.

Assessment and Grading:

This cohort is a voluntary participation training available to those who choose to increase their knowledge and skills in serving the church. No written exam is required.