

Church Treasurer Directions

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GETTING STARTED

Besides the church treasurer program you will need the following:

A checkbook that the church keeps up to date and reconciles regularly with the bank statements
A budget adopted by the church.

It is possible to have, also, a savings account. This is optional but makes a lot of sense for most churches.. Do not attempt to have designated money only in the savings account – that is impossible to do and it is often wiser to keep a good deal of the undesignated funds for a church in the savings account as well. A really great practice is to make all offering deposits into the savings account and occasionally transfer from savings to checking as needed just to cover the checks written by the church.

It is possible to have, also, a petty cash fund. This is optional but makes a lot of sense for those little expenditures for just a few bucks that come up now and then. If you have one, the church is, in affect, the banker for the fund. You must maintain a good record that is reconciled with the actual cash in the box on a regular basis. It is best to obtain a good cash book with permanently numbered pages to use for recording the transactions; every office supply store has these on hand.

TECHNICAL THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Normally after a session of entering data, you simply close the program, and then when you run it again you open the rep file you were working with earlier, and resume right where you left off.

The church treasurer program is intended to work on a month to month basis. Since the program saves data as a file with the extension “rep”, a separate REP file is to be created anew every month.

Conceivably, one could work quarter to quarter – nothing in the program is going to check for when the calendar month ends. But for most churches, a monthly report is best.

The church treasurer program will automatically create a JRN file – a file that ends with the extension “.jrn” - that goes along with the REP file. They should always be in the same folder location on your machine. So if you create a file for January named Jan2009, its full name will be Jan2009.rep. There will also be a file named jan2009.jrn in the same folder. Should you wish to move this report file from one folder to another, be sure to move the jrn file as well as the rep file, or else you will not have moved all the information for the report. If you seek to delete a report file, you should also delete the jrn file that accompanies it.

If you are running Windows Vista or later, you should set the program to be run as an administrator. This is done by changing the properties of the icon you use to start the program.

SETTING UP FOR THE FIRST MONTH

The first time you use the program, it comes up looking kind of blank – there hasn’t been any data entered into it yet, after all. You initial options are very limited. You should choose the option under “File” labeled “New Annual Budget Setup”. The new setup entry form will appear. You will take this option on first setting up the program and again every new fiscal year. At the very top of the form is an entry area named “Sum of All Cash on Hand”. You add up all the money in your checking, savings,

and petty cash, and any other location you have where there's money, and put that total in this box. Use the value for each account as of the first of the month you are doing the report.

Next, make sure the buttons on the right side are set to "Budget Entry". See the big white square in the middle with no label? Ignore that. It will be automatically filled in by the computer as you go. Instead, fill in the individual fields below for each item in the budget one by one.

You get to choose what budget account numbers are assigned. Most budgets have sections, such as "Missions", "Salary", "Programs" and so forth. We advise using numbers 100, 105 etc. for the first section, 200, 205 etc. for the second section and so on. Just don't try to use the same number for two budget items. The amount entered for each budget item will be the annual budgeted amount. Using numbers separated by 5 allows you to insert budget items between any others you wish later.

The item labeled "balance" is intended to be used for those cases where you are starting this process in the middle of the year and have already used some of the money in the budget. In that case, the original budget allotment and the current balance are different. You can leave this last field blank and it will automatically become equal to the budgeted amount, which is appropriate for a brand new year.

As you add budget items with this function, you'll see the numbers appear here in reverse order - the most recent on top. That way, you can view your most recent entries, see what number you are on, without having to activate the scroll bar. During normal program operation later, the budget lines will be displayed in the normal order, lowest numbers on top.

If you made a mistake with a budget entry and you notice it later, delete the budget item by highlighting it and hit the "delete" button. Then reenter using the same number for the budget item. Have all the budget items now been entered? Good, now its time to add in the designated funds. Up on the right hand side, where the button is set to "Budget Entry", select, instead, "Designated Fund Entry".

Churches seem to accumulate designated funds like barnacles on the bottom of a ship. You'll have to enter them here one by one, just like the budget items were added. Only you will not be assigning account numbers. They are tracked internally by hidden account numbers, but you will never see these, to you they will always simply be the named fund.

These directions apply to a first time user of the program. But when a new year comes around, you can create a new year blank report by selecting the option FILE then SAVE AS FRESH YEAR. This will create a new month's report with zero expended from each budget item. Your designated funds will come across normally. Then you will only have to modify whatever changes in the budget items were made in the new year! (Done via EDIT/VIEW followed by VIEW/ADJUST BUDGET ITEM)

IF YOUR BUDGET HAS SECTION TITLES – you can enter these to the program so that they will show up on the printed report. Select EDIT/VIEW – SET OR DEFINE SECTIONS. To specify a section, select the budget item on the left that STARTS the section. Type in the name of the section. Once all the funds have been properly inserted – take the Save and Exit option.

You will be presented with a file saving screen. You must know what folder you are saving the report in, be aware where it is going! You might have to find it again some day! We recommend selecting a name that includes the month and the year, such as July2009.rep. If you don't add the .rep, it will be added for you. Do not attempt to use any other extension other than .rep!

Once you have done this, you will see the current report summary. This will always be your start page for any actions you will be taking; notice the key information you will have available to you at all times as you work with the data all during the month.

Data will be constantly saved as you work. Simply close the program after each session. If you close the program, simply choose to open the file you created and resume right where you were. If you are unsure what data you have already entered and what actions you may have left out, select the option "Edit/View" then "View/Adjust Action". You can scroll down and see just what your last actions were.

RECORDING A DEPOSIT

Let's suppose Sunday came and went, there was money collected, it was deposited into the appropriate account, and you want the report to reflect that income, of course. You will have a record of the amount, preferably a signed note from the two or more assigned counters as well as the deposit receipt from the bank in one form or another. Typically there will be a few notations about some of the money being for a designated fund.

Select ACTIONS – DEPOSIT from the main menu. Fill in the blanks. For the amount, put in the total amount, which will include all designated funds. Don't attempt to "help" the software by putting in only the undesignated now and the designated later. The software is helping YOU by taking care of those kind of math FOR YOU. Note the hot-key assignment Ctrl – D which you could access from the main menu, if you remember it.

After putting in the total, record each designation as appropriate by selecting ACTIONS – NOTE DESIGNATION. You will be shown a list of funds available, including the option to create a new fund. Select the appropriate fund. Then enter the amount for that fund and the date (which will be the date of the deposit, of course).

SHOULD THE BANK notify you later of an error in the deposit, make a separate "deposit" entry that reflects the error. Record a negative amount if the bank says your deposit was actually smaller, record a positive amount if the bank says your deposit was actually larger. Date this new deposit as of the date you FIND OUT about the error, not the date the error was made. If you made the deposit in one month and the correction is found out after you started a new month's report, MAKE THE CORRECTION in the NEW MONTH. It is almost never appropriate to change a report after it has been given to the proper authority as the report for that month. People who receive your reports should not be troubled by making them obsolete retroactively.

ALL ABOUT "NOTING SOURCE"

SOMETIMES AN ODD SOURCE of funds comes along that is worth noting, but no designated fund is involved. Perhaps some group used the building and paid a fee for its use. Or the bank might notify you

there was an automatic deposit of interest to your savings account. You have to record this income as a deposit in the normal way ; then Select ACTIONS – NOTE SOURCE to reflect this alternate source of income beyond normal contributions.

A list of such sources will, therefore, gradually build up in a month. The list will NOT be saved in the next month's report. You'll have to enter each one each time as a new "note source" action. Deleting items from this list cannot be done, although you can revise the spelling of the name of the item. But take heart; if the amount for the "source" is set to zero it will be passed over when the monthly report is printed. You can edit the action that created an amount so that it is zero, or you can delete the action that set up the amount, or you can specify a new ACTIONS – NOTE SOURCE that is a negative entry exactly equal to the amount for that source.

As treasurer, you are aware that all these entries will increase the undesignated balance but, since they are listed separately, they don't show in the general line item for "undesignated receipts".

RECORDING A BUDGET EXPENDITURE

So you wrote a check to the utility company or some such normal budgetary item. Note, from the main page, the presence of a button labeled BX. Select this button to immediately begin the budget expenditure entry. Most of the time you will select the budget category, specify the check number and the amount, and be done. If you are recording an expenditure from the petty cash, where there was no check, use the *date* instead of a check number.

Be careful on posting payroll checks. They always have some kind of deduction associated with them. Post the net amount the check was actually made out for as coming from the salary account. THEN record the DEDUCTIONS by choosing the option ACTIONS – Internal Transfer. You will then TRANSFER the deductions to a designated account where they will be held until disbursed. It might be named by you as "Payroll Deductions". This money will go FROM the salary account TO the appropriate designated fund account. It's OK to have a single designated account for ALL deductions if its always just taxes – and you'll disburse that money as appropriate each quarter when you must comply with state and federal tax requirements. Alternatively, if you are spending the money in the same month, you can record it as a second budget action, from the budgeted salary account.

Small payrolls, where the church has only a handful of employees, are not as complicated as some think. The key is being able to prepare an accurate pay stub for each employee; from that, the treasurer easily sees how to write checks and withhold taxes.

RECORDING A DESIGNATED FUND EXPENDITURE

Choose the DX button instead of the BX button, or select ACTIONS – Designated Expenditure. Enter the check number and the amount as with budget expenditures. Once again, if you are recording an expenditure from the petty cash, where there is no check, use the date instead of a check number. There is a function for changing the display order of the designated funds in Edit/View (last item). Budget items, of course, should remain in the order set by the budget.

WHAT TO DO WITH A BANK CHARGE

From time to time banks issue charges and that's just a fact of life, so we have to be ready to deal with it. Simply record it as a normal budget expense to the office account or whatever budget account is appropriate for such expenses. If you have a treasurer's expense account, that's a great place to post it. As with petty cash, there is no check number, so you use the date instead. I suggest you use the date you became aware of the charge.

SETTING MONEY ASIDE

There are a couple of ways a church might act to set aside some funds. Our church set up a budgeted item in which every month a small percentage of the offerings were to go towards a mission action fund. This money would be available for projects as it accumulated. Every month, then, we had to select ACTIONS – INTERNAL TRANSFER. With this function, money is moved from a budget account to a designated account.

The other action a church might take is to simply set up, on a one time basis, a special fund. To do this, you select EDIT/VIEW – VIEW/ADJUST DESIGNATED ITEM. Then you take the option to create a new designated account. As treasurer, you know that creating a designated account will automatically shrink the amount of undesignated money.

TRANSFERRING MONEY BETWEEN BANK ACCOUNTS

Don't enter a thing into this report for any transfers between bank accounts. What you will reconcile to at the end of the month is the TOTAL of all funds in ALL accounts. Your checkbook, savings account records, and petty cash records should be detailed enough to do all the documentation of such transfers that you will ever need.

NON-BUDGETED EXPENDITURES

Sometimes the church governing body will vote to spend a certain amount of money aside from the budget process. Do not, if you are present when this is happening, rise to ask where the money will come from. Instead, view the mandate as your authorization to take the money from wherever you see fit! Often the wisest course is to create a new designated fund in the exact amount and spend it from that fund. Or you can create a new budget fund with that amount as the budgeted amount and spend it from that. Or, if appropriate, take it from an existing budget account. You decide! Bear in mind the individuals responsible for their program budgets don't expect to see those funds depleted, leaving them high and dry for the rest of the fiscal year.

CORRECTING ACTIONS THAT WERE IN ERROR

OK you meant to record an expenditure of 30.13 for office items and alas, you recorded only 30.00 last week. You COULD record an additional .13 for the same budget item with the same check number but wait! Why not simply edit your earlier entry? Yes, you can do that. Take the option EDIT/VIEW – VIEW/ADJUST ACTION. All your actions will be displayed for you including the one you messed up. Select the action for the budget expenditure of 30.00 – presumably they will be roughly in order of check number – and select the button below labeled EDIT SELECTED. Change ONLY what needs to be changed, and its corrected!

This works for designated funds in exactly the same way.

LOCATING ACTIONS ON A GIVEN ACCOUNT

What check did you actually write that affected a budget account – or a designated account? Pull up all the actions you took *for that account only* by this process:

EDIT/VIEW – VIEW/ADJUST BUDGET ITEM and then highlight the appropriate budget item and select the button DISPLAY RELATED ACTIONS down at the bottom. This will bring up a list of ONLY the actions related to that budget item. You can check to see what check numbers were involved, you can choose to edit the item, or you can just observe and cancel.

The same process works in the same way for designated fund actions. Select EDIT/VIEW then VIEW/ADJUST DESIGNATED ITEM. This will bring up a list of ONLY the actions related to that designated fund. You can check to see what check numbers were involved, you can choose to edit one of the actions, or you can just observe and cancel.

CHANGING THE ENDING OR BEGINNING BALANCE

There is a special function just for changing the ending and beginning balance. In the actual report, the ending balance is a function of the beginning balance plus everything else. If you make no changes in everything else, then by necessity changing the beginning balance changes the ending balance. For this reason, the function only offers you the opportunity to change the beginning balance. The ending balance will automatically change with it.

Needless to say, the beginning balance for a given month SHOULD be equal to the ending balance of the previous month. If they are not equal, you should be ready to explain why they aren't equal. But how do you do it? Select EDIT/VIEW – then VIEW/ADJUST MAIN BALANCE. You will be shown the current information the program has concerning the beginning balance and you can alter it as appropriate. Note: There will be no record of this adjustment in the action list.

PRINTING THE REPORT

Start with FILE then select PRINT. The program will always select and print to the default printer for your computer; if you wish to print to another printer, you must temporarily make that printer your default printer. The program will ask you if the printer is ready. This is your chance to make sure there is paper loaded, the printer is turned on, the path for the paper coming out of the printer is clear. Once you have indicated the printer is ready, you are brought to the print preparation box. You should enter appropriate title lines for the report. You should enter in the actual amounts for the checking account and any other accounts in the space provided. You should compare the actual totals of the actual accounts with the amount the program thinks they should total up to. If the amounts differ, then the books are out of balance, and it's not yet time to go ahead and print the report. Something is entered incorrectly somewhere; trace it down and fix it. Typically its a matter of leaving out a check or entering a check amount incorrectly. But it could be the deposits or maybe even a bank charge you neglected to enter into the report. It can't be the internal transfers or the designations; these don't change the amount of money the report thinks you have on hand.

All formatting, including pagination as required, is handled strictly by the program. The program assumes you are printing to standard US 8 ½ by 11 inch paper.

But you have the option to send the report to a file, instead. If you take that option, the file will be a text file, and you will need to open it with your word processor and take care of details like inserting page breaks or bolding parts of it yourself. If the report seems to be messy, try adjusting the font size in your word processor program . . . a smaller size will allow the report lines to fit neatly within the margins of your word processor's page. A nice compact version of the report can be prepared this way. And this would also allow you to insert comments.

PREPARING FOR A NEW MONTH

After printing up the final report for the month, you want to prepare a new month file. Select the option FILE – START NEW MONTH. You will again see the file saving screen. Please remember to always be aware of what folder you are saving the report to. After all, some day you might need to find it again. Select a new name reflecting the name of the new month and the year, such as AUG2009. Once you have saved that new month report, you will have to manually act to load it, at which point you can begin to work with the new month's report. At the end of the year, you can use this function to start a new fiscal year with a new budget. You will make a new month (Jan20xx) and you will have to edit every budget account to show it is zero spent in year and perhaps a new budgeted amount. You can also add new budget accounts with the edit budget function and you can delete budget lines, IF the budget line item has been first set to zero spent in year. You would do this from the main window by selecint “Edit/View” and then “View/Adjust Budget Item”.

BUDGET USAGE FUNCTION

You can have the program show you how the different budget categories are coming along in relation to how far you are in the budget year and in relation to each other. Select the option Edit/View, then Usage Report. The budget items will be displayed, the amount spent for each budget item, and then a number that represents how many nominal months of a yearly budget have already been eaten up. At the end of February, a number 2 would be perfectly normal. Higher numbers are a warning. Lower numbers are something you can be comfortable with. It's possible to print this report, of course, like any other seen in this screen.

RECONCILIATION TIPS

What, you are off a bit at the end of the month? These days, with the math being done for you by your checkbook program or your checkbook spreadsheet, odds are its merely a wrong or skipped entry. So select Edit/View, then View/Adjust Action. Print out that page with the print button. Now simply compare every entry line by line with the checkbook register, petty cash records, savings records. Because if the lines all match, and the math is correct, the report WILL BALANCE! (Starting balance must also be correct, of course)

PROGRAM CAPACITIES

The program is prepared to track and report amounts up to \$999,999,999.99 – after that the printouts won't fit properly in the columns. So if your annual budget exceeds that amount, you may have problems using this report. The program is prepared to track 100 budget accounts and 100 designated fund accounts and up to 50 special named sources.

CUTTING AND PASTING

You can paste into the program an amount you copied from somewhere else. So when you are recording an expenditure, copy the amount from the spreadsheet or checkbook program, then paste in the actual amount instead of remembering all the digits exactly.

THAT COPY BUTTON

The main menu has a copy button as well as a print button. You press this and nothing seems to happen, but an image of the contents of the window has been placed on the windows clipboard, and you can paste it into any word processing program. If columns don't line up, set the font to Courier New, and then they will.

PAYING FOR THE PROGRAM

Someday, when you think you are really using the program and you admit it works for you, send \$10. See billing page for simple directions.

COPYRIGHT DECLARATION

These directions and this program are copyright© 2010 by Paul Richmond. All rights are reserved. You may copy the directions to your heart's content! Share the directions and the program with others! Send an email to support@churchcents.com, let me know how this program works out for you.

PAYMENT DIRECTIONS

We do not track who downloads the software. It is up to you to take care of this part at your leisure. Nothing in the program itself will ever nag you or stop working as a ploy to enforce payment.

Simply put this page in with your file of bills to be paid, but don't pay until you are satisfied you are using the program successfully and it works for your situation. Once that has occurred, send the bottom stub to:

Church Cents
1330 chase
Eugene, OR 97402

along with the \$10 payment. Your check is just fine.

May the Lord richly bless your endeavors for His kingdom.

From:

To: ChurchCents
1330 Chase
Eugene, OR 97402

Payment for the church treasurer program in the amount of \$10 is enclosed.