

Vox Veniae

A Vision Statement for FY2013

Four seasons have passed through Austin since we last laid out a vision for Vox Veniae. We've seen some fire and felt some rain but now, in the long afterburn of a late Texan summer, as we look to our next stage of growth, perhaps we should first—like the original gardener in his original garden—sit back and acknowledge the fruits of labor. God's work among us has indeed been *good*. The heart of our vision last year was simple—consolidate and condense our operations, practice and teach generosity, all so that we could build up a surplus for local and global mission. The gardener must have found some strangely fertile ground because this ramshackle community produced a surplus defying all reasonable expectations of a young, poor, and broke east Austin.

Our task now is to discern where and how to plant the seeds God has given us. We've spent the last few weeks discussing this as a community and produced the following three directives to guide our work in the coming year:

Balance

Over the past few years Vox has developed substantial connections in both Afghanistan and India; while we will continue to develop these partnerships, this year we feel a particular need to increase our local missions efforts. We would like to achieve a 50-50 balance between global and local partnerships, better reflecting Vox's own interest in both majority-world issues and the needs of our local parish. To achieve this balance, we will divide both the current surplus and next year's mission funds equally among global and local efforts—Afghanistan will receive 25%, India 25%, Space12 15%, Posada Esperanza 15%, Mobile Loaves and Fishes 5%, and a new 'Good Neighbor Fund' (described below) 15%.

Increase

Along with balancing our missions approach, this year we will also look to simply increase our overall commitment to missions. We would like to build towards an eventual commitment of at least 30% of our overall budget and do so in a manner that balances fiscal responsibility with faithfulness to God's calling. To this end, this year we will increase our missions commitment by a further 2.5% of our total budget. This increase will allow us to establish a new 'Good Neighbor Fund' proposed by community members during our annual missions feedback session this July. The Good Neighbor Fund will mirror Space12's model of deliberate simplicity in service, and will simply be money set aside for community members to use when needs arise among actual neighbors and local acquaintances. The intention is to enable Vox members to develop relationships and meet existing needs amongst the people who live next to them.

Invest

Finally, we turn to the most local of all missions work—the children of our community. When Vox began, the children's ministry featured a grand total of three participants (the pastors' kids). Today, Greenhouse hosts over thirty kids, three classrooms, and ages ranging from last week to thirteen. This past year the program appeared to reach a critical mass where our current system of coordination by one or two volunteer parents was simply untenable. While it does not fall under our official missions budget, we have always seen Greenhouse as a vital prelude to missions, and Vox's children as in need of care and discipling as its adults. We also have been given an opportunity to connect and build relationships with the neighboring kids of Space12. Given our growth and our need in this area, we plan to add a part-time (10hr/wk) position to coordinate Greenhouse and pastor our children.

Close readers and listeners will notice the vegetation metaphors have been flying thick and fast. From seeds to seasons to greenhouses, the work of ministry always seems to find itself in a garden. Perhaps this is why Christ spoke so often of trees, flowers, shrubs. There is a vitality, an unexpected growth, and utter dependence on the heavens that seems to accompany a life of service. This past year we have experienced a whiff of that generous life. We pray that it will persist as we persist, a community of friends, discovering Christ, tending the garden.

Consolidated Proposed Budget for Vox Veniae and Austin City Spaces (ACS) - ADJUSTED
For the period September 1, 2012 to August 31, 2013

	Vox Veniae		ACS		Consolidated	
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%
Revenues						
Contributions						
General contributions, unrestricted	243,600	99%	1,200	3%	244,800	85%
General contributions, restricted	-		-		-	
Other contributions, unrestricted	-		-		-	
Other Income						
Sublease revenue: partners	-		24,000	57%	24,000	8%
Restricted sublease revenue: 297	-		-		-	
Other income	1,700	1%	16,800	40%	18,500	6%
Total Revenues:	Unrestricted	245,300	100%	42,000	100%	287,300
	Restricted Purpose	-		-		-
Expenses						
Ministry, Missions and Program						
Ministry						
Liturgy and related hospitality	1,250	1%	-		1,250	0%
Membership, community and pastoral care	750	0%	-		750	0%
External Giving						
Direct support to global missions partners	8,000	3%	-		8,000	3%
Long-term missions	4,800	2%	-		4,800	2%
Direct support to local missions partners	3,000	1%	-		3,000	1%
Good Neighbor Fund (Benevolence)	10,500	4%	-		10,500	4%
Program						
Community Events	-		200	0%	200	0%
Subtotal: Ministry, Missions and Program	28,300	12%	200	0%	28,500	10%
Operations, Personnel and Staff Support						
Operations						
Rent expense	25,400	11%	12,700	22%	38,100	13%
Facility support expenses	3,236	1%	6,003	10%	9,239	3%
Utilities and security	-		8,800	15%	8,800	3%
Supplies, postage, printing and website	180	0%	180	0%	360	0%
Accounting and transaction processing	1,560	1%	440	1%	2,000	1%
Insurance ¹	2,843	1%	15,157	26%	18,000	6%
Legal counsel	-		-		-	
Denominational support	3,000	1%	-		3,000	1%
Personnel						
Salary and parsonage allowance	137,200	58%	7,470	13%	144,670	49%
Insurance and other benefits	19,916	8%	-		19,916	7%
Retirement and pension contributions	6,151	3%	-		6,151	2%
Employment taxes ²	2,524	1%	571	1%	3,095	1%
Staff Support						
Seminars, training, travel and phone	7,500	3%	-		7,500	3%
Books and subscriptions	200	0%	-		200	0%
Subtotal: Operations, Personnel and Staff Support	209,710	88%	51,322	89%	261,032	88%
Income Taxes & Penalties	-		6,000	10%	6,000	2%
Total Expenses:	Unrestricted	238,010	100%	57,522	100%	295,532
	Restricted Purpose	-		-		-
Budgeted Change in Unrestricted Net Assets	7,290		(15,522)		(8,232)	
Budgeted Change in Restricted Net Assets	-		-		-	

¹ACS insurance costs are still under review

²Assumes Greenhouse worker will be paid as an independent contractor. \$382.50 additional if worker is paid as an employee.