



OFFERTORY READINGS 2014

North American Division

Stewardship Ministries





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 JANUARY

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

As this new year begins, we are eager to see God's work receive the financial support it deserves and needs.

The local church needs to be adequately funded. It is vital to remind your church members of the various needs and projects that continually support the church.

The local conference, as well as the worldwide church, are continually involved in various endeavors to introduce others to Christ. There are amazing opportunities to reach people at home and in foreign countries, and we should do all we can to help our members support this worldwide effort.

Following are some suggestions on how to achieve this goal:

1. The offertory readings have been developed to help church members be faithful in "returning" their tithe and in "giving" generous offerings. They are also intended to remind the church that giving is an act of worship.
2. These readings are intended to inform the church members as to how God's work functions financially in the local church and abroad.
3. The offertory readings should be assigned in advance. The presenter is encouraged to give some prayerful thought as to what should be said in calling for the offering.





4. It is often true that people in the congregation follow the example of the one making the offering appeal. Our positive words can impact others to give.

Thank you for giving prayerful consideration to these suggestions. Let's determine to do what we can to make 2014 a financially successful year for God's work, locally and abroad.





January 4, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

A blind Indian beggar wearing only a loin cloth sat beside a road, eating the rice in his little bowl. A few travelers occasionally gave him a little rice. One day he heard the thunder of a chariot in the distance. It was the grand entourage of the great king. Surely he would stop to give him baskets of rice.

Indeed, the golden chariot stopped before the beggar. The great one stepped down, and the beggar fell before him. “Give me your rice,” said the great king.

A fearful, hateful, scowl masked the face of the beggar. He reached into his bowl and thrust one grain of rice toward the king. “Is that all?” said the great one. The beggar spat on the ground, cursed, and threw him one more grain of rice. Then the great one turned, entered his chariot, and left.

The beggar—angry, empty, and crushed—grabbed for the remaining rice he had hoarded in his bowl. Yet he felt something different. He pulled it out. It was one grain of gold. Pouring out his rice, he found another grain of gold. Had he trusted the great one, he could have received a grain of gold for every grain of rice he had.

Galatians 6:7 says, “For whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (NKJV). When we give our offerings today, let’s remember to treat God as we would like Him to treat us.

Let’s determine to cultivate a loving and generous spirit this new year. We can make 2014 an exceptional financial year, here in our local church and worldwide.





January 11, 2014

Today's offering – Our Conference

A very rich monk died and left his estate of \$300,000 to a number of monks with whom he was acquainted. The instructions on the will directed them to give to his only son “that which they wished.” They interpreted the will to mean that the son should only get what they decided to give him.

The monks got together and decided that they would give the son \$10,000. The attorney told them they had misunderstood the will. The monks felt it was their decision to give the son whatever they decided, but the will stated that the son would receive “that which they wished.” They wished for themselves \$290,000, and therefore greedily took the majority of the will.

The golden rule suggests that we treat others the way we would like to be treated. As we give of our means today to support God's work, remember Galatians 6:7: “Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (NKJV).





January 18, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

Henry Ward Beecher once said, “There never was a person who did anything worth doing who did not receive more than he gave.” This concept of unselfish giving may seem unrealistic, but it has been shown again and again that there is a blessing to those who give generously.

Notice what Solomon says: “There is one who scatters, yet increases more; / And there is one who withholds more than is right, / But it leads to poverty. / The generous soul will be made rich, / And he who waters will also be watered himself” (Proverbs 11:24, 25, NKJV). What a true and wonderful Biblical principle!

If we would but take this important principle to heart, we would actually be blessed, and God's work in this church would be supported generously. Certainly the needs of our own local church need ongoing and generous support. Thank you for giving today.





January 25, 2014

Offering: Religious Liberty

Emphasis: *Liberty* Magazine

“This principle we in our day are firmly to maintain. The banner of truth and religious liberty held aloft by the founders of the gospel church and by God’s witnesses during the centuries that have passed since then, has, in this last conflict, been committed to our hands. The responsibility for this great gift rests with those whom God has blessed with a knowledge of His word. We are to receive this word as supreme authority. We are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God’s word must be recognized as above all human legislation. A ‘Thus saith the Lord’ is not to be set aside for a ‘Thus saith the church’ or a ‘Thus saith the state.’ The crown of Christ is to be lifted above the diadems of earthly potentates” (Ellen G. White, *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 68, 69).

Appeal: *Liberty* magazine is sent to thought leaders all across the North American Division. This includes the United States, Canada, Bermuda, and Guam Micronesia. As issues in society become more complex, *Liberty* seeks to give a balanced perspective that clearly presents freedom of religious liberty. Your offering today will assure that *Liberty* continues to be a vital ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 FEBRUARY

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

Is love versus selfishness a critical issue to God's people preparing for His soon return? As we seek to grow more like Jesus every day, unselfishness and love certainly need to be cultivated. Notice the following quotation:

“The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. . . . The principle there illustrated is to give, give. This, carried out in actual benevolence and good works, is the true fruit of the Christian life. The principle of worldlings is to get, get, and thus they expect to secure happiness; but carried out in all its bearings, the fruit is misery and death” (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 254).

Let us remember that God wants to help us grow in these virtues. This is one of the reasons we need to cultivate generosity and faithfulness in our weekly giving.





February 1, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

Many years ago, William Allen White, a famous newspaper editor in Emporia, Kansas, once gave a 50 acre tract of land to the city for a park. At the dedication, he made a strange statement: There are “three kicks in every dollar. One kick is when you make it—and how I love to make a dollar! One is when you save it—and I have the Yankee lust for saving. The third kick is when you give it away—and the biggest kick of all is the last one.”

It seems Mr. White had discovered what Jesus taught twenty centuries earlier: “ ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’ ” (Acts 20:35, NKJV). Do you believe that? Do you want a big “kick” from practicing generosity right here in your home church? The expenses of operating this building are necessary and need your regular financial support. Thank you for your faithfulness by helping to provide for the financial needs of this congregation.





February 8, 2014

Offering: World Budget

Emphasis: Adventist Television Ministries

“Systematic benevolence should not be made systematic compulsion. It is freewill offerings that are acceptable to God. True Christian benevolence springs from the principle of grateful love. Love to Christ cannot exist without corresponding love to those whom He came into the world to redeem. Love to Christ must be the ruling principle of the being, controlling all the emotions and directing all the energies. Redeeming love should awaken all the tender affection and self-sacrificing devotion that can possibly exist in the heart of man. When this is the case, no heart-stirring appeals will be needed to break through their selfishness and awaken their dormant sympathies, to call forth benevolent offerings for the precious cause of truth” (Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 396).

Appeal: The World Budget emphasis today is Adventist Television Ministries. These ministries reach out to millions of people seeking comfort, advice, and spiritual solutions to life situations. Let us be moved with compassion and not compulsion as we give today, “For God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7, NKJV).





February 15, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

In Malachi 3, God says that His people are robbing Him by not returning their tithes and offerings. He goes on to say that they will not be financially blessed by this course of action. Then He makes an amazing proposal.

“ ‘Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, / That there may be food in My house, / And try Me now in this,’ / Says the Lord of hosts, / ‘If I will not open for you the windows of heaven / And pour out for you such blessing, / That there will not be room enough to receive it’ ” (Malachi 3:10, NKJV).

Millions of people have taken God at His word and found that He does indeed bless those who return a faithful tithe. If you have not yet tested this promise, why not discover it for yourselves? You will discover that God do keep His word.





February 22, 2014

Today's offering – Our Conference

An old pioneer and local church leader was famous for having two compartments in his wallet. One was for the Lord, and the other was for himself.

After working hard all day in the fields, he would collect his pay from his employer. As soon as he received it, he would divide his earnings. Part of it went into the compartment for the Lord and the other part went into the compartment for himself.

This man made a deep impression on a young teenager named Arthur G. Daniells, who later became the president of the General Conference.

What an example! We, too, can be encouraged and blessed as we give to support the work of God's church, right here in our local conference. Thank you for your faithfulness as you participate each Sabbath in the work of sharing the gospel.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 MARCH

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

Our church is like a team of horses. The story is told of a horse pull in Canada. One horse pulled 9,000 pounds, while another pulled 8,000. Together you would expect them to pull 17,000 pounds. Not so! When teamed together, they pulled 30,000 pounds.

This principle is called synergism. By definition, the simultaneous action of separate agents working together has a greater total effect than the sum of their individual efforts. More can be done in a team effort than can be accomplished solo. In order for the principle of synergism to work as it should, there has to be cooperative effort.

In order for God's work to succeed in our church and conference, we need teamwork. If everyone pulls together, it is incredible what could actually be accomplished.

Let's encourage all our members to be a part of this church team by giving their tithes and offerings so that God can bless His people in our congregation.





March 1, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Local Church Budget

A woman in Germany brought to her pastor an amount of money equivalent to ten dollars in U.S. money. She said, "In former years I have had to pay this amount for medicine, yet this year I have remained healthy. I want to show my gratitude to the Lord by giving this money to the church." Sometime later, the woman came to him again with five dollars, explaining that many of her neighbors had suffered damage in a windstorm, but that her farm had been spared. "I now bring to the church this donation as an offering of thanks."

The offering today is for our local church budget. There are various church needs and expenses on an ongoing basis. We would encourage each member to give generously and regularly to support this offering, which is the backbone of the church.

Thank you for your generosity. As we give, may we do so with loving, joyful hearts because of God's generosity and goodness toward us.





March 8, 2014

Offering: World Budget

Emphasis: Adventist World Radio

Submitted by Shelley Nolan

With 1.3 billion people, China is one of the church's largest mission fields. For years, Adventist World Radio has broadcasted programs in Mandarin for 10 hours a day to China. All of those programs can now be heard online.

This voice of hope is bringing news of God's love to those who need it most, such as this listener who wrote:

"The past years, I have counted on your prayers and your website to help me pass through [many] difficulties. Though we have not met, it was your prayers that led me to feel the love of the Lord, and I have felt it was the Lord helping me through you. As a single parent having a daughter with depression and suicidal inclination, I felt the sky was to collapse on me. [You] made me feel there is someone praying for me in some part of the world. The Lord has cared for my daughter time after time. May [He] bless our family as we work for Him."

Appeal: The World Budget supports Adventist World Radio's programs that can be heard on shortwave, AM/FM, and online in nearly 100 languages. Your generous gift will keep these programs traveling to the furthest corners of the globe. Thank you for your support!





March 15, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

A sixteen-year-old boy pulled up to the curb in a shiny, new car. Soon he was surrounded by excited friends.

A little boy exclaimed, "That's a nice car. Where did you get it?"

"My brother gave it to me," was his reply.

"Well, that's the kind of brother I'd like to be!"

Do you see anything unusual with this comment? Most people would have responded, "That's the kind of brother I'd like to have," rather than, "I'd like to be."

John 3:16 points out this principle of love above selfishness: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. . . ." (NKJV). When we are motivated by love to give and to share instead of selfishly seeking things for ourselves, we will be blessed, and God's work will be greatly strengthened.

Today as you give to our local church budget, remember the little boy who wanted to be like the brother who gave.





March 22, 2014

Today's offering – Our Conference

The offering today is to benefit our local conference. A story is told of a church member who said she didn't have enough money for offerings because of payments on a new car.

"Of course," she said, "after the car is paid off, I will begin giving to God." She was giving God the leftovers. For many Christians, God comes last. He only receives what is left over; after all their needs and wants are taken care of first.

God didn't treat us that way. When our salvation was at stake, He gave the richest gift heaven had—His Only Begotten Son! Therefore, shouldn't we put Him first?

In Galatians 6:2, Paul instructs us to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (NKJV). Let us do our part to help God's church prosper and grow. If you have not been supporting the church budget, we invite you to begin doing so today.





March 29, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

The disease “cirrhosis of the giver” was discovered by the husband and wife team of Ananias and Sapphira. This is an acute condition that renders the patient’s hands immobile when he or she is called upon to move them in the direction of billfold or purse, and from thence to the offering plate. This strange malady is clinically not observable in such places as the shopping mall, supermarkets, clothing stores, golf courses, or restaurants. Some try to use a false remedy, pointing out to patients how income tax deductions can be claimed for giving. The best therapy that leads to a sure and lasting cure is to get the individuals heart right with God. This affliction is really a symptom of a more basic need of the soul.

Giving from the heart because we love God and want His church to grow are certainly the right motives for His children.

As we give to support our local church budget today, let us be sure our hearts are in the right place and, in turn, the financial needs of His church can be met.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 APRIL

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

It is imperative to discuss how to effectively call for the offering on Sabbath mornings. It is important to make sure the church members understand what the various offerings are designed to benefit as they are received each week. The importance of returning a faithful tithe to God should certainly be emphasized.

Here are four “P’s” that are key to remember when calling for the offering:

1. **Pray.** Pray for guidance when making the appeal.
2. **Prepare.** Prepare for the offering appeal prior to arriving to church.
3. **Purpose.** Explain the purpose of the offering—people like to know where their money is going.
4. **Positive.** Be positive and enthusiastic in telling how God’s work is getting accomplished as a result of their giving.





April 5, 2014

Today's Offering– Our Local Church Budget

John Wanamaker once made a trip to China to determine how the money he had given to missions was being used. He came upon an old man plowing with a crude instrument; it was drawn by an ox and a young man. Asking for an explanation, he was told that his chapel needed a spire so that it could be visible from miles away. The members had prayed, but the money was insufficient. Thus, the man had agreed to sell one of the oxen and take the yoke of the ox they sold. Wanamaker prayed, “Lord, let me be hitched to a plow so that I may know the joy of sacrificial giving.”

Our church budget funds a number of things here in this church. The utilities, insurance, and maintenance are only a part of the many ongoing, monthly expenses.

Thank you for your regular support of the operating expenses. No doubt the Lord is pleased as His people support His work here in our home church.





April 12, 2014

Offering: World Budget

Emphasis: Christian Record Services

One of the most moving ministries in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is Christian Record Services, its headquarters located in Lincoln, Nebraska. Every summer there are camps for the blind all over the North American Division. Every month materials produced in braille are made available to the visually impaired.

Thanks to your generous mission offerings, prayers, and personal involvement, the Seventh-day Adventist Church shares the love of Jesus in more than 200 countries around the world. It feeds the hungry, cares for the sick, leads people to Jesus, and establishes new churches and congregations each and every day! It is truly “love in action.”

In addition to funding many frontline projects, it is your mission offerings that sustain the continuing mission work of the church. In 2011, over \$1,100,000 was received for this offering, which was collected twice during the year. It provided a major boost to our mission work.

Appeal: A portion of the world budget supports Christian Record Services, a ministry for blind people. Thank you for your generosity in bringing the life-changing good news about Jesus to the visually impaired.





April 19, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Local Church Budget

A. A. Hyde, a millionaire manufacturer, said he began tithing when he was \$100,000 in debt. Many people said it wasn't necessary to give God a tenth of his income while he was in debt. Mr. Hyde said he agreed with that viewpoint until one day he was impressed to make God his first creditor. He began paying God first, and all the other creditors were eventually paid in full.

If a man owes you money, it would be a wise business policy on your part to encourage him to pay his debt to God first.

Notice the following passage from Proverbs 3:9, 10: "Honor the Lord with your possessions, / And with the firstfruits of all your increase; / So your barns will be filled with plenty, / And your vats will overflow with new wine" (NKJV).

God is the ultimate financial partner! Again and again people have discovered that when they make Him their partner, He blesses them and enriches their lives in many ways.

Remember to give to God first, and you will also receive His many blessings.





April 26, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Conference

Ah, when I look up at that Cross,
Where God's great Steward suffered loss
Yea, loss of life and blood for me!
A trifling thing it seems to be to pay the tithe,
dear Lord, to Thee,
Of time or talent, wealth or store—
Full well I know I owe Thee more;
A million times I owe Thee more!
But that is just the reason why, I lift my heart to God on high,
And pledge Thee by this portion small, My life, my love,
my all in all!
This holy Token at Thy Cross, I know, as gold,
must seem but dross;
But in my heart, Lord, Thou dost see,
How it has pledged my all to Thee,
That I steward true may be!
—Anonymous

We have a great opportunity today to show God our love and commitment as we bring our tithes and offerings to Him.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 MAY

Dear Pastor and Church Leaders:

We all realize that God's church needs generous, ongoing financial support. Not only does the church need adequate money to function, we also are personally blessed when we give. Following are reasons for us to be generous in our giving.

1. We love God. "God so loved the world that He gave. . . ." (John 3:16, NKJV).
2. God will bless us. "The generous soul will be made rich. . . ." (Proverbs 11:25, NKJV).
3. Faith In God will increase as He blesses. " 'And try me now in this,' / Says the Lord of hosts, / 'If I will not open for you the windows of heaven / And pour out for you such blessing / That there will not be room enough to receive it.' " (Malachi 3:10, NKJV).
4. Spiritual mindedness will result. "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21, NKJV).
5. It actually makes us happy. " 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' " (Acts 20:35, NKJV).

In view of the texts above, we are doing a great favor to our church members when we help motivate them to grow in the area of stewardship.





May 3, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Local Church Budget

Usually when a successful meeting has been concluded, the person who organized it receives the credit. The credit instead should go to God—exactly where it belongs.

David and the people had given a fortune in gold and silver, plus thousands of tons of bronze and iron. How the papers would be filled with that sort of news today.

First Chronicles 29:13–15 reads:

“ ‘Now therefore, our God,
We thank You
And praise Your glorious name.
But who am I, and who are my people,
That we should be able to offer so willingly as this?
For all things come from You,
And of Your own we have given You.
For we are aliens and pilgrims before You,
As were all our fathers;
Our days on earth are as a shadow,
And without hope’ ” (NKJV).

As we support the ministry of our own church, remember that God makes it possible for us to give and is pleased when we show a generous spirit in doing so.





May 10, 2014

Offering: World Budget

Emphasis: ADRA Disaster and Famine Relief

Submitted by Crister Delacruz

In the news, we are often overwhelmed with images of misery and pain. Most global headlines are about conflict, suffering, and death. Annually, millions around the world needlessly suffer from hunger and are displaced by disaster.

Statistics tell us that hunger kills more people than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined. Millions more suddenly find themselves victims of a disaster and are left with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. Do you find yourself wondering what you can do to help someone in need?

In cases of emergency, ADRA is there to show God's love and mercy to the suffering. Following the example of Jesus, ADRA is able to help an estimated 20 million annually. In over 120 countries around the world, ADRA feeds the hungry, shelters the homeless, educates the illiterate, provides health care to the sick, protects the innocent, and gives hope to the hopeless.

Appeal: Through the World Budget, ADRA supports the work of the world church in providing help from disasters and famine. Each of us are agents of hope and healing today, to men, women, and children, like Jesus did while He was on earth.





May 17, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Local Church Budget

Leprosy is a horrible, dreaded disease that is no respecter of persons. It can cause a father to die and break up a family. A mother or child may be found with the curse and sometimes have to be isolated from loved ones.

In Jesus' time, a man who contracted leprosy had to announce his presence in a loud voice: "Unclean, unclean."

Do you suffer from leprosy of the soul today? When leprosy first begins, it doesn't kill a person. But little by little, it steals a bit of the finger, then more and more until only a stub is left.

Many today suffer from the leprosy of selfishness. Selfish thoughts crowd out generous impulses. This morning, let us invite Christ to come into our hearts and ask Him to help us develop an unselfish, generous spirit.

Please remember the many needs of our own local church budget as we return our tithes and offerings.





May 24, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Conference

Some teachings in the Bible are hard to understand. I'm not necessarily referring to Paul's long lines of logic, the furious beasts of Revelation, or the prophet Jeremiah's strange activities. I'm stumped by the "Law of Generosity."

Proverbs 11:24 can be difficult to comprehend: "There is one who scatters, yet increases more; / And there is one who withholds more than is right, / But it leads to poverty" (NKJV). I'm not used to that kind of exchange. At the store I get what I pay for. At the bank I withdraw only what I deposited. And the quickest way I know to become bankrupt is to give away what I have. And the rich? They've learned to hold onto what they have.

This morning I'm looking for an explanation of the law of generosity. But, like many of the laws that govern God's world, maybe I can understand it best through experience. I invite you to experience these blessed results that God has promised in His Word. As we give to support the ministry of our conference today, let us each determine to practice the law of generosity.





May 31, 2014

Offering: North American Division

Emphasis: Evangelism

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14, NKJV).

“To the early church had been entrusted a constantly enlarging work—that of establishing centers of light and blessing wherever there were honest souls willing to give themselves to the service of Christ. The proclamation of the gospel was to be world-wide in its extent, and the messengers of the cross could not hope to fulfill their important mission unless they should remain united in the bonds of Christian unity, and thus reveal to the world that they were one with Christ in God . . . Their spiritual life and power was dependent on a close connection with the One by whom they had been commissioned to preach the gospel (Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 90).

Appeal: Today’s offering helps fund evangelistic training activities and provides resource material and special evangelistic events that focus on evangelism in the North American Division. As we worship in giving, remember we are still dependent on Christ, our Leader for spiritual life and power. Thank you for your generosity in supporting transformational evangelism, retention of young adults, women in ministry, education, and emerging immigrant populations for God’s mission field.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 JUNE

Dear Pastor and Church Leaders:

The financial support provided by the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is generally satisfactory. Even though this may be true, we need to continue to remind God's people that generous, faithful, financial support of the church is a blessing to the givers as well as the organization itself.

It is amazing how many members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church could testify that as they give back to God, they have in turn been blessed in many and various financial ways. Letting these members share their stories would inspire others to be more generous themselves.

It is certainly true that God is not dependent on our gifts to keep His work moving forward. He has many ways to strengthen, encourage, and bless His children. The reality is that we will be better off ourselves when we learn to be generous and unselfish. We need to grasp that “it is more blessed to give than to receive’ ” (Acts 20:35, NKJV).





June 7, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Local Church Budget

The story is told of a very rich lady who dreamt she died and was taken up to heaven. She was given an angel to escort her to her new home. The angel took her past many exquisite mansions.

Passing one of the most elegant, the angel said, “And this is the mansion of your servant who died last year.” Since this was a fine home, the lady became really excited about the anticipated size of her new home. Soon they rounded a turn and came upon a small shack.

“Here is your new home,” the angel announced.

“Is this all? I was of a very wealthy family on earth,” she said.

“Well,” the angel explained, “this is all you sent up.”

Jesus Himself said, “ ‘But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal’ ” (Matthew 6:20, NKJV).

As we plan our weekly giving, let's be sure that we give due consideration to eternal values, as well as present needs and desires.





June 14, 2014

Offering: World Budget

Emphasis: Multilingual Ministries and Chaplain Ministries

Psalms 19:1–3 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; / And the firmament shows his handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, / And night unto night reveals knowledge. There is no speech nor language / Where their voice is not heard” (NKJV).

God’s glory is revealed to us every day; His creative acts are seen all around us. Who can deny that there is a God? But many are denied the privilege of knowing the God of which nature speaks because the gospel has not reached them. George Washington Carver said, “I love to think of nature as an unlimited broadcasting station, through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune in.”

It is our responsibility through our giving to ensure that while nature speaks of God, we act on God’s behalf to reach lost souls for Christ!

Appeal: Military and hospital chaplains have a ministry to hurting and dying people. More than ever before, we have multiple language groups in the North American Division. These are two unique ministries that the world budget supports. As nature speaks of the glory of God, our offering will speak through these ministries of the love of Jesus.





June 21, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

Did you know that most church members expect others to carry the financial load of the church? An interesting study was conducted some time ago which revealed that about 30 percent of church members carry 80 percent of the financial load. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every member would generously and faithfully support their own local church? Are you a "giver" in your church, or do you expect someone else to "carry" your share of the load?

Paul tells us that, "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." Then Paul goes on to say that, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:6, 7, NKJV). God desires to bless us when we take Him at His word and support the work of His church.





June 28, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Conference

Two little Chinese boys stood outside of their Sabbath School class waiting to go in. One boy asked the other, “Why don’t you go in?”

“My stomach hurts,” replied the other boy.

“What’s the matter? Didn’t you have breakfast?”

“Well I was given a mo mo (biscuit).” He took the biscuit out of his pocket. He continued, “But I didn’t eat it because I didn’t have anything to give for my Sabbath School offering. So I decided to offer my food, but my tummy hurts so much!”

The other boy said, “I didn’t have any breakfast this morning either. I also brought a mo mo.”

The first boy excitedly said, “I’ve got an idea! We could both eat a half of one mo mo, and then we’d have one whole mo mo to give to Jesus.”

“That’s a good idea,” said the other. So they did so, eating it very slowly. And when their tummies were satisfied, they went proudly into Sabbath School.

When the offering plate was passed around, both boys put their hands on the mo mo, dropping it in. Although their offering wasn’t monetary, it was the largest offering given that day.





Offertory Readings 2014 JULY

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

Stewardship is primarily a spiritual issue. Our appeal to our church to give is sometimes skewed. It is true that the need for funds in the church is urgent, but the most important reason for generous giving is how it changes us spiritually.

Ellen G. White spells out why we need to encourage people to be generous in their financial support of the church:

“The cross of Christ appeals to the benevolence of every follower of the blessed Saviour. The principle there illustrated is to give, give. This, carried out in actual benevolence and good works, is the true fruit of the Christian life. The principle of worldlings is to get, get, and thus they expect to secure happiness; but carried out in all its bearings, the fruit is misery and death” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 254).

Jesus says, “ ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’ ” (Acts 20:35, NKJV). It is easy to forget the primary purpose of encouraging generosity, which is to help our church grow spiritually.





July 5, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Local Church Budget

A hiker was thirsty, but could not find water until he came up to an abandoned house. There he found a water pump and proceeded to pump with all the strength he had remaining. Yet no water came out. He saw a small jug with a cork at the top and a penciled note directing that the water in the jug be poured into the pump to prime it.

The man was so thirsty that he was tempted to drink the water that was in the jug, but decided to follow the directions in spite of his thirst. When he primed the pump, he was blessed with all the water he needed. Before going on his way, he filled the jug with water so the next thirsty person could secure water. He added to the note, "Believe me, it really works. You have to give it all away before you get anything back."

Solomon said, "There is one who scatters, yet increases more; / And there is one who withholds more than is right, / But it leads to poverty. The generous soul will be made rich, / And he who waters will also be watered himself" (Proverbs 11:24, 25, NKJV).





July 12, 2014

Offering: North American Division

Emphasis: Women's Ministries

The Vision

The vision for Women's Ministries in the North American Division is "to encourage, equip, promote, and challenge Adventist women in their journey as disciples of Jesus Christ and members of His Church and to bring women's unique perspectives to the issues facing the Church."

The Mission

"Provide opportunities for women to deepen their faith and experience spiritual growth and renewal. Elevate women as persons of worth. Address the concerns of women. Build networks among women. Mentor young women, teens, and girls. Promote opportunities for wider service for women. Challenge Adventist women to use their talents and spiritual gifts for the glory of God in the home, church, and community."

Appeal: Today, women make up the majority of church membership. They are involved in leadership, finances, Bible studies, and caring for children, to mention a few areas. The offering today supports Women's Ministries at the conference, union, and division levels of the church. Our church cannot exist without their love, commitment, and dedicated effort to make church life a better and happier place. Thank you for your gift and generosity.





July 19, 2014

Today's Offering—Our Local Church Budget

A drought had ravaged the land. Streams and rivers were dried up. The green vegetation withered in the hot sun. Food supplies were fast running out. Starvation would soon be the lot for the widow of Zarephath and her son.

While facing this tremendous trial, she was approached by the prophet Elijah who asked her for food and water. Elijah said, “ ‘but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son’ ” (1 Kings 17:13, NKJV). God was testing her. She and her little boy faced starvation, yet a promise was given to her if she would obey the voice of Elijah. “ ‘For thus says the Lord God of Israel: “The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth” ’ ” (verse 14). The widow obeyed God’s voice, and consequently, she and her son were cared for during the entire drought.

Dear Christian friends, this promise is just as good today as it was then. If we remember God and give to Him first, He has promised to take care of us no matter how severe our trials may be. We need to put God first as we give to His cause every week.





July 26, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Conference

August H. Francke, the well-known German preacher of the 17th century, founded an orphanage to take care of homeless children who roamed the streets of Halle. One day when he desperately needed funds to carry on his work, a destitute Christian widow came to his door begging for one gold ducat. Because of his financial situation, he politely but regretfully refused.

Disheartened, the woman sat down and began to weep. Moved by her tears, Francke asked her to wait while he went to his room to pray about the matter. Seeking God's guidance, he felt the Holy Spirit's call to give. Trusting the Lord to meet his own pressing needs, he gave her the money.

On the same day, he received 12 gold ducats from a rich friend. And shortly afterwards, he was informed that the prince had died, and in his will had directed that 500 gold pieces be given to the orphanage. Francke wept in gratitude.

We should always give with pure motives, “hoping for nothing in return” (Luke 6:35, NKJV), and God promises that he who gives to the poor will lack nothing.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 AUGUST

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

From time to time various churches report that their local financial picture is quite bleak. It is not unusual for these churches to also find it difficult to give strong support to their conference as well as the worldwide work of the church. There is no doubt that the Lord is interested in the welfare of every Adventist church and wants to see it succeed and prosper. Following are some suggestions that may prove helpful.

1. Encourage your church members to pray for an increase of faithfulness in tithing and generosity in offerings. Also, have the church body pray for financial blessings on members whom are struggling.
2. Make sure that interesting and well-thought-out offering appeals are presented each week.
3. Encourage members who have been blessed recently as a result of their faithfulness to share their experiences with the church.
4. Share interesting stories that illustrate the benefits and blessings that come from God when His children give back to God.





August 2, 2014

Today's Offering – Our Local Church Budget

A successful business man was once asked the secret of his success. His reply summed up success in these three words: and then some. He learned early in life that the difference between average people and successful people could be summed up by doing what was expected of them, “and then some”!

Unfortunately, many have accepted the idea of just getting by. The student who is satisfied with a “C” grade could be making an “A.” Or the employee who is only concerned about receiving a paycheck could be working toward a promotion. This is what Jay Lockhart calls, “the malady of the minimum!”

To be average is to be just as near the bottom as the top. It is the best of the worst and worst of the best. Why seek to be average in anything? Seek to excel! Go higher! Grow! Why be an average Christian? Why be an average church?

Let these words “and then some” serve as medicine for your spirit! Attend services faithfully—and then some. Greet those near you—and then some. Meet your obligations—and then some. Be dependable—and then some. Be a good friend—and then some. Today, as the offering plate comes down your aisle, give generously—“and then some!” Remember Who has done that for you already.





August 9, 2014

Offering: World Budget

Emphasis: Oakwood University/Andrews University/Loma Linda University

God gives the best gifts! Matthew 25:14, 15 says, “ ‘For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey’ ” (NKJV).

What are you doing with the gifts God has gifted you with?

Ellen G. White declares, “God has committed to each of us sacred trusts, for which He holds us accountable. It is His purpose that we so educate the mind as to be able to exercise the talents He has given us in such a manner as to accomplish the greatest good and reflect the glory to the Giver” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 3, p. 32).

The Master is about to return to check on His investments. Will He celebrate with us on a handsome return, or will we find ourselves outside of the kingdom giftless and lost?

Appeal: A portion of the World Budget supports Oakwood University, Andrews University, and Loma Linda University. As we give today, let us remember to use our gifts for His glory, so that the lives of young, university students are impacted for eternal life.





August 16, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

Does God need our money? The most obvious answer to that question is “no.” God does not need our money. He is the Creator of the universe. Giving is for our own good. It helps us learn to be unselfish. It reminds us to keep our priorities straight. It enables us to respond in a positive way to His blessings. It teaches us to trust Him more.

Does God need our money? Some may reply “yes.” God does need our money because of the way He has chosen to operate. God could use the angels to preach the gospel, but He has chosen to work through people to reach people. Therefore, He needs us! God could send a check written from the Bank of the Universe to pay our utilities bill, but He hasn't chosen to work in that manner.

Ultimately, God just needs for us to turn loose of some of His money. Then we can learn the lessons He wants to teach us, and there will be plenty of money in the storehouse to do His work.

As you give back today, contemplate the blessings that are poured out in so many ways when you choose to trust your Heavenly Father.





August 23, 2014

Today's offering – Our Conference

The church was bowed in grief this week to learn that one of our most valuable members, Someone Else, passed away. This death creates a vacancy that will be difficult to fill. Someone Else has been with us for many years doing far more than a normal person's share of the work. Whenever leadership was mentioned, this wonderful person was looked to for inspiration.

Whenever there was a job to do, a class to teach, or a meeting to attend, one name was on everyone's list: Let Someone Else do it. Someone Else was also among the largest givers of the church. When there was a financial need, all assumed that Someone Else would make up the difference.

This beloved church member sometimes appeared superhuman. But a person can only do so much; everybody expected too much of Someone Else.

Now Someone Else is gone. Who will pitch in to do the things that Someone Else had done? If you are asked to volunteer in church, you will no longer be able to reply, "Let Someone Else do it." Now you need to pick up where Someone Else left off.

As we give to support God's work here and abroad, let's remember that every member's help is needed.





August 30, 2014

Today's offering – Union Designated

A young girl looked online for a bicycle. Coming across a video clip, her search suddenly took a different direction. The clip was on a local bike store owner who had created an organization to make special bikes for people with disabilities. She wanted to buy one of the bikes, but it was too expensive. Determined, she wrote a letter to her family and friends, and the idea spread. When her campaign ended, donations totaled \$12,000 and she was able to buy seven bicycles to help in this cause.

“Good deeds are twice a blessing, benefiting both the giver and the receiver of the kindness. The consciousness of right doing is one of the best medicines for diseased bodies and minds. When the mind is free and happy from a sense of duty well done and the satisfaction of giving happiness to others, the cheering, uplifting influence brings new life to the whole being” (Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing*, p. 257).

Your offering today is not just transferring money from your hand to the church; it is a gift that will generate happiness in the life of someone. Giving money as an offering to be used to help others is like giving happiness. Thank you for giving happiness.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 SEPTEMBER

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

As church leaders, it is important for us to set a Christian example in every aspect of our lives. Hebrews 10:24, 25 says, “Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (NKJV).

Not only should we show love to our church family, but we need to remember that our Lord supplied the greatest example of love and good works. It will always be by His power that we are able to do the same. His “gift” should awaken in us a pure response to His love, that of gratitude, teaching us the works which we are to do and how we are to encourage one another.

On a practical note—as the offering is taken each Sabbath and the plate is passed to those on the platform, try to be an example to the adults and children by always putting something in the plate.





September 6, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

It's better to give to Christ than wish you had! The fact is we're not really "giving" our tithes and offerings; we're just taking our hands off of what is already His.

A certified public accountant decided to open a journal with God. He wanted to write everything God gave to him and everything that he gave to God. He started keeping a debit and credit book with God. If someone did him a favor, he put it down as God's gift to him. He credited God with the sun, his food, his health, his family and friends, the fresh air and flowers, and a thousand other benefits he received.

On the other hand, he put down what he did for God. Finally he gave up saying, "It is impossible for me to balance the books. I find that God is indeed my creditor and what I have done for Him is next to nothing."

Although it may seem next to nothing, God truly appreciates what we do week after week by returning our tithes to Him, as well as giving our generous offerings. The truth is that we can never out give God.





September 13, 2014

Offering: World Budget

Emphasis: Fall Mission Appeal – “Unusual Opportunities”

Submitted by GC Treasury – Verland Erntson

Funding the mission of the church is complex and can be full of surprises. Opportunities to spread the gospel can quickly come and go. From time to time, situations develop which create mission opportunities to which we could respond quickly if funds were available. In these cases, if we had to wait for months or years to raise funds, these opportunities might disappear. The “Unusual Opportunities” offering which we are receiving today will be used for these kinds of situations.

For the past several years, this offering has averaged over U.S. \$600,000, and has been used in places like Syria, Zanzibar, and Yemen.

Appeal: As the controller of the General Conference and a local church treasurer, I understand the needs of the local church and the world church. Join with me in participating in today’s offering with a special gift to the Fall Mission Appeal and support these urgent opportunities by giving through the World Budget offering.





September 20, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

Ellen G. White once spoke to a church about the importance of paying tithe. “As the sin of robbing God was presented, the people received clearer views of their duty and privilege in this matter. One brother said that for two years he had not paid his tithes, and he was in despair; but as he confessed his sin, he began to gather hope. ‘What shall I do?’ he asked. I said, ‘Give your note to the treasurer of the church; that will be businesslike.’ He thought that was a rather strange request; but he sat down, and began to write, ‘For value received, I promise to pay—’ He looked up, as if to say, Is that the proper form in which to write out a note to the Lord?

‘Yes,’ he continued, ‘for value received. Have I not been receiving the blessings of God day after day? Have not the angels guarded me? Has not the Lord blessed me with all spiritual and temporal blessings? For value received, I promise to pay the sum of \$571.50 to the church treasurer.’ After doing all he could to do his part, he was a happy man. In a few days he took up his note, and paid his tithe into the treasury” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, pp. 95, 96).

God blesses those who are faithful in returning their tithe to His church. Let us determine to be faithful stewards by giving back to His storehouse.





September 27, 2014

Offering: Our Local Conference Advance

“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7, NKJV).

“[God] will accept not only the gift, but the giver. And though it may have cost self-denial and sacrifice on our part, the approval of conscience and the blessing of Heaven will make this holiday season one of the happiest we have ever experienced. We may have such a spirit of love and joy in our hearts and homes as will make angels glad” (Ellen G. White, *The Review and Herald*, December 15, 1885).

Appeal: Your local conference is composed of congregations that have joined together to advance Adventist mission within their conference, territory, and beyond. The responsibilities and needs are great and include coordinating evangelism, education, technology, involving the youth, training local leaders for effective ministry, and supporting the pastors. A church and conference that is on the cutting edge of ministry and accomplishing Adventist mission will always be in need of funds to support and expand the work. Thank you for your cheerful gifts.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 OCTOBER

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

There are two conflicting principles of motivation in a person's life. Notice how Ellen G. White outlines the struggle God's people often face:

"Selfishness is the strongest and most general of human impulses, the struggle of the soul between sympathy and covetousness is an unequal contest; for while selfishness is the strongest passion, love and benevolence are too often the weakest, and as a rule the evil gains the victory. Therefore in our labors and gifts for God's cause, it is unsafe to be controlled by feeling or impulse. . . . Christians should act from fixed principle, following the Saviour's example of self-denial and self-sacrifice" (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 25).

This quote helps us understand why it is so important to encourage God's people to be generous in their giving. Church leaders need to understand how Satan tries to motivate us selfishly, while God continually seeks to develop love and generosity as a very real part of our nature.

Systematic giving is a good plan to follow because it helps the giver support God's work regularly.





October 4, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

Louis XI of France once made out a deed in which he gave the province of Buologne to the Virgin Mary. He expressly stated that all the income and revenues should forever be paid to himself and his heirs. Thus he gave without suffering personal sacrifice.

If I give to God only after I have met all of my own needs and desires, am I really sacrificing for Him? Or am I like those who dropped their gold loudly into the temple treasury in order to be seen and praised by others? The poor widow, on the other hand, gave to God instead of satisfying her own wants or even her own necessities (Mark 12:41–44).

This spirit of sacrifice is most pleasing to Jesus. It expresses to Him our love and trust in Him. Shall we, like the widow, place our needs, our comfort, and our securities into His scarred hands and trust Him to supply our lack?

Let's remember to support our local church as we give to the Lord each week. After your tithes, perhaps the most important offering is the local church budget.





October 11, 2014

Offering: World Budget
Emphasis: Voice of Prophecy

The church of the first century was an exciting church to be involved in. It was a church of action, activity, and productivity. It was founded by God, functioned by the Holy Spirit, and focused on Christ and His return. Acts 2:46, 47 records, “Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (NKJV).

Ellen G. White says, “The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God’s plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church . . . are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to ‘the principalities and powers in heavenly places,’ the final and full display of the love of God” (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 9).

Appeal: Are you excited to be a part of God’s last day church? Communication is a necessity in making the good news available to every person. Radio is an effective way to preach the message. Let us give to the Voice of Prophecy Radio program and watch God add to the church daily.





October 18, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

The Egyptian Pharaoh Cheops devoted his entire reign and mobilized his nation to build the Great Pyramids. Why?

Michelangelo started painting the Sistine Chapel in 1508. For four years, hardly eating or sleeping, he dedicated his energies to completing this project. Why?

Andrew Carnegie came to America at the age of 13. For his first job, he worked two hours a day for \$1.20 a week. During his lifetime he developed U.S. steel and became one of the richest men in the world. Carnegie dedicated the later years of his life building over 3,000 libraries in cities all over the world. Why?

In the time of Moses, Jews were asked to give 25 percent of their income to the temple, and the most devout gave 30 and 35 percent. Why?

Certainly the eternal rewards of investing in God's work outweigh any temporal advantages this world has to offer us. God's promise to meet our needs here and now are also of great value. But what can compare to the motive of love. Love will cause people to gladly do things that are amazing and beyond belief.

As we give to support our local church budget, let's demonstrate our love for God and our desire to see His church successful and effective.





October 25, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Conference

Money ranks pretty high on human priorities—we tend to be stingy. When sin entered the world, selfishness took the place of love. Generosity does not come naturally or easily.

Tithing is one of heaven's prescriptions for our spiritual health. Jesus' life was characterized by giving. Giving is the lifestyle that will prepare us for heaven.

“Give and it will be given to you” (Luke 6:38, NKJV). Such is God's cycle of blessing, and God will keep His half and honor His promise. Giving reciprocates blessings. At a baptism, we see church money at work. Giving pays for electricity to have a baptistery full of warm water. This is just one of many examples.

We will be the blessed ones when we are faithful to return our tithes and offerings every week. God will be pleased, His work will prosper, and we will have joy knowing that we have had a part in winning souls for God's kingdom.





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 NOVEMBER

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

As church leaders, the congregation looks to us for guidance in spiritual matters. As we prayerfully contemplate what we can do to help finish God's work, our hearts should be touched by what He has given to make that possible. He has blessed us in so many ways and gives us the opportunity to give of our means to help others learn of what Jesus has done for us.

In *Quiet Talks on Service*, S. D. Gordon tells the following beautiful story. The imaginative scene is the return of the Son of God to glory after having died for the sins of the world and His meeting with His Heavenly Father. Attention is called to the scar marks of Calvary that our Savior bore on His face and form.

“Gabriel is saying: ‘Master, you died for the whole world down there, did you not?’

‘Yes.’

‘You must have suffered much,’ with an earnest look into that great face with its unremovable marks.

‘Yes,’ again comes the answer in a wondrous voice, very quiet, but strangely full of deepest feeling.





‘And do they all know about it?’

‘Oh no! Only a few in Palestine know about it so far.’ ‘Well, Master, what’s your plan? What have you done about telling the world that you died for, that you have died for them? What’s your plan?’

‘Well,’ the Master is supposed to answer, ‘I asked Peter, and James and John . . . and some more of them down there just to make it the business of their lives to tell others, and the others are to tell others, and the others others, and yet others, and still others, until the last man in the farthest circle has heard the story and has felt the thrilling and thralling power of it.’

And Gabriel knows us folk down here pretty well. He has had more than one contact with the earth. He knows the kind of stuff in us. And he is supposed to answer, with a sort of hesitating reluctance, as though he could see difficulties in the working of the plan, ‘Yes—but—suppose Peter fails. Suppose, after a while, John simply does not tell others. Suppose their descendants, their successors away off in the first edge of the twentieth century, get so busy about things—some of them proper enough, some maybe not quite so proper—that they do not tell others—what then?’

And his eyes are big with the intenseness of his thought, for he is thinking of—the suffering, and he is thinking too of the difference to the man who hasn’t been told—‘what then?’

And back comes the quiet wondrous voice of Jesus, ‘Gabriel, I haven’t made any other plans—I’m counting on them.’ ”





November 1, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

Perhaps you have had an experience that illustrates this Biblical principle: “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Galatians 6:7, NKJV). The following story illustrates this truth.

A group of coolies (Asian slaves) had been hired by an Asian farmer to bring in his grain harvest. All through the day the men carried basketfuls of grain.

As the sun was setting, the coolies made their way in with the baskets of grain. Each one was met at the door by the farmer. He said, “Don’t empty the basket. It is your pay for the day.”

Those who had chosen the larger baskets were joyful. Those who chose to do minimal work by selecting the smaller baskets turned away sorrowful.

People who develop an unselfish, generous attitude will certainly experience a happier, richer life than those who are stingy and selfish. Thank you for supporting our local church budget today.





November 8, 2014

Offering: General Conference Session Offering

Emphasis: For World Mission

Submitted by Adventist Mission – Nancy Kyte

Since 1990, the Annual Sacrifice Offering has made it possible for Global Mission pioneers to establish more than 13,000 new congregations in previously unreached areas of the world.

With a presence in nearly 200 countries, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is one of the fastest growing denominations in the world. But there is still much work to be done.

Global Mission, the frontline mission arm of the church, uses a holistic approach to reaching people. The pioneers work within their own culture where they understand the community and speak the local language. They often help with people's basic needs like food, water, shelter, health care, education, and Bibles.

Your financial support makes it possible for frontline workers to offer hope and assurance to those who live in fear and despair. Every dollar makes a big difference to a man, woman, or child somewhere—to someone who is still waiting to hear about Jesus.





November 15, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

The God of heaven had just granted Israel a great victory over the largest city of Jericho. The small city of Ai came next. Since Ai was a small village, they thought it would be an easy victory. In fact, Israel sent only a small force to do battle. However, Israel suffered defeat.

When they returned with the sad news, Israel could not understand why they were defeated. Later, God told Joshua the problem. There was an “accursed” thing in the camp; consequently, God could not bless their efforts. The gold and silver that Achan had coveted belonged to God. Sometimes “accursed” things infiltrate our hearts. Sometimes God’s people keep for themselves what belongs to God. As a result, He cannot bless their efforts.

A man once said, “I cannot afford to pay an honest tithe.” The truth of the matter is Christian people cannot afford to covet what belongs to God.

As we give today, let’s remember to be faithful to the Lord in returning His tithe, and also be generous in supporting our own church budget.





November 22, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Conference

“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” (Matthew 16:26, NKJV).

There is a danger of putting financial success before seeking God.

Several years ago, a farmer increased his farm holdings from 300 acres to 9,000 acres. Everyone was happy for him and was glad to see him prosper. He had a lovely family—two boys and a girl, and one of the sweetest wives in the world. He was a leader in the church, and the family was very faithful to God. Needless to say, he became very wealthy, and life was good.

As the responsibilities of the farm increased, the involvement with church decreased. Over time the entire family became so involved with the farm and the wealth that came with it, they became unfaithful and the church became a low priority. The father died and the children fought over the land, lost it, and spent all of their inheritance. As years passed, they lost touch with one another and went through many difficulties and personal problems alone. Their mother died in poverty and loneliness.

Really, what good does it do to gain the whole world and yet lose your soul and those of your loved ones?

May you be blessed as you help support our local conference today.





November 29, 2014

Offering: North American Division Evangelism

“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Revelation 14:6, NKJV).

Evangelism is exciting and has been considered by some as “the life blood of the church.” If a church is not growing, there is no advancement. On the other hand, if a church is active, there is excitement and expansion. I can hear the singing in the New York subway station.

“As the steel wheels of the New York subway train screeched to a grinding halt at Manhattan’s Hunter College station a strange refrain filled the air. A group of Adventists waiting on the platform began to sing, ‘Lift up the Trumpet and Loud let it ring, Jesus is coming again.’ The echoes of the familiar hymn were picked up by another group of Adventists waiting for a different train on the opposite side of the track. Up and down the line, more voices joined the chorus. Soon the subway station was filled with the glorious, hopeful refrains of ‘Lift up the trumpet. . . . Jesus is coming again’ ” (Mark Finley).

Appeal: The offering today will support the ever-expanding need of evangelism in the North American Division. Your gift will be like singing in the New York subway: “Jesus is coming again”!





North American Division Offertory Readings 2014 DECEMBER

Dear Pastors and Church Leaders:

Sincerely praying for God's blessings can help build up His work financially. Notice what Ellen G. White says in this regard:

“From every church, prayers should ascend to God for an increase of devotion and liberality. My brethren and sisters do not plead for retrenchment in evangelical work” (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9, p. 55).

Let's encourage our church members to pray earnestly about the financial needs facing our church and denomination. If we humbly bow before God, He will grant us with greater success in the future.





December 6, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

Most of us think we could be happier if we had more money. Even those who are well off wish they had more. What would it take for us to be totally satisfied?

Here is a quiz from the Book of Proverbs. The question is one of priorities. Which is better?

1. A little with the fear of the Lord, or great treasure with trouble? (15:16)
2. A dinner of herbs where love is, or a fattened calf with hatred? (15:17)
3. A little with righteousness, or vast revenues without justice? (16:8)
4. Wisdom or gold? (16:16)
5. Understanding or silver? (16:16)
6. A dry morsel with quietness, or a house full of feasting with strife? (17:1)
7. A poor man with integrity or a fool? (19:1)
8. A good name or great riches? (22:1)
9. Let us remember our priorities as we give to help our local church budget at this time.





December 13, 2014

Offering: World Budget

Emphasis: Adventist Community Services

“Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4, NKJV).

“But Paul did not regard as lost the time thus spent. As he worked with Aquila he kept in touch with the Great Teacher, losing no opportunity of witnessing for the Saviour, and of helping those who needed help. His mind was ever reaching out for spiritual knowledge. He gave his fellow workers instruction in spiritual things, and he also set an example of industry and thoroughness. He was a quick, skillful worker, diligent in business, ‘fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.’ Romans 12:11. As he worked at his trade, the apostle had access to a class of people that he could not otherwise have reached. He showed his associates that skill in the common arts is a gift from God, who provides both the gift and the wisdom to use it aright. He taught that even in everyday toil God is to be honored. His toil-hardened hands detracted nothing from the force of his pathetic appeals as a Christian minister” (Ellen G. White, *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 351, 352).

Appeal: The World Budget today supports Adventist Community Services (ACS) in the North American Division. Simply put, ACS helps people. The offering today will help people in need on a national level, especially when there are needs due to natural disasters.





December 20, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Church Budget

In a story entitled, “A Modern Miracle,” Revel Papaioannou wrote in the 1999 women’s devotional about four families that comprised the small Adventist church in Berea, Greece. They offered potluck to 150 Adventist youth that were touring their country.

“A phone call informed us that the group would not be arriving before 3:00 p.m., so after church, all gathered in our home to await our guests. They arrived, ‘all 150 of them.’ “Lord,” I cried, “We’re really going to need a miracle if all these people are to be fed.”

After the blessing, the group leader requested that the 50 who hadn’t eaten anything for a day to go first. The remaining 100 could eat if there were any leftovers. “One hour later they had all had enough, and there was still food for at least twenty more people.”

We had the privilege of witnessing a twentieth-century version of one of Christ’s miracles on a hillside in Galilee. Christ fed a group of 5,000 men, plus women and children. He used a small boy’s lunch, freely given, and Jesus’ blessing multiplied until all were filled. How do you suppose God will multiply the gifts that you give to His cause today?





December 27, 2014

Today's offering – Our Local Conference

Two sisters were at church one Sabbath. It was evident that the older sister had physical difficulties and the younger sister was her nurse and attendant. After the offering appeal, the two sisters were ready to give their offerings. As the plate came down their aisle, the helper sister put her hand over the hand of her invalid sister and together the two lifted their hands and dropped their gift into the plate. Both wore huge smiles as the task was completed, and from the looks on their faces, the joy of giving was evident.

Do we feel that same joy as we drop our gift into the offering plate each week? Or is it just a formality that is part of the worship service? Do we really think about what may be accomplished with our gift, the money that we drop into the plate? Have we asked God to multiply what we are able to give and that it do a mighty work for Him? Have we prayed that our giving bring souls into His kingdom, helping hasten His soon return? Let's not only learn this valuable lesson for ourselves, but also teach it to our children. As the offering plate comes by you, may your gift be given joyfully.





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