

offertory readings

2015



iGiveSDA.org
NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION STEWARDSHIP



North American Division **Offertory Readings 2015**

Our mission as a church is “to reach the North American Division territory, with the distinctive, Christ-centered Seventh-day Adventist message of Hope and Wholeness.” Stewardship Ministries is dedicated to helping members catch the vision of “funding the mission to finish His work.” These funds make an impact on preaching the gospel to save the lost.

Systematic giving is part of being a faithful steward. When we tithe, we are recognizing that God owns everything. Offerings express our gratitude for what Christ has done for us. He loves a cheerful giver and has chosen this method to support those who preach the gospel as they reach the world with His message.

The 2015 English offertory readings were written by Dr. Nikolaus Satelmajer. He is an author and has worked as pastor, conference treasurer, and *Ministry* magazine editor, and he is now retired in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Again, this year we are videotaping these offertory readings in short clips that can be played in your church. You will find them at www.iGiveSDA.org. You can also find these offertory readings at the iPhone and Android app stores. Download the free *igivesda* app, which includes the readings and video clips.

Revival and reformation will drive your actions. Wherever revival and reformation is present, tithe appears. These three: revival, reformation, and tithing, will deepen your spirituality.

John Mathews
NAD Stewardship Ministries Director

Dear Presenter,

Thank you for your willingness to share the following appeals with your local congregation. It is a wonderful and gratifying responsibility. How you present these readings could determine how effective they are. Here are some suggestions you may want to consider before you share:

1. **PRAY:** Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit. Pray that God will use your words to speak to the hearts of the congregation.
2. **PRACTICE:** Read over the appeal at least three times to familiarize yourself with it. Find key words (underline or highlight them) to emphasize throughout the reading. Strive to share these readings with excellence.
3. **PREPARATION:** There may be times when other materials are sent to your local church to distribute or present along with the appeal. Please use them accordingly, and determine how they can be used most effectively.
4. **PRESENT WITH PASSION:** Read slowly and clearly. It is an amazing responsibility to lead out the worship in giving. Fill your heart with the thoughts presented, and God will do the rest.
5. **PRAY:** Each appeal has a prayer that has been prepared as a guide to go along with the thought of the day. Present to God what is on your heart as it relates to the appeal. Please keep the prayer concise and to the point.

May God richly bless you and speak through you as we take this journey together in 2015.



Local Church Budget

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a worldwide movement, but the local church is the center of church ministry. Sabbath School, divine worship, Pathfinder programs, Community Services, evangelism, and many other programs and activities take place in thousands of Seventh-day Adventist churches around the world. These activities take place because church members generously give of their time, talents, and means.

Today is the first Sabbath of the New Year. I thank you for supporting the programs of this congregation. As we look forward to this year, may each of us commit to supporting our congregation so that the Lord will be glorified in our communities.

Today's offering is for the ministries and operations of our church. Let us be faithful stewards by returning the tithe and giving an offering according to the means that God has entrusted us.

In Proverbs 11:25 (NIV), we are told that "a generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." At the start of this year, let us thank God for the blessings we receive when we are faithful with our tithe and generous with our offerings. God is generous with us; let us also be generous.

Thank you.

January

10

Local Conference Advance

Our conference is a sisterhood of various congregations. Some congregations are small, while others are larger, but we all belong to the same conference. The conference is a coordinating organization for all of the congregations in its territory. Evangelism, youth programs, and Christian education are just some areas the conference coordinates and supports with the offerings we give. Today, the offering is for the conference advance, an offering that will be used throughout our territory. Some of it may be used to plant new churches, operate youth camps, and provide Christian education and other youth programs.

Thank you for supporting the conference advance offering. And, thank you for returning a faithful tithe. At the beginning of the year, we need to remind ourselves of the blessings we receive because of being faithful stewards.

Local Church Budget

Jesus tells us, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21, NIV).

We have heard that verse many times, but Adelina Alexe, a Seventh-day Adventist Seminary student at Andrews University, helps us understand the meaning of this passage. She writes, “Ellen White fills in the contours of what ‘heavenly treasure’ means: ‘Every opportunity to help a brother in need, or to aid the cause of God in the spread of the truth, is a pearl that you can send beforehand, and deposit in the bank of heaven for safe keeping.’ ” She also writes, “What shall we do with our time, our understanding, our possessions, which are not ours, but are entrusted to us to test our honesty? Let us bring them to Jesus. Let us use our treasures for the advancement of His cause. Thus we shall obey the injunction, ‘Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven’ ” (*Beyond Blessings*, page 23).

We are part of God’s heavenly kingdom. Let us return our tithe and offerings as joyful members of God’s kingdom.

The offering today is for the ministries and needs of our local church.

January

24

Religious Liberty* NAD

Seventh-day Adventists have always been strong advocates of religious liberty—for themselves and for others. One of the ways we have proclaimed this message is through *Liberty* magazine. While anyone may subscribe to the journal, it is sent to many government officials, judges, attorneys, and other leaders. Today, we have the opportunity of giving an offering so that *Liberty* magazine will continue to be sent to influence leaders in our community and throughout the country.



Courtesy of Liberty Magazine

If you wish to add names to the list of those getting the magazine or get the magazine for yourself, please see our church religious liberty leader.

I invite you to return the tithe to the Lord and give an offering for *Liberty*. God will bless our faithfulness, and liberty will continue to be proclaimed throughout the land.

Thank you.

January

31

Union Designated

Early on, our denomination adopted a tithe and offering system that has made Seventh-day Adventists a worldwide movement.

The church recognized that the Bible treats tithe as what belongs to God. Ellen White writes, “The tithe is sacred, reserved by God for Himself” (*Stewardship*, page 93). The tithe is sent to the local conference and, while it shares some of it with the union conference and the world-church, most of it is retained for ministry workers such as pastors, conference personnel, and church school teachers.

The tithe shared by the local congregation makes it possible for our church to proclaim the gospel worldwide. This system has been a great blessing to our denomination, as it has made it possible to reach all parts of the world.

Today we thank the Lord for His blessing and express our gratitude by returning our tithe. The offering today is designated for projects within our union conference. Thank you for your faithfulness and for giving an offering according to your ability.

February

7

Local Church Budget

A local church functions because the members follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and exhibit an attitude of respect and love for others. Often, individuals who were once strangers become part of a church family that worships and works together. Such a group becomes a strong spiritual body and is able to meet all challenges. That is why the Apostle Paul writes, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31, NIV). These wonderful promises keep us spiritually strong.

Our attitude about offerings is also an indicator of our spiritual strength. The Bible makes it clear that the spirit with which we give is more important than how much we give.

Today the offering is for our church—for the programs, ministries, and needs of the congregation. Let us rejoice that we are a part of this congregation and that we have the opportunity to help support it with our financial gifts.

February

14

Adventist Television Ministries* NAD/WB

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has been a pioneer in broadcasting the gospel over television. Individuals such as William Fagal, George Vandeman, and C. D. Brooks had the vision to use television as an evangelistic tool. Even today, many individuals get their first introduction to the Adventist message by watching one of our television programs. Many of these individuals are not necessarily looking for a spiritual broadcast, but when they come across it, often their minds are open to the message.

Today, an offering is being taken throughout North America for the support of the various Adventist television ministries. You and I have the opportunity to support these ministries with our prayers and offerings. Also, watch some of the television ministries programs—you will receive a blessing.

Ask the Lord to guide you in returning a faithful tithe and giving an offering for Adventist television ministries.

February

21

Local Church Budget

What are the needs in our congregation? Whatever the needs are, God is willing to fulfill them. We join the Apostle Paul in proclaiming, “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19, NIV). Do we believe that? Do we truly trust that God will meet our needs—both our individual needs and those of the congregation? God is a God who fulfills His promises and surely He will fulfill this promise.

What are the needs of our congregation and who will fulfill them? Today's offering is for the local church, and yes, it is up to us to fill those needs. But the good news is that we do not fulfill them on our own. We ask God to bless, and through us, God will fulfill these needs.

As we give today's offering for our local church, let us give it with an attitude of gratefulness to our God because He has blessed us.

Let us return a faithful tithe and give an offering for our local church according to the blessings we have received from God.

Local Conference Advance

Singing, praying, reading of Scripture, and preaching are all part of Sabbath worship. Leroy E. Froom, a Seventh-day Adventist minister and writer, reminds us that something else is also part of worship. He writes, "Rightly understood and practiced, tithing is an act of worship as essential as prayer and praise. Worship is the giving of self to God" (*Ministry*, June 1960). Froom's emphasis on giving of self may surprise those who think that stewardship is just returning money to God. Stewardship, indeed, is giving of yourself in worship to God.

Today, when you and I return the tithe, let us remember that we are giving ourselves to God. After all, Jesus Christ gave Himself for us, so we are faithfully following His example.

The offering today is for conference advance. The conference advance supports local conference-wide programs that benefit all churches, including ours.

Thank you.



Local Church Budget

The family was made up of a father, mother, and five children. The oldest child was about twelve years old. The children were busy putting their coins into the tithe and offering envelopes. Some of the older children were helping the younger ones. When the deacon came to their pew, the children were still writing and sealing their envelopes. The deacon stopped by the pew and patiently waited until the last child had sealed the envelope, and then, with a joyful expression on his face, received the envelopes. All together those envelopes contained very little money, but it was given joyfully and received graciously.

Today, our offering is for our church. It's for the programs and activities of our congregation. How much you give is between you and the Lord. Whatever we give, let us give joyfully. No one should force us to give, for we give out of gratitude to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Thank you for the tithe you return and the offering you give.

Adventist World Radio* WB

As Gustavo works alone on his farm in the green hills of the Dominican Republic, his radio is his constant companion. All day long, he toils among his fruit trees and vegetable plants to the Adventist World Radio affiliate station.

Around the world, people are tuning in to AWR through a wide variety of ways. From Middle Eastern students in Internet cafes to villagers with small shortwave radios in Cambodia, people are hearing the voice of hope in their own languages.

Their lives are transformed by these messages of God's love, such as this listener who wrote: "Your radio station is an immense source of inspiration that keeps me going in spite of all the odds."



Courtesy of Adventist World Radio

programs traveling to the furthest corners of the globe.

We are invited to return our tithe and offering, and today the offering is for Adventist World Radio. Thank you for your support.

March

21

Local Church Budget

In Matthew 6:8 (NIV) Jesus says, “Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” Who is “them”? Jesus is referring to hypocrites. While some sarcastically state that the church is full of hypocrites, each church has members who faithfully participate in the various ministries and support the church with their time, talents, tithe, and offerings. Just as Jesus says in Matthew that God knows what we need even before we ask, faithful members often know what the needs of the church are because they are involved in the life of the church. Thank you for being a faithful supporter.

Today's offering is for our local church budget. The church budget supports the ministries of the church and provides the funds needed for the church building.

We are privileged to return our tithe and local church budget offering.

Local Conference Advance

Today, the offering is designated for local conference advance. The conference advance offering gives our conference the opportunity to support a variety of projects for all churches under their care. The conference is a fellowship of local congregations, and by working together, we accomplish much more. Evangelism is one of the ministries that the local conference supports with the offering we give. Evangelism is central to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. By joining with other churches in this offering, we can provide the funds needed to strengthen existing churches and also plant new congregations.

Today, you and I are invited to return the tithe to the Lord. God asks us to return a faithful tithe, and we receive something wonderful from Him. Ellen White writes that tithing will “be a blessing to those who carry it out to the end of time” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, page 67). Members who have been faithful tithers can testify of the blessings given to them. You and I can experience that blessing.

Thank you for returning God’s tithe and giving an offering for the conference advance.

April

4

Local Church Budget

Proverbs 3:5, 6 (NKJV) gives us these encouraging words:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
And lean not on your own understanding;
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
And He shall direct your paths.”

A congregation that trusts in the Lord is a healthy congregation. Because the members trust the Lord, they also learn to trust each other.

Today's offering is for the ministries and operating expenses of our congregation. When we ask for an offering, we trust that each member will pray to the Lord for guidance and give accordingly.

Thank you for returning a faithful tithe and giving an offering for our local church.

April

11

Christian Record Services* WB

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart” (Galatians 6:9, NKJV).

Did you know the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a ministry to people who are blind or visually impaired? Christian Record Services for the Blind improves the quality of life for more than 20,000 children, teens, and adults with visual impairments in 71 countries worldwide.

Christian Record helps the blind see Jesus by providing free programs and services such as:

- Christian magazines and books in audio, braille, and large print formats
- *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guides* in audio and braille
- *Primary Bible Study Guide* in braille
- College scholarships
- Bible study courses in audio, braille, and large print
- Summer and winter camps
- Spanish materials in audio and large print
- Full-Vision books, a multi-format series for children and families, in audio, braille, and print
- *inSight4Vets* audiobook players for blind or visually impaired military veterans

Open your eyes to the possibilities of partnering with Christian Record. Helen Keller wrote, “Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” Together we can do so much, and your financial gift today enables Christian Record to enhance the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired.

Thank you for supporting the ministry of Christian Record with your offerings.

Local Church Budget

When we give a gift to someone we love, the giver and the receiver experience joy.

Sometimes we give a gift to a person as a way of showing appreciation for something they did. Ellen White reminds us that “the gifts are to be made in consideration of the great goodness of God to us” (*Stewardship*, page 80).

Today we are giving an offering for our local church. The offering will support the ministries and programs of our congregation. Our church is part of God’s family, and we are truly giving to God. We give joyfully because we have experienced God’s goodness to us.

Let us return God’s tithe and give an offering for our local church today. Thank you.



April

25

Local Conference Advance

Early in its development, the Seventh-day Adventist Church adopted a conference organization system. In this system, congregations in an area organize into a local conference. This approach allows us to work together and support each other. Because of this system, it was possible to plant new congregations where none existed before.

Today's offering is for our local conference. The offering will support evangelism, youth ministries, education, and other ministries throughout the conference. These are ministries that benefit our congregation and the other congregations in the conference.

Thank you for responding to God's invitation to return a faithful tithe, and thank you for giving an offering today for the ministries of our conference.

May

2

Local Church Budget

Every so often we hear in the news that someone has made a large donation to a hospital, school, or some other worthy institution. Such gifts are a valuable source of income for these institutions and make it possible for them to serve their communities.

Many of us are not able to make such large gifts, yet whatever the size of our gift, in the eyes of God it can be a great gift. Listen to these encouraging words: "But it is not the greatness of the gift that makes the offering acceptable to God; it is the purpose of the heart, the spirit of gratitude and love that it expresses. Let not the poor feel that their gifts are so small as to be unworthy of notice" (*Stewardship*, pages 73 and 74).

Today, our offering is for the local church budget. Let us give it with a spirit of gratitude and love in our heart. If we give with such an attitude, God will bless both the giver and the congregation.

I invite you to give an offering for the ministry of our local church and return God's tithe.

Disaster & Famine Relief * WB

Jesus said in Matthew 24:6 and 7 (NKJV), "See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. . . . And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places." We further read in *The Great Controversy* (pages 589 and 590), "Satan . . . is at work. In accidents and calamities . . . in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms. . . . These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous."

Almost daily, Adventist Community Services (ACS) volunteers compassionately respond to disasters throughout North America. They serve by collecting, sorting, and distributing items such as flood buckets, personal care kits, clothing, and food through collection centers, warehouses, distribution centers, and mobile distribution units.

No matter how large or small the damage, individuals are trained and locally deployed to provide emotional and spiritual care to the survivors. As Adventists, we are compelled to do our very best to provide assistance to each survivor. Our offerings and service are combined to transform us into Christ's hands and feet to fulfill that purpose.

Today, your offering will be gratefully received by Adventist Community Services in North America and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) internationally to further their efforts.

Thank you for returning God's tithe and supporting today's offering for Adventist Community Services.

May

16

Local Church Budget

The local church functions because members volunteer their time and share their talents. Also, it functions because the members support it financially. While giving is important, the Apostle Paul reminds us of something else that is very important. Paul writes, “Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7, NIV). When we give gifts to loved ones, we do not give because we have to, but rather we give because we want to. Both the giver and the receiver experience joy. Paul reminds us that this is the same with our giving to God—we give gladly.

Today, the offering is for our church. It will be used to support the ministries, programs, and facilities of our congregation. You and I do not give because we are forced to give; we give cheerfully.

Thank you for returning God’s tithe and giving an offering for our congregation.

May

23

Local Conference Advance

Tithing is a fundamental Biblical teaching, and the tithing system has enabled our denomination to fulfill its worldwide mission. But tithing also says something about our individual relationship with God. Seventh-day Adventist minister and writer, LeRoy E. Froom, tells us, "True tithing is simply the symbol of utter consecration. It involves a new vision of relationships and values. It ushers in a new sense of accountability toward God and a new recognition of responsibility toward man" (*Ministry*, May 1960).

Today, when we return God's tithe, we are reminded that it is important to the mission of the church. It also shows that we recognize we are accountable to God and have a responsibility toward others.

I invite you to return the tithe and give an offering for the conference advance. The offering will support the many programs throughout our conference. Thank you for giving.

May

30

NAD Evangelism

Many evangelistic projects and meetings take place throughout the North American Division. During the past several years, we have focused on some of the major cities in the territories of our division. Because of the generous offerings given by our members, the

division has been able to support these city projects. We have a worldwide mission, and that includes the millions living in the large metropolitan areas.



Jesus, in Mathew 23:37 and Luke 13:34, tells us how much He

cared for the people in Jerusalem. He also cares for the people living in our cities.

Today, let us worship by returning a faithful tithe, and as the Lord impresses us, an offering for NAD Evangelism. God will bless us, and He will also bless those who will hear the message of Jesus Christ.

Local Church Budget

The Apostle Paul writes:

“I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:12, 13, NIV).

Local congregations have also learned to be content in all situations. Sometimes we don't seem to have what we need, yet the Lord does not forget us. Sometimes we don't seem to have the money for our ministries, yet the Lord blesses us. The reason we are content is because God gives us the strength we need. That was Paul's experience and that can be ours, too.

Today's offering is for our local church. Ask the Lord to help you decide what you should give and remember that whatever you give, our church will be able to fulfill its mission because God will strengthen us.

Thank you for returning God's tithe and offering today for the local church budget.

June

13

General Conference Session Offering (for World Mission) GC

An old hymn, “Give of Your Best to the Master,” describes Jesus as “dauntless . . . young and brave,” and its well-known refrain says:

“Give of your best to the Master;
Give of the strength of our youth.”

The 2015 General Conference Session offering will provide children and young people the opportunity to give of their best to Jesus. The Give them the Keys! offering is a unique opportunity for the world church to show its confidence in the younger members of our family.

This offering will go 100 percent to mission, service, and outreach projects that are planned, owned, and implemented by children and young people from elementary, high school, and college age groups.

This offering will make it possible for children and young people to be involved in hundreds of unique and creative projects to reach people with the love of Jesus and the good news of salvation.

Please pray for this offering—that it will empower our young people in mission and be a life-changing experience for them and the people they reach.

June

20

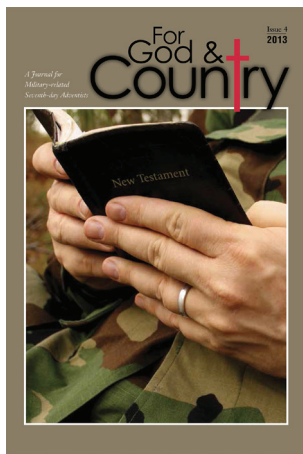
Multilingual Ministries/Chaplaincy Ministries* NAD/WB

Today's offering will be divided between two important ministries in North America.

Part of the offering is for Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries. This ministry supports Adventist chaplains who provide spiritual care outside the familiar walls of the church. Their parishes are found on educational campuses, prisons, hospitals, among military troops, in the workplace, and the local community. They minister to people of all faiths or of no faith. More than 500 Adventist chaplains work in all types of settings across the North American Division. This ministry also provides a free-of-charge quarterly publication, *For God and Country*, to uniformed service personnel. Also, a helpful website, www.adventistsinuniform.org, will be of special interest to fire and rescue personnel, veterans, military personnel, and law enforcement officers.

The other part of the offering is for Refugee Ministries. North America is the destination for refugees from many parts of the world. In fact, many church members in the countries that make up North America are immigrants. The offering received will be used to offer programs for refugees.

Thank you for returning God's tithe and the support of today's offering.



Courtesy of Chaplaincy Ministries

June

27

Local Conference Advance

Each Sabbath worship service is an acknowledgement that God is our Creator. God is not only the Creator; but He is also the Owner of all. LeRoy E. Froom writes, "... the tithe emerges as the basis of acknowledging the all-comprehensive ownership and sovereignty of God" (*Ministry*, May 1960). The wonderful news is that God is a caring Owner—He has, at great expense, made provision to rescue us from the sin in this world. He gave before He ever asked us to give anything to Him.

Today, when we return the tithe, let us remind ourselves that tithing is one way we recognize God as Owner; and He only asks us to return one tenth of what He has given us. He trusts that we will wisely use that which He has designated for us.

The offering today is for conference advance. Because we support this offering, the conference is able to provide a variety of programs that benefit all of us. It is **our** conference and these are **our** programs—programs that make evangelism, youth programs, and Christian education a blessing for all.

Local Church Budget

A Seventh-day Adventist minister, LeRoy E. Froom, tells us that “money is a good servant but a bad master. It is stored power. A power for evil when abused, it can be an even greater power and blessing for good” (*Ministry*, May 1960). Faithful stewards use money so that it is a blessing both in their lives and the lives of others. A congregation needs God’s guidance in their decisions on how to use the funds that are entrusted to it.

Today, the offering is for the local church. The offering will support the programs and ministries of this congregation and the upkeep of our facility. What you give today, God will bless. Thank you for your faithfulness.

Let us return God’s tithe and the offering for the local church budget.

July

11

Women's Ministries* NAD

From the beginning, the Women's Ministries Department has been engaged in carrying out the mission of the Church, and that is "to proclaim to all peoples the everlasting gospel. . ." When Jesus explained what separates the sheep from the goats in Matthew 25:31–46, He made it clear that ministry to others is a primary characteristic of Christians. With the theme, "A Ministry for Every Woman," the North American Division Women's Ministries Department actively encourages every woman in the Church to be involved in service to others. According to Ellen G. White, "They [women] can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. Their labor is needed" (*Evangelism*, page 465).

Today's offering is for North American Division (NAD) Women's Ministries. Your gift, marked NAD Women's Ministries, will affirm the work of women in the church. Visit www.nadwm.org to view all of the wonderful resources, including DVD Bible studies that are available.

Thank you for returning the Lord's tithe and for your support of the Women's Ministry offering.



Local Church Budget

In Psalm 24:1, 2 (NKJV), David tells us:

The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell therein.
For He has founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the waters.

It is comforting to know that we belong to the Lord. Because we belong to God, He has made provision for us to be saved from our sins and become part of His kingdom. We thank Jesus Christ that, because of His ministry, death, and resurrection, we truly belong to God. Our congregation is part of God's kingdom.

Today's offering is for the local church. It will help us meet the needs of this congregation and the ministries we have. Thank you for your faithful support of this congregation with your time, talents, and offerings.

Local Conference Advance

In the Bible, there are many texts that focus on God's blessings and promises. Malachi 3:10 (NIV) is one such passage. It reads:

“‘Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it.’”

No doubt you have read and have heard this text read before. Each time we hear it, we are reminded that God wants to be involved in our lives. Those who have been faithful in returning God's tithe can tell how they have been blessed. When we return God's tithe, we enter into a partnership with God, who cares for us and loves us. When you return the Lord's tithe, remember that you are entering into a special relationship with God.

Today's offering is for the conference advance. This offering will be used throughout our conference for programs to benefit all congregations. Let us joyfully return the tithe and give an offering for the conference advance.

Local Church Budget

How do we respond to God's love for us? T. E. Unruh writes that "the true motive in Christian stewardship is *gratitude*, and gratitude is our response to the daily manifestations of God's love for us" (*Ministry*, March 1967). When we hear the word "stewardship," we often think it only refers to money. Money is a part of stewardship, but stewardship also is about how we use all the gifts that God has given us. We, as a congregation, also need to be faithful stewards by using our gifts and means to serve our members and the communities where we live.

Today, the offering is for the local congregation. How much you give is a decision that you and the Lord need to make. Ask the Lord to guide you, and then respond to His guidance. You and I need to give with a spirit of gratitude to our God and Savior.

Let us return, in a spirit of gratitude, a faithful tithe and give an offering for the ministries and needs of our congregation. Thank you.

August

8

Oakwood University/Andrews University/ Loma Linda University* WB

Today's offering is for three well-known Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions—Andrews, Loma Linda, and Oakwood universities. These schools were established and continue to fulfill the important mission of providing quality Christian education. We know that Christian education is expensive, but as a church, we continue to value this education for it prepares our youth for today's world and God's Kingdom.

Our denomination has always invested in young people. That is one of the reasons why we have one of the largest educational systems sponsored by a denomination. We need to make certain that our schools will continue to meet the needs of our youth.

I invite you to return the tithe and ask the Lord to bless you so that you can support with your offering the youth at Andrews, Loma Linda, and Oakwood universities.

Local Church Budget

“Time and money are two of God’s most valuable gifts. . . . But in both, God holds a designated reservation. There is holy time and there is holy money—the Sabbath and the tithe” (LeRoy E. Froom, *Ministry*, July 1960).

When Seventh-day Adventists think of time as a gift from God we, often refer to the Sabbath. And the Sabbath indeed is a wonderful gift from God. Each week, the Sabbath brings us blessings through rest, the opportunity for worship and fellowship, and a reminder that God is our Creator. On the other days, we also have time, and that is a gift from God.

In our society, money is part of our everyday lives. If properly used, money can be a blessing to others and us. Tithe is holy money, and God wants us to return it to Him. God does not force us to return tithe, but when we do, we enter into a wonderful partnership with Him.

Offerings also come from the money with which God has blessed us. How much we return in offering is a decision that we make. Today’s offering is for our local church so that we can conduct the ministries and programs that benefit our church and community. Thank you for returning the tithe and providing an offering to support our church budget.

Local Conference Advance

Ellen White writes that tithing "... is the provision God has made for carrying forward the work of the gospel" (*Stewardship*, page 65). The tithing system, as practiced by Seventh-day Adventists, has indeed been a blessing in our proclamation of the gospel. It is the tithing system that has enabled the denomination to proclaim the message of the return of Jesus throughout the world. While most of the tithe remains with the local conference to support conference ministries, the remainder is shared with other church organizations. Our tithing system is such that the local conferences can meet their needs, and the remainder supports our worldwide ministry. Thank you for participating in this God-given system of tithing that supports the world ministry of the church.

Today, the offering is for our local conference programs. These programs support the various ministries of our conference. These ministries, such as youth camps and schools, benefit all congregations.



August

29

Union Conference Designated

Jesus describes a scene that will take place at the time of His return: “The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” ’ ’ ” (Matthew 25:40, NIV).

People have spiritual, physical, and emotional needs, and the mission of the church is to help in all areas. We return the tithe in order to proclaim the gospel through the various ministries that serve the church. We give offerings in order to address the various needs of our members and the public.

Today, the offering is for activities sponsored by our union conference. These activities range from evangelistic training for church members to youth programs, but their goal is to equip us to better serve the needs of church members and people in the community.

Let us return a faithful tithe to our Lord and give offering that will benefit churches within our union conference.

September 5

Local Church Budget

I share with you Jesus' words: " 'If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer' " (Matthew 21:22, NIV).

The local church is a place where our faith is tested on a regular basis. When we come to church, we trust that someone opened the church, that Sabbath School leaders are waiting for the children, and that worship has been planned. We believe in each other.

It is the same with the support of our local church ministries and programs. No one is forced to support them—we, as members under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, decide to support the activities of the church. Those in charge of these ministries have to believe that we will provide the needed funds for the ministries. The local church, indeed, is a place where we live by faith.

Thank you for returning a faithful tithe and for providing an offering for our local church budget.

September 12

Fall Mission Appeal (Unusual Opportunities)* WB

From time to time, situations develop which create mission opportunities where we can respond quickly if funds are available. In these cases, if we had to wait for months or years to raise funds, these opportunities might disappear. The “Unusual Opportunities” offering we are receiving today will be used for these situations.

Many of you may remember when the “Iron Curtain” fell. Shortly after that time, many properties in the former USSR became temporarily available at very low prices. Although a few were purchased at the time for church buildings, funds were very limited, so for the most part, this was a missed opportunity. More recently, a similar situation has developed in another country. Because of the existence of the “Unusual Opportunity Fund,” we have been able to provide US\$700,000 for the purchase of prime properties at very low prices for future church locations. These are the kinds of things this offering is for, whether for properties, evangelism opportunities, or other “open doors” that may quickly close at any time, and we want to be ready.



You can help us respond to these opportunities by participating in the offering today.

September 19

Local Church Budget

Why do we come together each Sabbath? One reason is because God has set aside the Sabbath as a day of worship. Another is because we enjoy fellowshiping with other believers. Jesus gives one more reason when He says, “‘But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you’ ” (Matthew 6:33, NKJV). We are on a journey together—traveling to God’s kingdom. If we are faithful to our mission, Jesus tells us that everything else will be added. God knows what we need, and He will supply those needs.

God knows the financial needs of our church. And if we listen to His voice, we will know, as individuals, what we should do. God never forces us to give. He wants us to give with a joyful heart. Today, our offering is for the local church. This offering will support the ministries and programs of our congregation. I invite you to give from a joyful heart. If we give willingly, the Lord will bless, and the needs of our congregation will be met.

September 26

Local Conference Advance

“To become a steward means to accept responsibility, and to accept responsibility strengthens character” (LeRoy E. Froom, *Ministry*, May 1960). Early on, when our denomination was a small group of people, the members accepted responsibility, and with great enthusiasm, proclaimed Biblical teachings such as the return of Jesus Christ and the Sabbath. They also accepted the responsibility to be faithful stewards by returning the tithe and providing offerings for various programs and ministries.

When we return tithe, it is sent to the local conference, and most of it stays with the conference. It is used to support pastors and other ministerial workers. It is a system that has been a wonderful blessing to our denomination. This tithing system has made it possible for us to proclaim the message throughout the world.

We also give offerings for various projects and ministries. Today's offering is for local conference programs and ministries that benefit all churches throughout the conference.

Thank you for returning the tithe and today's offering for the local conference.

October

3

Local Church Budget

In Deuteronomy 28:12 (NIV) we read, “The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands.” Today in many parts of North America, not as many people live in rural areas, and thus may not appreciate the importance of rain for crops. But the verse also tells us the Lord wants “to bless all the work of your hands.” That blessing is available to all of us.

The Lord wants to bless the work we as individuals do and also the work done by our congregation. The local church is a place where we come together to worship, fellowship, and make plans to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ. It's where we support each other and the ministries of the church. We also provide a place where we worship. Thank you for your support of the various ministries and programs of our congregation.

Today, the offering is for our local church. Let us thank the Lord for inviting us to worship together and give an offering for our local church.

Thank you.

October

10

Voice of Prophecy* NAD/WB

From its humble beginnings in a chicken coop in Walnut Park, California, to the global outreach ministry of today, *Voice of Prophecy* exists to bring lost people into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. This mission is carried out through evangelism, the *Discover Bible School*, media outreach, and global outreach.

Voice of Prophecy's primary focus is evangelism and sharing God's message of hope. In 2014, Speaker/Director, Shawn Boonstra, held a series of meetings in America's heartland: Indianapolis. And in 2015, in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Courtesy of Voice of Prophecy

Discover Bible School is the biggest Bible correspondence school on the planet. Tens of thousands have found Christ through *Discover*, using carefully planned and exquisitely guided studies of His Word.



In 1929, H.M.S. Richards sensed that the invention of radio was not simply for the sake of entertainment; it could be used to broadcast the Good News of the second coming of Christ. He was right. Today, countless individuals—perhaps hundreds of thousands—can trace their spiritual birth back to the *Voice of Prophecy*. His ideas were cutting-edge, and *Voice of Prophecy* continues to innovate and utilize the latest technological advancements.

With your support, the brightest days for *Voice of Prophecy* are still ahead.

Thank you for your offering for the *Voice of Prophecy*.

October

17

Local Church Budget

The Apostle Paul writes, “God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:9, NKJV). God’s faithfulness is a central theme of the Bible. It’s because of God’s faithfulness that Jesus Christ came to our world, lived among us, died for us, and rose for us.

The local congregation functions because members faithfully fulfill their responsibilities. “Thank you” to all those who gladly give of their time and abilities so that we have a place to worship and can benefit from the various church programs.

I also want to thank the members for returning a faithful tithe and freewill offering. Today, our offering is for our local church budget. This offering will provide the funds needed for various ministries and programs of our church. What we give, God will bless. We know He will fulfill His promise.

October

24

Local Conference Advance

“Leading our churches to faithfulness in the support of God’s work will bring untold blessing upon the members individually and upon the church as a whole.” Roy Allan Anderson wrote this profound statement (*Ministry*, September 1961).

Those who have faithfully supported God’s work can testify of the blessings they have received. God has promised to bless, and He always keeps His promises. Our denomination has also been blessed because we have dedicated our resources to the proclamation of God’s message. The system of tithing and offering that we have has enabled us to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

Thank you for the tithe you return and the offerings you give. The offerings we give support the local church and other ministries. Today, the offering is for our local conference. The offering will benefit conference-wide programs and ministries.

October

31

NAD Evangelism

The preaching of the return of Jesus Christ has been a central message of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We have proclaimed that message in the communities where we live and in areas where there are no Adventist churches. In the North American Division, there are many communities—large and small—where we still need to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ. That is why today we are calling for an offering throughout our division to support a variety of evangelistic projects.

During the past several years, we have focused on some of our major cities. Because of the generous offerings given by church members, the division has been able to support these city projects. We have a worldwide mission, and that includes the millions living in the large metropolitan areas. Today, the majority of the population lives in the large metropolitan centers, and we need to proclaim the good news to the millions in these cities. Let us partner with the Lord and proclaim the good news to those individuals.

Today, let us worship by returning a faithful tithe and, as the Lord impresses us, an offering for NAD Evangelism. Thank you.

Local Church Budget

What are the needs in our congregation? Does the building need some attention? How about the various programs in our church—do they need your support?

An Adventist minister Mel Rees wrote, “Those who plan their giving do not *wait* for things to give to—they *look* for them!” (*Ministry*, December 1969). I invite you to look around our church and *look* for things to give to. Where does the church need your talents, time, and abilities? Where does your congregation need your prayers? Do your church leaders need to hear your words of appreciation?

Where does your church need your financial support? Look for opportunities to give to your church and strengthen its programs. When you give, your church will be blessed and you will experience the joy of partnering with God.

Let us return a faithful tithe and experience the joy of giving for our local congregation.

November 14

Annual Sacrifice (Global Mission)* WB

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.

Global Mission, the frontline mission arm of the Church, uses a wholistic approach to reaching people. These pioneers work within their own culture where they understand the community and speak the local language. They help with peoples' basic needs, like food, water, shelter, healthcare, and education. They share lessons from the Bible whenever they can.

Your financial support makes it possible for frontline workers to offer hope and assurance to those who live in fear and despair. Whatever you give, it will make a big difference to someone who is still waiting to hear about Jesus.

Please give as generously as you can to the Global Mission Offering.

Thank you.



Courtesy of Global Mission

November

21

Local Church Budget

Paul writes, “For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord’s people” (2 Corinthians 8:3, 4, NIV).

That is how Paul describes the giving of the church members in Macedonia. He tells us that the members there were in “extreme poverty,” (v. 2) yet they gave “beyond their ability” (v. 3). Furthermore, Paul tells us that they gave with an attitude of joy. The church in Macedonia was a sacrificial congregation.

In our congregation, there are individuals who do not have much, yet they give beyond their ability. And they do it joyfully. Thank you for your faithfulness. It’s because of such faithfulness that we have a church.

Today’s offering is for our local church. The funds received will be used for the ministries and operation of this congregation.

November 28

Local Conference Advance

Ellen G. White says, “God’s plan in the tithing system is beautiful in its simplicity and equality” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, page 73). Indeed the tithing system is easy to understand. Even young children understand the system and many of them faithfully return tithe from the small amounts they have. God blesses those small amounts, just as He blesses what adults give.

The tithe we return is submitted to the conference and the conference executive committee administers it. The tithe is used to pay those engaged in ministry. The conference keeps records of how the tithe is used, and reports are given to the constituency. While most of the tithe stays in the local conference, some of it is shared with the world church and used for the support of ministry.

Today, in addition to returning our tithe, we are asked to give an offering for the local conference. The offering will be used for the support of various programs of the conference. Our church will benefit from those programs, as will the other churches throughout the conference.

December

5

Local Church Budget

The holiday season is a busy season. Many of us are making plans for family get-togethers. Others are busy buying gifts for loved ones and family members. And some, I might add, are even busy anticipating the gifts we may get.

We give gifts because we choose to do so. Just because we give gifts does not mean that the recipient will return a gift. Yet, God tells us that those who give, will in return, receive. Jesus tell us, “ ‘Give, and it will be given to you’ ” (Luke 6:38, NIV). Indeed, God is generous with His gifts, and we thank Him for that.

Today, the offering is for our local church. Let us give this gift joyfully to our church to support the various ministries of this congregation. Jesus is the ultimate gift we can share with others.

Thank you for returning God's tithe today and for giving an offering for our congregation. Let us give joyfully.

December 12

Adventist Community Services* NAD/WB

The World Budget today supports Adventist Community Services (ACS) in the North American Division. By supporting ACS, you can make a lasting impact in your community and beyond, whether it's volunteering your time, donating goods, or financial contributions. Touching one heart, one family, one community, we can transform the world. Commit to make a difference today through ACS.

Jesus lived His life as a humble servant: " 'Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' " (Matthew 20:28, NIV). Therefore, the bottom line of the Christian journey is to be servants of God.

Courtesy of NAD Adventist Community Services



We bear witness throughout Jesus' ministry of a genuine servanthood approach toward humanity, especially people who were marginalized, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised from society. They were the poor, sick, unclean, and outcasts. Jesus expanded the kingdom of God to places, people, and

cultures in which others were not interested.

Adventist Community Services provides you with opportunities to serve communities in Christ's name. ACS volunteers provide support and assistance in disaster relief ministries, elder care, crisis care, urban ministries, tutoring, and mentoring. Your financial gifts to the Adventist Community Services offering will make it possible to continue transforming communities—one life at a time.

December 19

Local Church Budget

A local church is made up of individuals who have accepted the Lord's invitation to worship and work together. The Psalmist writes these words of encouragement:

“For our heart shall rejoice in Him,
Because we have trusted in His holy name”
(Psalm 33:21, NKJV).

Rejoicing and trusting is important for a healthy congregation. We rejoice in the Lord and for the opportunity to be together. We trust the Lord and in each other.

One of the ways we show trust is by believing that the members will provide the funds needed to fulfill the ministry of the church. As we come to the end of the year, I want to thank you for the financial support you have given and the offering that you will give today. Let us continue to be faithful and provide the needed funds for our congregation.

Today, God invites us to return a faithful tithe and give an offering that our congregation needs for its ministries. Thank you.

December 26

Local Conference Advance

Today is the last Sabbath of the year. Whatever has happened during the year, we know that God has been with us, and for that we are so thankful.

Today, we also thank God for caring for us and trusting us as His stewards. As God's stewards, we are privileged to manage what God has given us.

I want to thank you for returning God's tithe throughout the year. Those who return God's tithe have experienced that, "it has ever proved that nine tenths are worth more to them than ten tenths" (Ellen G. White, *Stewardship*, page 68). God's blessing is worth more than all the wealth in this world.

Today, we are privileged to return God's tithe and an offering. Today's special offering is for our local conference and the programs it supports.

NOTES

THIRTEENTH SABBATH OFFERINGS 2015

North American Division	March 28	+
Northern Asia-Pacific Division	June 27	+
Southern Asia-Pacific Division	September 26	+
Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division	December 26	+

MISSION INVESTMENT PROJECTS 2015

Southern +
Canadian +

* Special Materials Provided
+ Special Project Development

WB = Designates an offering for NAD that is
part of the World Budget

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