



GENEROUS LIVING

ALL OF ME
IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM

Offering Appeals
3rd Quarter 2019

Treasurer's Copy

Please store this booklet in the pulpit.

July 6, 2019 - Local Church Budget

Independence Day. In the year 2000, the General Conference session was held in Toronto, Canada. On July 4, the people of the city went to work and the General Conference did its normal business. You see, July 4 is not a holiday in Canada. It was a good reminder for us that “this world is not my home.”

It may surprise you to learn that the United States is one of the few countries where the national flag is displayed in the church sanctuary. Adventists in other countries feel that that would be mixing politics with religion. Americans, of course, consider that they have a spiritual heritage received from the founding fathers of the nation. Their patriotism has almost a spiritual feeling to it.

I personally have no problem displaying the flag or honoring our country, but the faithful Adventist always has in the back of his or her mind that someday even here the situation will change. Right now, we are prospering beyond measure and way too comfortable. Hopefully, we are taking full advantage of these conditions to be faithful in our stewardship and in sharing the gospel with others around us.

Jesus told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world. As we celebrate the birth of our nation this month, let us also bear in mind our greater loyalty to Christ, and continue to strive for the coming of His kingdom. And let us support His kingdom work by giving to our local church this morning.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

Women's ministries. Today's offering is for the North American Division (NAD) Women's Ministries, which was first established in 1898 at the urging of Ellen G. White. In the book *Evangelism*, we find her marching orders to the women of the church: "The Lord has a work for women as well as for men. They may take their places in His work at this crisis, and He will work through them. If they are imbued with a sense of their duty and labor under the influence of the Holy Spirit, they will have just the self-possession required for this time. The Saviour will reflect upon these self-sacrificing women the light of His countenance, and will give them a power that exceeds that of men. They can do in families a work that men cannot do, a work that reaches the inner life. They can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. Their labor is needed" (*Evangelism*, p. 464).

All across the North American Division, from the United States to Canada and from Bermuda to Guam-Micronesia, the women of the church are engaged in serving others. They give Bible studies, hold evangelistic series, and minister to those in shelters for battered and homeless women. They provide for the needs of families seeking refuge on our shores from oppressive regimes, teach classes in English as a second language, tutor school children, and make bags of love for children who are displaced from their homes or their parents. The women of the church are making a significant difference in their communities and their congregations. I invite you to make a generous gift today to affirm their work and ministry.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

July 20, 2019 - Local Church Budget

The Clear Word. Several years ago, a pastor was preparing to officiate at his son's wedding in Minnesota. It was Saturday evening after sunset, and all were at the church going through the rehearsal.

The groom, the best man, and the dad were up on the platform awaiting the entrance of the bridal party. The flower girl proceeded, pretending to scatter flower petals as she went. Next came the Bible boy, empty-handed, pretending to carry a Bible. So, the pastor remarked, "Hmm, an invisible Bible." Without missing a beat, the best man quipped, "Yes, it's the *Clear Word!*" And of course, everyone had a good laugh.

Many thousands have been blessed by Dr. Jack Blanco's Bible paraphrase, *The Clear Word*, as well as by his life story as a little boy in Germany. How clear is God's Word to you and me?

God has made it clear in His Word about returning tithe and giving offerings. His desire is for us to remember that He is our Great Provider for all of our needs.

Today's offering goes to our local church budget. At this midpoint of the year, please make it a matter of earnest prayer regarding your giving. God has tremendous blessings in store for you if you are faithful!

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Over spring break I went on a mission trip to Honduras. Since it was a Spanish speaking country, we brought a translator. We had a safe trip there, and on the second night of VBS I decided I would show the kids a few simple sleight of hand tricks. I put one ball in my hand, and one in theirs. When they opened their hand, they had both! They were amazed by this, and kept asking me a myriad of questions in Spanish. I tried to understand, but finally resorted to attempting to demonstrate how I did the trick. Unfortunately, because of the language barrier, I was failing miserably. However, Mr. Parra, our translator and Spanish teacher, came to the rescue. I told him what I wanted to say, and he translated my words. With his help I was able to teach some of them the hand moves to do, and words to say. With my help they were soon joyfully fooling each other.

Just as I had a message for the kids in Honduras, God has a message for us. He works in our lives and shows us things that really can't happen without Him. And, just like our translator, God speaks through people He puts in our lives. With God's help we can learn to trust in Him. This faith works like magic in our hearts and we will then want to spread it to work like magic on other's hearts too. Luckily we don't even have to wait for a translator to learn to trust Him; we can jump right into His word, and talk to Him on a one-to-one basis. He is ready to accept us and teach us the "tricks" of life.

Written by Nathan George, Class of 2020 of Mount Pisgah Academy.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

August 3, 2019 – Local Church Budget

Too early. A pastor in Ohio had a speaking appointment in Indiana one Sabbath morning. He calculated the travel time, and left his home promptly to make sure of an on time arrival.

As he drove into the church parking lot, he found himself to be the first one to arrive. So, he patiently waited, figuring that very soon he would begin to see other cars pulling in. As he waited and waited, he began to get upset. Where were the people? After a few more minutes, he became alarmed and then angry. Again, *where were the people?*

As his patience grew thinner, he considered returning home, when suddenly a few cars began to appear, and then more and more. He hadn't realized that he had crossed the line from Eastern time to Central time. He was an hour early.

How many times have you or I had to say "Oh!" when we have made a hasty judgment based on poor information? Sometimes it is better to be more patient and wait until we know the whole story.

Smooth human relations can sometimes be a challenge, but it is an important and necessary part of getting along as part of God's family. As decisions are made about important issues in the church, let us go with cooler heads and committed hearts, that God's work may go forward.

Please give liberally to His work today.

IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF HIM!

August 10, 2019 World Budget (Emphasis: Oakwood/Andrews/Loma Linda Universities) 500

Our marvelous educational system. A Seventh-day Adventist man who went through our educational system wrote: “My parents became Seventh-day Adventists when I was 8 years old. My mother had been a Jehovah’s Witness and my father a former Adventist. They were not attending any church at the time, but they allowed my brother and me to attend Sunday school with the neighborhood children. The day we came home from Sunday school with notions of going to heaven when you die was the day our parents got to thinking about their spiritual responsibilities. You see, Jehovah’s Witnesses and Seventh-day Adventists have similar views on the state of the dead.

“A couple of years later we were enrolled in the local church school, and never again did we attend a non-Adventist school.

“I think back to that wonderful church school library, full of inspiring pioneer missionary stories; to our godly teachers and the Bible lessons through all levels of education; and to the lifelong friends we made along the way. Sadly, some of those friends have passed on, and some have left the faith of their childhood. But many of us have remained, and up into our later years still cherish our Adventist educational experience.”

Our universities and other schools are not perfect, because people are not perfect. But they certainly deserve our support today as we render God’s tithes and our offerings.

**IT IS ALL OF US IN RESPONSE TO ALL OF
HIM!**

August 17, 2019 – Local Church Budget

Anything for a buck. Commerce is an interesting phenomenon. There is a fine line between making money for our daily needs and making money because of greed. The human individual from day one is driven by thoughts of self-interest and self-benefit. It is in our very nature, and to some degree necessary for life but exploited by Satan to the extreme. From the baby crying because it is hungry to the business person pushing the envelope seeking to move upward, it is often about self.

Altruism and self-denial do not come naturally. Happy is the parent and blessed is the child when by precept and example self-interest is suppressed and thinking of others is encouraged. A truly other-centered person is a miracle of God.

“The directions given by the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul in regard to gifts, present a principle that applies also to tithing: ‘Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.’ Parents *and children* are here included. Not only the rich, but the poor, are addressed. ‘Every man according as he purposeth in his heart [through the candid consideration of God’s prescribed plan], so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.’ The gifts are to be made in consideration of the great goodness of God to us”—*Counsels on Stewardship*, p. 80, emphasis ours.

Today we have another opportunity to demonstrate our faithfulness and the joy of altruistic living.

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Growing up, I lived in Ethiopia. As a child I used to travel back and forth to the United States quite a bit to visit family. My dream was to remain in the United States. Fortunately, six years ago I received U.S. citizenship. I have family in America, but my parents still live in Ethiopia.

The next step I wanted to take was to find a good school in the United States. After years and years of applying to many schools, I found Mount Pisgah Academy and was accepted. I moved into the dorm and started school during the fall of my junior year. It was the first time I had lived away from my family. I experienced many challenges as I adjusted to a new life here. Things were very different from what I was used to.

But I am thankful for my time here. In fact, I made a very important decision my senior year: to join the Seventh-day Adventist church through baptism. I am glad I came to MPA and I am glad that God has been with me through all of these transitions.

One thing I have learned from the Bible is that whenever we call on God, He will always answer our prayer. God is always patient with us. And He will guide us in our hard times.

Written by Naol Ejigu, Class of 2018 of Mount Pisgah Academy

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August 31, 2019 - Local Church Budget

Moon Walk or Sabbath School? Astronaut James B. Irwin's wife gave a most impressive testimony on the importance of Sabbath observance and Christian responsibility on Sabbath, July 3, 1971.

Walter Cronkite, CBS news celebrity reporting on the moon shot, said, "Mrs. James B. Irwin did not watch her husband take his first ride and walk on the moon yesterday. She is a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and she had a Sabbath School class to teach. She said, "He has his mission and I have mine."

This significant statement was broadcast and telecast to the United States., the Congo, Europe, South America, and Canada. What an eloquent testimony this was to our faith!

Of course, we all agree that there are legitimate reasons for missing church—illness, for example. And no one would have faulted Mrs. Irwin had she took the time to watch her husband walk on the moon. But sometimes we allow little aches and pains, rain drops, or other minor things to keep us from the joy of fellowship.

Each local church has a mission for its members and the larger community. This morning, we have another opportunity to lift up our wonderful church by contributing, in addition to our faithful tithe, a generous and sacrificial offering for our local ministries. Thank you for supporting the mission!

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September 7, 2019 - Local Church Budget

Men's Ministry Day of Prayer. When Claudio Consuegra, the current Family Ministries Director of the North American Division, was a young man, he began attending the Seventh-day Adventist Church and was receiving Bible instruction by the local church pastor. When they studied what the Bible said about tithes and offerings, Claudio became concerned. He had not been careful about money management and had fallen into a bad habit. He would get paid on Thursday, but by Monday all his money would be gone. He would then borrow money from friends to hold him over until the next paycheck.

When he was taught that God expects that the first 10 percent of our income be returned, he figured that would not be possible. His paycheck now didn't even last a week so, surely, finances would be even tighter with 10 percent less to spend. When he told his pastor of his concern, the pastor challenged him to test God and claim His promises. Claudio prayed and put God to the test. The amazing thing is that the very first week he returned God's tithe, his paycheck lasted until the next paycheck, even after paying back his debts. Since that day, more than 40 years ago, he has been returning God's tithe and giving offerings faithfully, and God has shown His faithfulness and love to him and his family in many different ways.

His daughters witnessed their parents' faithfulness and now as married women they follow the same practice. His prayers and his obedience have shown them what it means to be a spiritual head of household, as men of God are called to be.

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September 14, 2019 – Local Church Budget

Misguided trust. Once there was a photographer for a national magazine who was assigned to “shoot” one of those big western forest fires. He was told that a small plane would be waiting to fly him over the fire.

When he got to the airport, sure enough, he found a little Cessna waiting. He jumped in with his equipment and yelled, “Let’s go!” The pilot, the plane, and the photographer were soon in the air.

“Fly over the north side of the fire and make several low passes,” the photographer shouted.

“Why?” the nervous pilot asked.

“Because I’m going to take pictures. I’m a photographer, and photographers take pictures,” was the reply.

After a long pause, the pilot tensely asked, “You mean you’re not the instructor?”

The pilot and the photographer both trusted someone to do something they could not do. Luckily, in this case, thanks to communication by the air traffic controller, they were able to get back to the airport.

In life, trust is often put in places, people, and things that are not worthy of such trust. I invite you this morning to faithfulness by returning tithes and giving offerings to Someone who is more than worthy of our trust!

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September 21, 2019 – Local Church Budget

Grandparent's Day. Grandparents and grandchildren have a unique opportunity to learn lessons together across the generations. Grandparents have experienced the ups and downs of life, and can teach their grandchildren lessons of patience, planning, and perseverance so they can reach their goals in life.

Grandparents can teach their grandchildren about saving, investing, spending, and giving. Perhaps they have experienced the ups and downs of the economy, so they can tell them stories of what it's like to have more some days and less at other times.

Because many grew up and lived without much of the technology that surrounds us today, grandparents can teach their grandchildren how to communicate face-to-face and the importance of placing healthy boundaries around all of the technological gadgets that consume our time. Grandparents and grandchildren can do service projects together to help others make this world a better place. One way to accomplish this is by volunteering on projects or activities in your church and community. As you spend time together, you can share principles and life lessons that will help your grandchildren grow to be healthy adults and committed Christians.

The offering today is for the local church budget. The church can serve as the vehicle where people of different ages come together for the common goal of sharing the message of love from God to His children who don't know Him yet. Our generosity is a lesson to God's younger children and a tangible way to help others.—Claudio Consuegra

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September 28, 2019 – Carolina Youth 8001

My day started off horribly. Everywhere I went I felt as if people were laughing at me. I sensed their gossip, but I tried to ignore them. I went and had a good time with one of my friends, but deep inside I was unsettled. Things were not good and I didn't know what to do. Later on that night when study hall was over, I sat in the chapel to think about my day. Then, I felt called to go to the prayer room, so I went in and found three girls sitting quietly.

I asked them if I could join them and they replied "you're just in time, we haven't prayed yet." Right then I knew it was God that sent me there just at the right time.

They sang a song and I immediately felt God's presence. When we prayed, I began to cry. I knew that God distracted and delayed them for a little bit before I came in. I asked God to forgive all my sins because I knew I had messed up. I finished praying and they all came and hugged me. We continued talking about how God has a purpose for me and I believe them. I felt God's power that day.

Even if we have a rough day, our loving Father never leaves our side. I'm blessed that I have caring people around me to remind me of His love. If you find yourself having a tough time, find friends who will pray with you. Prayer is powerful and God is good.

Written by Janet May, Class of 2018 of Mount Pisgah Academy

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Tips for a Successful Offering Appeal

1. Pray

Your attitude is of utmost importance. An offering appeal presented with a pre-season of prayer is always more effective. People in the pews will know the difference and respond accordingly. With an attitude of gratitude, calling for the offering is always a privilege for which to be thankful.

2. Practice

Read the script out loud several times and stay with the script until the reading comes naturally. If possible, stand in the church location and read the script with the microphone on. Take courage, you will gain experience over time and eventually come to wonder why it seemed so hard at first.

3. Appreciate your audience

Realize that they want you to succeed. Relax as best you can! We are all in this together.

4. Visualize yourself giving the offering appeal

Smile! Imagine yourself speaking, your voice loud, clear and confident. Visualize the congregation smiling and pleased with your presentation. This will boost your confidence as they approvingly smile.

5. Know your material

Make sure you fully understand how the designated offering will be used. Give everyone a reason to help support the designated offering.

6. Do not apologize for any nervousness or problem.

Being nervous is natural. No one but you has to know. Do not allow yourself to focus on your anxiety, but rather focus on your message and audience. They will never suspect you are not a public-speaking pro!