



# GENEROUS LIVING

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All of Me in Response to All of Him

## Offering Appeals

1st Quarter 2021

Treasurer's Copy

Please store this booklet in the pulpit.



## **January 2, 2021 - Local Church Budget**

A visitor arrived at a church in the middle of winter. He noticed it was cold inside the sanctuary, and everyone wore winter coats and scarves. The visitor found the head elder and asked, "Is your furnace broken?"

"No, the furnace is fine. We just don't have enough money to pay the heating bill."

Startled, the visitor asked, "Doesn't the local church budget handle these issues?"

The elder shook his head.

The visitor requested permission to address the church. He asked the members, "How many of you had heat in your homes today?" Everyone raised their hands.

He continued by saying, "Today, we are in God's church. I believe that God deserves better than what we enjoy in our homes. I will visit again next Sabbath and will donate to the local church budget. How many will join me?"

Most of the congregation raised their hands. He read this passage: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

The following Sabbath, the visitor returned and led the members in giving to the local budget. The congregation continued to pay for heat throughout the entire winter as they brought their offerings for the church expenses. When we compare the costs in our own home to the needs of the church, we can see the importance of supporting the local budget.

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

Times are changing and the world is becoming a more intimidating and complex place to live. Youth are faced with issues that far surpass the issues faced by past generations. There is a great need for places that our youth feel understood, a place where they can ask hard questions, not only about God; but, about life issues as well, and a place that gives them a sense of belonging.

There are so many programs within the Carolina Conference that provide this safe place for our youth, such as Pathfinders, Adventurers, Nosoca Pines Ranch, camp meetings, etc. These programs give our youth a community to belong to and a place to not only learn Scripture but learn to understand it and apply it to their relationship with God.

The offering today is for Carolina Youth. This money will support the different programs that provide our youth with a safe and fun place to not only learn about God, but how to apply these teachings to their daily lives, helping them to stand firm in this ever-changing world. Thank you for partnering with me to help our youth learn to live courageous lives for Christ.

*Written by: Pastor Daniel Bran*

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## **January 16, 2021 - Local Church Budget**

A church member lost his job when his company downsized. He knew that for weeks he would be without food and without the ability to pay his bills. He told the pastor about his situation.

The pastor said, "You are not alone. About a third of our members have gone through tough times. Our church can assist you for a month or two to give you time to get back on your feet.

The church board requested the amount of his rent and a copy of his utility bills. It shocked this man that the church would give, not loan, the money to help pay the bills.

The pastor shared this text. "Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40

Weeks later, the man found another job. He wanted to repay what the church had done for him.

The pastor pointed out a line item in the church budget called Emergency Fund. This explained how the church had assisted him and his family.

When you give to the church budget, part of the offering is allocated to help church members in time of need. By contributing to the church budget, you are helping provide resources to those in crisis—one day this may even be you! Today, when we give to the local church budget, we are supporting all the ministries of the church.

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## **January 23, 2021 – Religious Liberty**

A pastor stood on a ledge with a long drop before him. This group of Houston pastors had gone on a team-building exercise as part of a faith-building experience.

They helped each other through obstacle courses and challenges to accomplish tasks they could not have done alone. They called the final challenge “the step of faith.” The pastor was hooked to a harness. Then he would step forward and drop 50 feet to the ground.

The coach reminded him, “We are here for you. We’ve got you. Just believe and take the step of faith.”

After a moment of silent prayer, the pastor stepped forward. The seconds felt like an eternity as he dropped into what seemed an endless descent. Then the tension on the line increased, and at last his descent decreased in speed. When he landed, the pastor dropped to his knees and thanked the Lord.

All the pastors learned how teamwork could bring a group together to achieve a common goal. Each individual, when they gave their best, enhanced the entire team’s abilities to complete their mission. The exercise reminded them how faith in God helped the team triumph in what seemed impossible. When talking to the disciples, Christ gave them a message. “And Jesus answering said unto them, Have faith in God.” Mark 11:22

Today, let us give God our best in our offerings so that together we can achieve the common goal to expand indispensable work in defending religious liberty across the North American Division.

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## **January 30, 2021 – Local Church Budget**

Have you ever attended church in a house? There are many home churches across America. But home churches are easy to outgrow!

One of these house churches in Vermont, the Brattleboro church, stepped forward by faith in outreach to their community. As the congregation grew, it became obvious they needed a new location to become even more effective for the Lord. The house itself could no longer handle the various ministries and the growth of the congregation. They brought the matter before the Lord. Land opened in the adjacent town of Vernon, and the members raised funds to move to the new location. Week by week, the members gave according to their abilities. The church project went forward, and construction began on the new building.

The new structure started as only a dream in the hearts of the members. Now faithful members worship in their beautiful building today.

Members are able to have a wider impact in the community. The community is grateful for their presence. When God's people come together for the Lord and follow the dream that the Lord placed in their hearts, great things will happen.

Today, as you give to the local church budget, ask God to place in your heart a vision for your church. Catch the inspiration of how your congregation can bless your community. Look for the greater mission to souls who will come and praise our wonderful Savior. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."  
Proverbs 29:18

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## **February 06, 2021-Local Church Budget**

The new pastor arrived early in the week for a tour of the church and school. When the deacon showed the new pastor the sanctuary, he gasped.

“What happened here?” he asked. There were large streaks of watermarks running down the walls on two sides of the sanctuary.

“Long story short, it’s a budget issue,” the deacon replied.

After the tour, the pastor thanked the deacon and went home. As he prayed about the situation, the Lord impressed his heart that he must find some way to restore God’s house of worship. A couple of verses came to mind. “Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes.... Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose to cause his name to dwell there.” Deuteronomy 12:8, 11

His first Sabbath, after the conference president introduced him, the pastor stood still and looked at the walls of the church. The eyes of the members followed the eyes of the pastor as he scanned the walls. “Beginning next week, we shall work together as a church. We shall restore God’s Holy Temple,” he said to the congregation. The church erupted with praise!

The next Sabbath, the pastor placed an offering in the plate. He asked the congregation to join him and give to the church budget. Six weeks later, they completed the repairs. The church renewed God's house of worship.

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## February 13, 2021 – Adventist Television Ministries

Media consumption is at an all-time high. People watch television on big screens in their living room, on computers in their office, and on laptops, tablets, and smart phones in their hands.

Americans spend a staggering amount of time watching TV programs. We even have a new word for it called “binge watching.” People get most of their information from looking at a screen. Thus it’s a great way to reach them with the Adventist message.

During World War II, television was a fairly new invention. By 1950 only about five million TV sets existed. Adventists thought it might be a good idea to use this new medium. So, a program called **Faith for Today** was launched. It has the distinction of being the first nationally broadcast religious program on TV.

Soon other Adventist television programs followed. **It Is Written** in 1956, **Breath of Life** in 1974, and, more recently, the **Jesus 101 Biblical Institute**. Today these continue to be the four television ministries owned and operated by our North American Division. They provide a primary evangelistic thrust.

Adventist television has been transforming lives for 70 years and is still going strong. Every year, thousands continue to discover a Christ-centered message of

hope through the creative productions of **Faith for Today, Breath of Life, It is Written, and Jesus 101.**

More people are reached through TV programming than any other way. You can help Adventist Television Ministries touch hearts and change lives. Please give liberally today.

—Fred Knopper is Marketing Director at the Adventist Media Ministries Support Services.

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## **February 20, 2021 – Local Church Budget**

One of our churches in New York City was looking for an innovative way to help pay off their mortgage. The monthly payments were close to 60% of the local church budget.

“Does anyone have an idea for ways to raise extra money?” the pastor asked. They knew at their current rate of giving, it would be decades before the building could be free of debt.

One member came up with a novel idea. Besides his normal offering, he volunteered every week to donate the money that it would cost him to have one meal at his workplace. The cost was between five to six dollars per meal. He invited others to join him in this pledge.

Around 300 members dedicated the cost of one meal per week for the local church budget. As a result, \$1,500.00 extra funds came into the treasury per week. That meant donations of \$6,000 per month, close to \$78,000 per year, besides the regular offerings.

As the church grew, the giving amounts also grew. Within ten years, this church burned their mortgage and dedicated the church debt-free.

When a church works together and supports the local church budget, wonderful things happen in the name of the Lord.

The Bible is clear. “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7

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The phrase that a chain is as strong as its weakest link holds true. The same holds true with raising children. Parents have the strongest influence, especially during the early formative years. Next you start adding Sabbath school teachers. Then eventually you add school teachers and possibly Adventurer leaders with Little Lambs and Eager Beavers. Beginning fifth grade Pathfinders come into the picture. (When I grew up we did not have Adventurers.) This is about the time that worldly temptations kick into overdrive.

After Pathfinders, what next? At that time Millie Evans, the Pathfinder director at Columbia First Church somehow had the insight to ask me to be a Junior Counselor for that club. This was during a critical time that I refer to as “MY ILLUSTRIOUS TEENAGE YEARS.” I’ll say no more!

This is where a weak link could have separated me from any church association. Thank God it did not!!

As a result, I eventually became a Pathfinder director and am the last original member of the Pathfinder Council formed in the 1980s, and been an Area Coordinator since 1995.

If your generous offering can save another “Charlie Young”, then I encourage you to give all you can so that the conference can continue our youth programs.

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## **March 6, 2021 – Local Church Budget**

One Sabbath morning, the deacon-in-charge arrived at church only to discover standing water in the church basement.

He began making phone calls. “There are several inches of water in the basement! Can you come to help clean up the mess?”

Most of the deacons changed from their Sabbath clothes to flannel shirts and jeans and hurried to the church. They gathered sump pumps, hoses, extension cords, and began to drain the water. They closed all the waterlines to make sure it wasn't a frozen line that ruptured.

When they first heard the news, some members worried about the coming repair bills. “How will we be able to pay for this?” they asked one another.

However, the head deacon smiled and reassured them, “Our church emergency repair fund will take care of the expense. We have money set aside for unexpected events like this.”

The members were thankful that through their faithful giving to the church budget in the past, there did not need to be any delay in repairs. The head deacon made a call to the local construction firm the following Monday. Within two weeks, the workers had repaired the damage.

The congregation could once again meet in their fellowship hall and Sabbath School classrooms.

The Bible says, "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:8

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The field trip had ended. At the bus stop, many parents were already waiting to pick up their children. Others arrived a few seconds later. One by one, the parents hugged their children and left.

However, one child still waited for his parents. The bus driver sat next to the boy on a bench and waited with him. Tears were rolling down the boy's face as he looked up at the driver. He needed no words to explain. He felt abandoned.

Then he heard the voice of his auntie. He ran to her and grabbed her by her legs. His tears turned to joy. The pain of abandonment changed to celebration.

We as Christians may sometimes feel alone and abandoned by God. But this is never the case. The Bible reminds us: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." Psalms 23:4

Imagine if we as Christians can feel alone and abandoned at times, how must others feel who don't know Christ? The offering that we give today brings joy and hope to those who feel lost and abandoned. They are like that young boy. The message of hope is like the aunt, ready to bring peace and hope to those who have believed they were all alone.

Today, let us bring a message of joy to others by opening our hearts and giving to advance the spread of the Gospel.

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## **March 20, 2021 - Local Church Budget**

Jesus saw the widow bring her offering to the temple. She gave two of the smallest coins in the temple monetary system. She waited until she thought no one was watching, for her gift was so small. Yet, Jesus commended her. "Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all." Luke 21:3 How can that be?

The rich gave large coins. But the widow gave her heart as part of her offering.

A Christian writer commented on this passage. "A heart of love and genuine faith in a worthy object is more acceptable to God than the most costly gift. The poor widow gave her living to do the little that she did.... It was this unselfish spirit and unwavering faith that won the commendation of Jesus." {3SP p. 72}

We may think the size of our offering makes it valuable to God. But no, the size of the heart gives value to the gift. God will take the offering we give with our hearts and magnify our offering into something special for His service.

Does this mean we should not sacrifice as we give? Here are the words of Jesus. "For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had." Luke 21:4 The widow sacrificed with her heart. As a result, God blessed her gift.

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The offering this today is for the youth. I love that word- youth. Say it with me - "YOUTH". I love being around young people, they're vibrant, they're alive, they're full of energy and potential, and they're fun! You never hear them complain about their problems or their aches and pains, they are full of life, they enjoy life, and I love to be around them and grab some of that energy and enthusiasm! I've heard some people say that our youth are the leaders of tomorrow, but I think they are the leaders of today! Remember to include them in all you do: in your church activities, in your evangelism efforts, and especially in your prayers. Give them positive reinforcement, uplift them; stop telling them to be quiet, tell them to speak up for Christ! Don't forget the youth in your offering today. That's the best way to feel young yourself! Amen.

**Today's offering appeal is written by:  
Pastor Steve McKoy.**

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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 and share your material**

Make sure you fully understand and share 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 have 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!