

Readings & *Stewpot* posted on: www.imsda.org/resources

May 4, 2019 – Local Church Budget

Lest we also forget. When London was being blitzed during World War II, this article appeared in one of the British newspapers:

“We have been a pleasure-loving people, dishonoring God’s day, picnicking and bathing. Now the seashore is barred—no picnics, no bathing.

“We have preferred motor travel to church going. Now there is a shortage of motor fuel.

“We have ignored the ringing of church bells calling us to worship. Now the bells cannot ring, except to warn us of an invasion.

“We have left our churches half empty when they should have been well filled with worshippers. Now they are in ruins.

“We would not listen to the way of peace. Now we are forced to listen to the way of war.

“The money we would not give to the Lord’s work, now is taken from us in higher taxes and the high cost of living.

“The food for which we refused to give God thanks, now is unobtainable.

“The service we refused to give to God, is now conscripted for our country.

“Lives we refused to live under God’s control are now under the nation’s control.

“Nights we would not spend watching unto prayer are now spent anxiously in air raid precautions.”

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.”- Ps. 33:12

May 11, 2019 – Disaster & Famine Relief

Adventist Community Services Disaster Response has been serving the community for years. In the small town of Beaumont, Texas, more than 50 percent of homes in some of the communities were destroyed as raging waters flooded the area. ACS DR visited one senior who pleaded that we come and look at the damage. We went into her home and the smell of mold and mildew permeated our nostrils. We stepped through the mud that still covered portions of the floor as she pointed to where the water had come in her home. As we looked at the damage, she pulled out her cell phone to show us the river-like stream that ran through the house directly where we stood. We couldn’t help but notice the black mold moving its way up the walls of her home. Showing concern, we explained that it was not safe to live in a building under these types of conditions. She looked at us with earnest eyes and simply asked, “Where would you have me go?” We had no answer.

Experiencing these types of events convinced ACS DR that we needed to find additional ways to help in recoveries such as this one. Through many discussions with Union leadership, we created a Rebuild Program that is presently taking shape in both the Southern and Southwestern Unions. While this work is somewhat different from our norm, ACS DR is working to address needs in our Communities. –Derrick Lea, NAD Adventist Community Services

May 18, 2019 – Local Church Budget

Adventist Single Adult Ministries Sabbath. Look around your church and you will notice church members and guests who have never been married, who are divorced, or who have lost their loved one. They are as important to the church as anyone else, and yet, often they feel forgotten or neglected by the church.

The apostle Paul wrote to the unmarried in the church at Corinth that not being married provides some opportunities that those who are married do not have. “I want all of you to be free from worry. An unmarried man worries about how to please the Lord. But a married man has more worries. He must worry about the things of this world, because he wants to please his wife. So, he is pulled in two directions. Unmarried women and women who have never been married worry only about pleasing the Lord, and they keep their bodies and minds pure. But a married woman worries about the things of this world, because she wants to please her husband. What I am saying is for your own good—it isn’t to limit your freedom. I want to help you to live right and to love the Lord above all else,” (1 Cor. 7:32-35, CEV).

Whether married or unmarried, we all can participate in the ministry of the church. Through our prayers, personal efforts, and financial support, we contribute and assume responsibility and ownership for the mission with which God has entrusted us. The offering today, which is designated for the local church budget, demonstrates our response to God’s generosity to us.—Claudio Consuegra, NAD Family Ministries

May 25, 2019 – Combined Youth Ministries (Conference Advance)

Praise the Lord for committees! This is a rather unusual title for an offertory reading, but we really mean it!

Part of the democratic process of the Seventh-day Adventist Church since the beginning has been committees. Yes, it does take longer to get things done, but it is really the only way to ensure that a proper system of checks and balances is in place.

On the local church level, it reminds us that no one is big enough or important enough to make all the decisions. We have committees to plan various forms of outreach, maintenance and building needs, programs, funding, membership issues, etc.

Yes, there is give and take, and free expression of opinions (99 percent of the time without hostility). And every committee is bathed in prayer and ultimately dependent, not on man’s wisdom, but on God’s.

So, while you are home in your easy chair some evening, remember that a brother or sister from the church may be sacrificing his or her personal time to make sure that the church runs well, and things get

accomplished. Let's praise the Lord for all our wonderful volunteers and let's even praise the Lord for committees!

Our offering today is for Local Conference Advance. Let's continue to faithfully support God's work throughout our region.
