

# Local Church Budget

**June 4, 2022**

Revelations 18:3 says, “For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries.”

We worship God with our resources because it is one of God’s protective walls against the Deceitful One. The Bible portrays Babylon as a major threat to God’s people. Prophetic Babylon serving intoxicated wine conveys the idea of deception (Prov. 20:1). One of Babylon’s final deceptions is to present itself as the source of economic prosperity. This manipulation works well because it appeals to our natural attraction for material gain. Are we not the generation known as “lovers of money”? (2 Tim. 3:2). How do we stand in resistance to the deception of Babylon?

Observing squirrels can teach us a lesson. These cute and furry creatures often roam in your backyard, but they are always cautious not to come too close and are furtive when you approach them. However, when their reserve of acorns is almost depleted, you may attract them by offering them some nuts. Their need for food leads them to lower their defense mechanism. Effective manipulations function in the same way: they appeal to a perceived need. When one experiences a financial crisis, the means to acquire some income become particularly attractive!

The practice of tithing, systematic offerings, and donations helps us constantly remember that God is the source of true riches (Deut. 8:18). Hence, we don’t have to yield to the Babylonians’ manipulative schemes to obtain what we need. Furthermore, the craving for material possession loses its grip over us when we are already appreciative through giving of what we have received. Ellen G. White wrote: “Constant, self-denying benevolence is God’s remedy for the sins of selfishness and covetousness” (Testimonies to the Churches, vol. 3, p. 548).

We are called to get out of Babylon. This includes resisting the manipulation of Babylon in issues of finances. This week, through our tithing and regular offerings we can stand in resistance to Babylon.

# NAD Women's Ministries

**June 11, 2022**

Proverbs 31:8 says, "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute."

Women are specifically designed by God to meet the needs of other women. Women's Ministries is the best way to connect the church and unchurched women in your community to each other and to introduce them to Jesus Christ.

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 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. COVID-19 didn't slow down ministry; it just moved it online. Local, conference, union, and division women's ministries offered online and live webinars, retreats, seminars, and get togethers. Zoom became a place where church and community members gathered to talk, encourage, study, discuss books, and pray together.

Established in 1898 at the urging of Ellen White, the Women's Ministries Offering funds evangelistic outreach events and leadership training for women across the North American Division who partner with God in service through ministries that impact girls, teens, young adults, and women.

Thank you for supporting Women's Ministries as we seek to encourage, equip, and challenge girls, teens, and women to grow deeply in God and serve Him uniquely with their gifts and talents.

# Local Church Budget

June 18, 2022

1 Peter 1:20 says, “He was chosen before the creation of the world but was revealed in these last times for your sake.”

We give systematically and regularly because the divine Model has demonstrated that His giving to humanity was not an afterthought. The plan to offer His Son and rescue humanity from sin was developed before the creation of the universe, and at the set time, Jesus came to planet earth. This clearly illustrates the consideration of a loving God for fallen humanity. In response to the example set by the greatest Giver, Apostle Paul gave the following admonition to the believers in Corinth, “On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up...” (1 Cor. 16:2). Giving that is planned, honors the receiver.

Think about your feelings when you receive a belated birthday note from someone whom you consider close and important to you. Sometimes the message comes when they see your social media post thanking others for their well wishes. These belated notes are rarely the most valued. When we want to show someone that he or she counts and is special, we usually mark our calendar and even add a reminder for us not to miss the important event. The best expression of love is both spontaneous and planned.

Which type of giver are we when we have to express love and thanks to God? Do we depend solely on the prompting of our impulses and feelings? Are we the ones who asked the deacon to wait while we dig deep into our purse or pocket? Or do we remember about returning tithe and giving offerings when we see an expectedly higher balance on our bank statement at the end of the month? How do we honor the Savior who does not treat us as an afterthought? This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular and systematic offerings, let us show that our God is first and foremost.

# Combined Youth Ministries

**June 25, 2022**

On April 10-13, 2022, 90 students from ten conference schools and 4 home schools participated in Outdoor School at Camp Heritage. Each student was actively involved in learning Dutch Oven Cooking, Fire Building/Camp Cookery and Christian Story Telling. Many of the students, teachers and parents who attended this event had never been to Camp Heritage. Several students talked about coming back for Summer Camp as they were impressed by the well-kept cabins, the lake, Cowboy Camp and all the other buildings and venues. Through your support of the Combined Youth Ministries Offering, we are able to provide the upkeep and improvements to Camp Heritage every year. Also, your support of our elementary schools through this same offering, allows kids to experience Outdoor School and many other Conference events planned by the Education Department. Thank you for your continued monthly support of the Combined Youth Ministries Offering.