

# Local Church Budget

**July 2, 2022**

Matthew 24:14 says, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

We worship with our tithe and offerings because we wait eagerly to see our God face to face. Scripture associates the Second Coming with the proclamation of the gospel to the whole world (Matt. 24:14). He desires “everyone to come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9). Our involvement in doing and supporting God’s mission makes it possible for others to hear and receive the good news. Peter describes the waiting experience as an active one: “as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming” (2 Pet. 3:12). Ellen G. White clarifies Peter’s words: “By giving the gospel to the world it is in our power to hasten our Lord’s return. We are not only to look for but to hasten the coming of the day of God” (The Desire of Ages, 633, 634). It appears that God has given us the possibility to hasten His coming.

The example of a sled helps us to understand the meaning of hastening Christ’s return. If you put a sled at the top of a hill and allow it to glide, it will reach the bottom after some time. This is the natural course due to gravity and normal force. However, kids who like playing in the snow know that you can speed up your sled as it goes downhill. Among other tricks, you can spray cooking oil on the bottom of the sled, pack down the snow on the track, stay low on the sled, or balance your weight on the sled. As a result, you go faster, and it is more fun. In the same way, the reality of the Second Coming is unalterable; it will take place, but it can happen earlier if we associate with Jesus and reach out to others.

Are we going to forsake this opportunity to speed up His coming? This week, as we worship with our tithe and regular offerings, we can reveal how much we are wishing for the Second Coming.

# World Budget

**July 9, 2022**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is known throughout the world for its mission outreach. Your regular and systematic mission offerings are like a life-giving river with tributaries flowing around the world, carrying refreshing water to mission fields. Every time we give our mission offerings, we're adding water to a life-giving river that flows through often parched lands bringing life and hope. We're helping the church grow, not only locally but also in areas that we may not have even heard of. We're assisting missionaries we may never meet and building schools and clinics that we probably will never visit. We are helping plant churches we may never worship in. And we're bringing life to the church's mission by introducing Jesus's love to the hearts and minds of people all around the world.

Did you know that even before COVID-19, the Adventist Church was experiencing a noticeable decline in mission offerings? Part of the reason is that we sometimes want to give to a specific project or to put our offerings toward something special that stirs our hearts. We see the results, and we feel satisfied. Giving to the mission offering may not be as glamorous as giving to a specific, well-advertised project or program. But mission offerings help sustain all mission projects.

Just as we do not know where every drop of water in a river goes, we can see the results, and they are beautiful. Psalm 104 says, "He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches" (104:10–12).

In Matthew 28, Jesus Himself said, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (28:19–20). Please prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit to show you what more you can do to support and sustain our Lord's work until He comes.

# Local Church Budget

July 16, 2022

2 Kings 4:7 says that she went and told the man of God, and he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debts. You and your sons can live on what is left.”

We worship the God who makes promises and provides instructions. Our Bible text describes the initiative of a widow after she experienced a miracle, a room full of jars with oil. She returned to Elisha to express gratitude. Then the prophet spoke these final words to her: “Live on what is left!” These words stand as a promise about the sufficiency of God’s provision. The widow did not need to fear for her future. They are also an instruction not to live on borrowed resources. Previously, her family contracted a huge debt which resulted in painful consequences. Elisha’s departing advice was for her to manage what she had wisely. The Lord does not only perform miracles, but He also teaches us how to use our blessings.

The instruction “live on what is left” is still relevant for us today. In many countries, people did not agree with the statement “before I buy something, I should carefully consider whether I can afford it”. Personal financial management is a major deficiency for our generation, bringing disastrous consequences. Believers who have the best intentions to partner in God’s mission often do not because their finances are in a mess. The following words are unfortunately a common description of reality: Many do not remember the cause of God, and carelessly spend money on various amusements, on dress and folly, and when there is a call made for the advancement of God’s work in home and foreign missions, they have nothing to give, or even have overdrawn their account.

As we claim God’s promises daily, let us also be diligent in the management of our resources. Some may be struggling not because the Lord has not already blessed them but because of their lack of self-discipline and good management. This week as we worship with our tithes and offerings, let us choose to be better managers of God’s resources.

# Combined Youth Ministries

July 23, 2022

In Proverbs 1:7 we read, “To have knowledge, you must first have reverence for the Lord.”

How is reverence developed? Where does a child learn reverence for the Lord?

A child learns from their parents and the support system that surrounds them.

What support system do we as a church provide? How do we minister to our children?

As our children grow, the church family, provides opportunities for our children to learn reverence for the Lord.

We provide Sabbath School classes each Sabbath, Adventures and Pathfinders, elementary and secondary education, and summer camp! These ministries provide the opportunity for our children to grow in Jesus! Please consider the importance of today’s Combined Youth Ministries offering, the impact on our children, and the importance of spreading the Gospel so Jesus may return soon! Please give generously today and each month in support of our children ministry’s programs.

# Local Church Budget

July 30, 2022

Mark 6:37 says, but he answered, “Give them something to eat.”

We worship with our offerings and donations because Jesus invites us to care for others as He does. One day, the crowd noticed the movement of Jesus and His disciples and came to meet them. Full of compassion, Jesus spent the entire day teaching, blessing, and healing. It was a spiritual feast. As the sun was lowering in the sky, the disciples asked Jesus to send the crowd away to seek food. The crowd would soon get hungry, and there was no bakery in the desert. But instead of attending to their quite sensible request, Jesus invited them to “give them something to eat”. This unexpected answer reveals Jesus’s concern for both the spiritual and the temporal needs of people. This is also our mission: “When we see human beings in distress, whether through affliction or through sin, we shall never say, this does not concern me.”

The story of Emily from Madagascar reminds us that we can put a smile back on people’s faces. Before 2015, Emily was always frowning. She was a single mother whose children were always hungry, and she could not afford to send them to school. Then, she joined the Adventist Disaster and Relief Agency food security project in her town. There she received training, access to farm tools, and drought-resistant seeds. As a result, she started her own farm by planting sorghum, sweet potatoes, pumpkins and cassava. Cassava is a starchy tuberous root of a tropical tree, used as food in tropical countries. Now, she has enough to feed and clothe her family, pay their school fees, and invest in the future. Above all, she now has a huge smile on her face.

Would you like to do mission work in the footsteps of Jesus and put smiles on people’s faces? Giving is one of the means established by God to alleviate suffering, express His love, and bring back hope. Let us give generously to support our local church today.