

Local Church Budget

December 7, 2024

Recently a friend of mine had major surgery on her jaw, which would prevent her from eating normal food. She lived far away from me, so I encouraged her in her recovery with texts and my prayers. When she recovered enough to be able to talk, she shared with me how well her local church had cared for her. From the moment she went into surgery, to the days that followed, they provided her with rides and round-the-clock care. She lived alone at the time, and she had been quite concerned about the logistics, but her local church family had acted as her own family would have, making sure she had everything she needed. They even went as far as providing her with a gift card to purchase smoothie drinks for the weeks that followed, until she could go back to eating solid food.

When I think of what it means to be a church family, my friend's recovery from surgery comes to mind. Not everyone is blessed to live in a loving family with others in their household. When the church steps in to provide that necessary comfort and care, our faith takes on a whole new meaning! Today's offering is for our local church budget. As you give today, give with an open heart, and consider all the ways our own church is touching lives.

Adventist Community Services

December 14, 2024

People come in all shapes and sizes, and so do their needs. For over 50 years Adventist Community Services has offered diverse services tailored to fit the needs of the community. Often this is in the form of tangible goods and services such as food, clothing, shelter, and showers as well as emotional support if needed.

Portland Adventist Community Services Director, Laura, was in a meeting when she heard a woman wailing outside her door. She excused herself to check on the situation, but found another staff member already sitting quietly with the grieving woman. The center's chaplain was called, who was able to spend more time listening and offering comfort. Most encouraging to Laura was a remark the woman made later, "I was overwhelmed and knew this would be a safe place to come."

Whether giving food and cooking gear, dental care, clothing, after school tutoring, or English language skills, hope and encouragement is the most valuable item found in ACS ministries.

Ellen White shared in Ministry of Healing page 143 that "The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me"".

Adventist Community Service's ministries mingle in our communities, bringing Jesus' goodwill to the people. Join us and become the practical hands and feet of God in our world.

Local Church Budget

December 21, 2024

This time can be a busy time for many! If you have children in school as I do, it is a blur of Christmas programs, family traditions, and various gatherings of the people I love. It can be a time of great joy or a time of great sorrow, depending on many factors. Once all the busyness of the holiday is done, things actually slow down and reset.

One beautiful thing I have noticed is that where I live, there tends to be a stillness and a quietness in this season. The days are shorter, the weather is colder, and all of that combined slows me and my family down, and we simply adjust our pace to enjoy the rhythm of winter. I recently ran across the term “wintering,” referring to easing into the softer pace of the winter season.

As we look back on this year, let’s take time to reflect on how God has shown up for us this year. Was there a difficult thing your family went through? Is there a way you can see how prayer helped you navigate that time? Our offering today is for the local church budget. Let us give today from hearts grateful for all that we recognize God has done for us.

Combined Youth Ministries

December 28, 2024

All across our Conference, teachers and students are enjoying a Christmas break from school. The last month has been a flurry of Christmas pageant practices, set painting, organizing costumes, and finishing lessons and grading before the end of the semester.

We thank the Lord for each of these teachers who work tirelessly to provide a strong academic education for our children often at the sacrifice of their own personal time and resources. We know the commitment they show to their schools and students doesn't just come from a duty to their job but from a higher calling to be ministers of the Gospel in their classrooms.

You can also be a part of the mission to provide Adventist Education in the Iowa-Missouri Conference. When you give to Combined Youth Ministry, 50% of your offerings go to support the Adventist Elementary schools in our conference, 25% goes to Sunnydale Adventist Academy, and 25% goes to support Camp Heritage.

As we draw close to the start of a new year, we want to encourage you to plan to consistently give 1% of your income to this important fund. If every person who pays tithe in this conference would give 1% to Combined Youth Ministries, schools would have more than enough of the resources they need to continue to offer Adventist Education as well as start new schools in untapped areas.

Please prayerfully consider how the Lord is leading you to give in 2025.