

August 2

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

Birthdays were always a special and happy occasion in our home. When it's one of the sibling's birthdays, we gave all our kids gifts to enjoy, not just the celebrant. But when it was our birthday, during their younger years, they would draw pictures and color them expressing their creativity and love for their parents. They didn't have the money to purchase gifts or nice Hallmark cards. Yet when they presented them to us, we cherished those handmade cards more than all the commercial cards produced by Hallmark. Why? Because they were our children's expression of love from the heart. It's hard not to express this love without giving a gift.

Have you thought of giving a birthday thank offering to God? We could never give as much as God gives us but a birthday can give us the opportunity to give a special offering to thank Him for all He has done for us.

Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's thank God for each birthday He has given us and the weekly birthday of His world, the Sabbath. Let's pray...

August 9

Christian Record Services for the Blind

In the heart of compassion and dedication, Christian Record Services (CRS) stands tall as it celebrates an incredible milestone—125 years of unwavering commitment to serving individuals worldwide who are blind or visually impaired. Since its inception, CRS has been a beacon of hope, breaking down barriers and providing life-changing services to individuals facing vision challenges.

I love that we can share the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ with people who are blind or experiencing vision loss. One such person was Elizabeth, who was blinded by a shotgun blast to the face. Through her love for Jesus she was able to forgive the ones responsible. Elizabeth attends National Camps for Blind Children, a service of CRS. She says, “There is so much love, happiness, and joy at camp.”

Camps are just one of the services Christian Record Services offers. Other programs include Bible study lessons, books, magazines, and Bibles in audio, braille, and large print from a library of over 2,000 titles. Members can also deepen social, educational, and spiritual connections through PhoneFaith, scholarships for higher education, and, of course, National Camps for Blind Children.

These services and programs are free of charge to people who are legally blind. Your offerings will help further the ministry’s mission to *empower* people who are blind to *engage* their communities and *embrace* the Blessed Hope.

August 16

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

Gardening is fun if you know what you're doing. When I first heard about pruning, I thought this was harming the poor plant but actually the opposite occurs. When you prune fruit-bearing plants you will stimulate the production of more flowers which will, in turn, develop into fruits. Also, pruning reduces the number of stems, branches, and leaves that may be competing for the resources which are needed to produce fruit.

Likewise, giving to the Lord our time, talents, temple, treasure, and our testimony is like pruning. What logically sounds as if it's taking away from us, is really allowing us to bear more fruit for God's glory. The more we cut away from personal use and give it to God, the more He multiplies what we gave Him and the more fruitful we become.

The offering for today is for the local church budget. By faith let's answer God's call and let Him prune us of anything unneeded in our lives. Let's pray...

August 23

Wisconsin Conference Budget

There are two types of givers. One group says, “they give until it hurts!” and the other group says, “every time they give, it hurts!”

The apostle Paul says we should give “not out of necessity or grudgingly. For God loves a cheerful giver.” (2 Corinthians 9:7, NKJV).

So how does one become a cheerful giver? As God to give you a heart that gives cheerfully. A heart that delights to be a blessing to others and loves to give!

Our offering for today is for the Wisconsin Conference Budget. With the Holy Spirit filling our hearts we will give cheerfully and willingly. Our hearts will be filled with thankfulness that together we are able to help advance the work here in Wisconsin.

August 30

Local Church Budget

Perhaps in your journey of life someone gave to you and that inspired you to give to someone else. Data from a Barna Group research project called “Why Giving Is Good” reveals that generosity is reciprocated. This is especially true among practicing Christians—the 65% majority—say they have been the recipient of someone’s generosity and now are motivated to model generosity for others.¹

How has God blessed you this month and this year? As we grow in our understanding that every good gift is from the Lord it fills our hearts to overflowing and we reciprocate that giving. We give according to the blessings He has given us.

Our offering for today is for the local church budget. How has God given to you? How have you given to God? Let’s pray...

¹ (Barna Group, “Why Giving Is Good”, Nov. 2021).