

December 6

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

When I was young, I was confused about why there was an offering call every worship service. After all, God owns the universe! Why doesn't He just provide for our needs miraculously? He could!

Then I read a passage in Psalms and began to understand why, "If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all its fullness. Offer to God thanksgiving and pay your vows to the Most High. Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify Me." (Psalm 50: 12,14-15, NKJV).

This is where I learned that God wants His children to trust Him for their needs. Through this experience God wants a **RELATIONSHIP** with His children, not a donation. This giving, however, builds the relational experience where we learn to trust and glorify Him in all areas of our lives. As we give, God blesses so we can bless others and grow His kingdom.

Today we are called to be partners with God and our fellow church members as we give to our local church budget. Let's pray...

December 13

Adventist Community Services

In Luke 10:30-37 Jesus tells a parable about a priest, a Levite, and a Samaritan who came upon a man who had been beaten and robbed. When the priest and the Levite saw the man, they concluded that their help was optional. They *could* help, but they did not *have* to help, and in the face of competing priorities, they opted *not* to help.

The Samaritan, on the other hand, did not see his help as optional. Not even the hatred between his country and the other man's could overcome his compassion. He saw no alternative but to help.

In Luke 10:37 Jesus tells us all to “go and do likewise.” As Christians we see each person in need as a beloved son or daughter of God and we are compelled to help.

Adventist Community Services, or ACS, is part of this response, serving communities in Christ's name. ACS is the Adventist Church—you and me—helping our neighbors in need.

Across the North American Division our offerings go to work, helping the hurting. Whether by providing food, teaching literacy, distributing diapers, organizing job fairs, or opening dental clinics, our help is not optional. It is the extension of God's love to His creation.

Today's offering is an invitation to join the ACS team through your gift. Thank you for helping to bring relief and comfort to your neighbors and making compassion your priority.

December 20

Local Church Budget

The Christmas season is upon us. For some the calendar is filled with Christmas programs, family traditions and various gatherings of the people we love. It can be a time of great joy as we experience the most wonderful time of the year. For others it can be a time of great sorrow, depending on many factors. The holiday season can feel lonely and long.

Whatever you are experiencing this week, remember to let your thoughts and affections be turned to Jesus, the “Reason for the season.” God emptied heaven when He sent His only Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. He is our greatest Gift. Take time to reflect and recognize how Jesus has shown up for you this year.

Our offering for today is for our local church budget. Thank you for your support and commitment as we seek to uplift Jesus to the community around us. Let’s pray...

December 27

Wisconsin Conference Budget

Today's offering is for the Wisconsin Conference Budget. This offering addresses specific needs as well as a variety of special projects. As of this printing, the Wisconsin Conference is a sisterhood of 86 churches, companies and mission groups that help each other to accomplish important objectives that are beyond the reach of any one church alone.

"Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us of which we know nothing. Those who accept the one principle of making the service of God supreme, will find perplexities vanish and a plain path before their feet" (*Ministry of Healing*, p.481).

Let's make this our motto and aim for the coming new year! Encourage your church to keep a journal of all the amazing ways God provides and the opportunities He gives for you to provide for others, locally and beyond our community.

Through the spirit of generosity and sacrifice we partner with God and take the work forward for His kingdom. Let's pray...