

North American Division

2025 Offertory Readings

Our mission is “to reach the North American Division and the world with the distinctive, Christ-centered Seventh-day Adventist message of hope and wholeness.” Stewardship Ministries is dedicated to helping members catch this vision.

Systematic giving is part of being a faithful steward. When we return tithe, we are recognizing that God owns everything. Giving offerings expresses our gratitude for what God has done for us. God loves a cheerful giver and He has chosen this method to support those who preach the gospel as they reach the world with His message.

You will find an extensive selection of videos emphasizing various offerings by visiting our website at www.nadstewardship.org/videos. You can use them in conjunction with the offering appeals or in place of them. They average between a-minute-and-a-half and two minutes in length.

Faithful stewardship is a matter of the heart. We don’t give to receive love and blessings from God. We give because we have already received God’s love and blessings. We give because our hearts and lives are full of the joy of the Lord. We give because we want to live out God’s character of abundant generosity—especially as exhibited through the giving of the ultimate gift: the life of His Son. Giving is a natural response for recipients of God’s goodness.

God’s blessings to you as you help others experience the joy of faithful stewardship.

Michael Anthony Harpe



Director
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North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists

NADSTEWARDSHIP.ORG

Dear Presenter,

Thank you for your willingness to share the offering appeals with your local congregation. It is a wonderful and gratifying responsibility. How you present these readings will determine how effective they are. Here are some suggestions to consider before you share:

Pray: Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit. Pray that God will use your words to speak to the hearts in the congregation.

Practice: Read over the appeal at least three times to familiarize yourself with it. Read slowly and clearly. Underline or highlight key words to be emphasized during the reading. Strive to share these readings with excellence.

Prepare: Sometimes materials for special days are sent to your local church to distribute or present along with the appeal. Determine how they can be used most effectively.

Personalize: If you have a personal experience that you think will add strength to the appeal, please share it. People connect with others through stories.

Present with Passion: A presentation can have all the above elements, but without passion, it may not stir the hearts of the hearers. Ask God to fill your heart with His Spirit so that you can present the appeal with spirit and truth.

May God richly bless you and speak through you as we take this journey together in 2025.

January 4

Local Church Budget

The first Sabbath of the New Year is an opportunity to press the reset button of our lives, goals, and relationship with God. If you keep a prayer journal, take it out sometime today and reflect on how God has led in your life and your family's life. During this self-evaluation, ask God what changes you need to make for the coming year. Then pray for the Holy Spirit to give you strength to transform each area of your life that needs a fix.

Jesus emphasized the great principle of life when He said, "But seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33, NKJV). The key word is FIRST. Many people seek the kingdom of God, but they allow the cares of this life to dominate and consume them so they don't have anything left to give to God.

Let's put Christ and His kingdom first. Jesus didn't say not to ask for other things like as happiness, security, success, or even money. When God comes first, He will reorder our lives and show His power by blessing us in all ways according to His purpose. Sometimes He will even bless us through trials.

Let's ask God to empty us of self and fill us with the Holy Spirit each day of this year so we can do what He wants us to. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

January 11, 2025

Religious Liberty

It's often said that religious liberty is in the DNA of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. From the very start of the Advent movement, we stood for an idea that was radical for its time—that religious freedom was for *everyone*, regardless of who they were or what they believed.

What shaped this belief? It was our conviction that God doesn't want forced obedience. As Ellen White wrote, "God desires from all His creatures the service of love—service that springs from an appreciation of His character."

And so, in the very first issue of *Liberty* magazine, which rolled off the presses in 1906, the editor described this unique Adventist understanding of religious liberty. He wrote: "We believe no power but the power of love can rightfully compel the human conscience."

Today, almost 120 years later, the culture around us has changed dramatically. But our commitment to religious liberty as a reflection of God's character hasn't changed.

As students of prophecy, we know that a time will come when our freedom to worship will be taken away. But until then, God calls us be His ambassadors of liberty—to faithfully reflect His character and His love within our communities and our nation.

Today, let's continue in the footsteps of our early Adventist pioneers in generously supporting the religious liberty ministries of our church.

January 18

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

It didn't make sense. When I was young, I was confused about why there was an offering call every worship service. I really did not understand why a church who worshipped the God who owns the universe and galaxies would let His people beg for funds. I rationalized that perhaps God could not afford to take care of His children, or He wants His children to be poor. But why doesn't He just provide for their needs miraculously? He could.

Then when I read a passage in Psalms I 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 glorify Him in all things in our lives. As we give, God blesses so we can bless others and grow His kingdom.

Let's glorify the Lord with our offerings. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

January 25

Minnesota Conference Ministries

For many, many years the Minnesota Advance offering has been described, promoted, discussed, advertised, and still after all these years we are still not entirely clear what that offering is all about. So we have decided to rename that offering in hopes that the name can begin to speak for itself. We are calling it the Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget offering because that is what it is.

Perhaps you don't realize it, but tithe funds are used almost exclusively to pay workers like pastors and teachers. Tithe cannot be used for other parts of mission. Therefore, everything else that happens in Minnesota like evangelism, Maplewood Academy, North Star Camp, and all other aspects of mission in this conference are funded by Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget offerings. Without this offering Minnesota Mission activity just withers away.

In addition to the tithe God mandates for paying workers, He also asks for our voluntary gifts to support His mission. For us that happens in Minnesota! Today our offerings will go to the Minnesota mission offering. And you are encouraged to make Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget a part of your weekly giving routine. Together we can make a real impact for God's mission in Minnesota!

February 1

Local Church Budget

Proverbs 3 says, “Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; so, your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine” (Proverbs 3:9-10, NKJV).

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

Shortly after our wedding, we flew to Berrien Springs, Michigan to start my seminary classes. We moved into our barely furnished apartment. We just had our clothes and whatever else we could pack in our suitcases. This prompted a shopping excursion.

What struck me was a powerful wave of emotion when we purchased our very first microwave and a set of pots and pans. It was not the objects themselves, but the realization that they were ours, collectively. We owned these items as a married couple, together.

When we accept Christ as our Savior, we enter into a partnership with God spiritually and with our material possessions. Everything we own is God's; we are merely stewards managing these things on His behalf.

How we view our possessions, and how we handle them, becomes a litmus test of our faith. It's through this stewardship plan of giving that we truly “honor the Lord.” When we focus on honoring the Lord, His promise is that we will be abundantly filled to overflowing.

Today, let's be filled to overflowing by giving back to God and sharing our blessings. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

February 8, 2025

Adventist Television Ministries Evangelism

In 1 Corinthians 9:22 Paul says, “I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some” (NIV). As one of those possible means to save some, the Adventist church in North America is using television. There are millions of people who watch Adventist media programs every year. If the Apostle Paul would have been alive in the 21st century, he would be sharing a Christ-centered message of hope and wholeness through technology and media.

Jesus told the Apostle Peter, “Feed my sheep.” Peter would also be using the internet and social media to feed His lambs. We are living in a time when people are watching more TV than reading books or pamphlets. The average person watches TV for around 2 hours and 51 minutes while reading for no more than 16 minutes and 48 seconds during the average day.

Ellen White said this in 1914, “the circulation of the printed page has come to be a mighty factor in the dissemination of the truths of the third angel's message.” (*Review & Herald*, November 5, 1914). If she was alive today, Mrs. White would point to TV as the mighty factor in preaching the three angels’ message.

Your offering today will help Adventist Television Ministries continue to reach millions of people around the world and help spread the gospel to those who are searching and those who are lost. Help us fulfill the great commission.

February 15

Local Church Budget

When Joseph Leek died, he left nearly \$1.8 million to an organization that provided guide dogs for the blind. Nothing unusual there. Except that nobody, not even his own family, had any idea that he had that kind of money. The 90-year-old lived like a pauper, according to his daughters. He watched television at a neighbor's house to save on electricity, put off home repairs, and bought secondhand clothes. Joseph's problem was not the lack of money; he was driven to save money to help others.

Likewise, the lack of funds isn't the real issue in the church, but a lack of understanding in the purpose of giving and why God installed this as part of the redemptive restoration process. When we don't participate in giving, it weakens our spirituality and the spirit of generosity.

By giving regularly, we nurture a generous spirit which aligns more with Christ's character. Giving offerings shouldn't be motivated by earthly rewards, but by sharing in Christ's eternal glory. Now this is priceless!

The right understanding of giving should propel us to give more for His glory. That's why our donations to the church should not be driven by emotional appeals and feelings, but by our love and deep commitment to Christ and the people He gave His life for.

Today, let's ask the Holy Spirit to help us give so we can reflect Christ's unselfishness. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

February 22

Minnesota Conference Ministries

Evangelism

Evangelism is all about making disciples, which are the marching orders Jesus gave us when He said, “Go and make disciples,” just before He ascended to heaven. Minnesota is serious about that commission, which is why we have the Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget offering. A significant portion of that offering funds evangelism around the state. Every church that submits an application (or more than one) with creative evangelism ideas is eligible to receive a significant amount of funding for their plans.

As we plan for this year’s evangelism efforts, remember that what you give now and throughout the rest of the year towards the Minnesota Conference Ministries offering will determine what is available for next year’s local evangelism projects.

When we all work together to add even small amounts to the Minnesota Conference Ministries fund each Sabbath, it seems like God mysteriously multiplies it because each year we usually have the funds to issue \$200,000 or more for evangelism in Minnesota!

Today the offering is for the Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget. Please make this Minnesota mission offering a part of your regular giving plan because this mission fund covers expenses that tithe cannot be used for, since tithe is restricted primarily for paying workers. Everything else we do to follow Jesus’ commission in Minnesota must happen through our freewill offerings.

March 1

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

Several years ago, I was studying the subject of motivation and motivational factors that drive people. Some people will use reward or threat to get people to respond such as receiving a paycheck or getting fired. Others use fear and guilt. They create fear of losing something if they don't act. Some are motivated by statistical measures and defined goals that provide them with a clear benchmark to strive towards. However, I discovered that all these are low-level motivators and only short term.

In the spiritual world, the same principles apply when it comes to giving tithes and offerings. The highest motivation should be our love for Christ in response to His love for us! This stems from a deep, personal connection and commitment that far outweighs any other incentives.

“We belong to God; we are His sons and daughters—His by creation, and His by the gift of His only-begotten Son for our redemption. ‘Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's’” (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p.72).

We give our offerings not to pay for His sacrifice. It wouldn't even come close, but to show our love for Him.

Our offering today is for the local church budget. Let's give in responses to Christ great love for us!

March 8, 2025

Adventist World Radio

(Note to the offering reader: Download the AWR 2025 video and the latest offering resources at awr.org/offering)

Adventist World Radio (AWR) uses many forms of technology to reach people where they are, in their local dialect. From AWR's shortwave towers in Guam to 2,000 radio stations around the world, these messages are broadcasting in more than 130 languages every day. And for those who aren't in range of a radio station, AWR's YouTube videos, ministry app, and tracts are ministering to millions.

In addition, solar-powered Godpods are reaching everyone from prisoners to shepherds! And the ministry's semi-truck in Ukraine is both meeting needs in the community and broadcasting Bible-based messages of hope wherever it goes.

In 2023 and 2024, the ministry joined with the General Conference's "Total Member Involvement" initiative to hold more than 1,500 meetings across 40+ countries during *Christ for Europe*. From the UK to Italy to Ukraine, people made decisions for baptism. Shortly after these events, meetings in Zambia, Rwanda and Papua New Guinea saw record crowds and baptisms.

God predicted that one day we would be "utterly amazed" (Habakkuk 1:5, NIV) at what He would do—and we are!

Thank you for your support of Adventist World Radio.

March 15

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

I visited a country during a mission trip where the people didn't have many conveniences or material things like we do in North America. They lived in dilapidated homes where conditions were deplorable. No one owned vehicles so they walked. Despite their sad state of affairs, the people seemed happy and content with what little they had.

Their faith in God was rich and genuine, resulting in praise and melodious singing as they went about their daily activities. They didn't seem to worry as much. I was humbled and ashamed to say that I required many things to be comfortable.

I learned that the greatest danger is the accumulation of things. Why? Because we focus most of our time and energy on what is not kingdom-worthy. We feel entitled to spend more on ourselves instead of helping those in need.

“If the hearts of God's people were filled with love for Christ, if every church member were thoroughly imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice, if all manifested through earnestness, there would be no lack of funds for home or foreign missions. Our resources would be multiplied; a thousand doors of usefulness would be opened, and we would be invited to enter” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol.6, p.449).

Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

March 22

Minnesota Conference Ministries

How many of you here today are thankful for God's blessings? Although we don't deserve these blessings, they are generously given to us by our Father in heaven.

I've discovered the Bible's teachings of God as the Owner and we as managers. God has set a divine plan reminding us of this owner-manager relationship weekly. Every seventh day of the week, the Saturday Sabbath, is God's day. This holy day is designed for us to worship Him and dedicate our time to Him, while we are entrusted with the management of the remaining six days.

Similarly, every tenth of our income or possessions, known as a tithe, is God's. However, He entrusts us with the management of the remaining 90%. We manage it according to His will and what will give Him glory.

God's plan states that the tithe belongs to Him. We worship Him by returning His share and giving our freewill offerings because of our love for Him. However, sometimes we forget that giving is part of our worship, not simply a financial donation.

The problem starts when we forget we are managers and assume the position of owner. It's easy to forget that everything ultimately belongs to the Lord, including our time...and even every breath we take is a gift from God, isn't it?

Let's worship him by returning our tithes and offerings.
Our offering for today is for Minnesota Conference Ministries.

March 29

Supporting Maplewood Academy's Mission

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today, we have the opportunity to support Maplewood Academy, a key ministry of Seventh-day Adventist education in Minnesota. Our academy's mission is clear: to empower young people with spiritual commitment, academic excellence, and a passion for lifelong learning. In a world facing numerous challenges, Maplewood focuses on developing tomorrow's leaders, critical thinkers, and devoted followers of Christ.

By supporting Maplewood Academy, we invest in a generation of young people who will carry the torch of our faith in His service. Your generous offerings today will help provide resources for spiritual growth, academic programs, and character development. Together, we can ensure that Maplewood continues to be a place where students experience God's presence in a spirit of affirmation and grow into the exceptional young men and women He has created them to be.

As we give today, let us remember the words of Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Your support will help Maplewood Academy fulfill this divine mandate, preparing our youth to shine as lights in the world.

April 5

Local Church Budget

Researchers estimate that there are 10 quadrillion ants on earth. Ants live in colonies and are very industrious with various tasks. Everything they do is for the sake of the “queen” ant. It’s been noted that an ant is helpless without its colony, but when ants work as a team, they are practically unstoppable.

The verse in Psalm 8 humbles me, “What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?” (Psalm 8:4, NKJV) Why is God the Creator so mindful of us human beings? Of all His creatures, God has uniquely lavished His love on us by sacrificing His Son to redeem us. On top of that, He invites us to join Him in the grand purpose of saving humankind.

If we insist on doing our own thing, we are no better than the anonymous ant, just struggling ineffectively to store enough food for the next winter. But when we make God’s interests our interest, His plans as our plans, and return our tithes and offerings, we honor Him and acknowledge Him as our Redeemer, and, like the many ants working together, we take our place in the eternal plan of salvation.

Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let’s pray...

April 12, 2025

Hope Channel International

Hope Channel International (HCI) is an Adventist global media network that offers programs on Christian living with a holistic focus on faith, health, relationships, and community. Hope Channel began broadcasting in North America in 2003. Today, Hope Channel is a global network with more than 80 channels broadcasting in over 100 languages. In December 2023, in response to the heightened sense of loneliness prevalent during the holiday season, Hope Channel International stepped forward with a heartfelt campaign to foster connections and address the epidemic of isolation in our society. At the heart of this initiative was a strategic billboard placement in the iconic Times Square in New York City. Positioned where an average of 330,000 people pass through daily, this strategic move amplifies Hope Channel's reach to millions from diverse backgrounds.

Jesus quoted the following passage from Isaiah 61:1, "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me; Because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted." (NKJV).

Through this campaign in Times Square in New York City and all the different TV programs being shown 24/7, Hope Channel is truly preaching the good news to all the world.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, out of the blessings we have received from your hand, we give back these offerings. Bless Hope Channel as they reach not only the homes, but the hearts of many people.

April 19

Local Church Budget

Charles Schwab, Bank of America, and Fidelity are among many financial institutions that provide financial advisers to help people invest their money to prepare for retirement.

Christ gave solid investment advice, “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal, for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6: NKJV). In other words, invest your treasures in the kingdom of heaven.

God has a simple plan in place to finance His kingdom work here on earth. It’s so simple. First, He blesses His children, and then they return faithfully the tithe and freewill offerings. That’s it.

As there are greater needs in growing God’s kingdom, He increases the blessings He gives to His children. So, the more faithfully we return, the more He gives. This is the divine partnership God wants His people to understand.

There is no other plan, no substitute, no alternate. An all-wise God knew the right plan from the beginning. His investment system is fail-proof.

Do you want to see God do a miracle? Let’s invest in Kingdom work and watch Him work His wonders.

Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let’s pray...

April 26

Minnesota Conference Ministries

North Star Camp

Adventists in Minnesota have something very special in North Star Camp. Beyond a gorgeous property, mission and ministry happens at North Star Camp like it happens nowhere else in Minnesota. There are two obvious reasons for that. First, our kids love going to camp. They associate camp with wonderful memories and positive experiences. Second, the camp staff is dedicated to connecting those positive experiences and memories to the campers' relationship with Jesus. For young people to learn that life with Jesus is wonderfully fun and joyous is one of the best ways to establish them for the rest of their lives in a relationship with Jesus.

This is why North Star Camp receives funds from the Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget offering. This is evangelism at its best among our own children. Every summer, dozens and dozens of young people dedicate their lives to Jesus, request baptismal studies, and are even baptized. Having a nice camp, which we do, is not the measurement of success. The measurement of success is how much North Star Camp contributes to solidly fixing the eyes of kids on Jesus.

North Star Camp does not operate on tithe funds. It operates from freewill offerings. Today's offering is for the Minnesota Conference Ministries fund, which pays for North Star Camp operations. Please make the Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget offering a part of your weekly giving so that the evangelism that happens at North Star Camp is able to continue.

May 3

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

While shopping at Lowe's hardware store one day, I saw a bird trapped inside the store that probably had entered through the outdoor garden section. Its wing seemed broken, it couldn't fly, and was too weak perhaps from days of not being able to eat. If left alone this bird would die. I found a discarded box and went over to get the bird. I took that bird home and placed it in a makeshift birdcage and gave it water and food. The next day the bird was more alert and flapping its wings. I took it outside and opened the cage door. The bird slowly walked out and flew to the nearest tree. I felt great that I was able to help one of God's little creatures live another day!

Jesus' words, "Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?" (Luke 12:24, NKJV). Jesus wants us to trust Him because God the Father cares so much for us.

God has placed the church to care for the broken hearted, to help the downtrodden, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to share the love of Jesus through the various ministries it has set up.

Our offering today is for the local church budget. Let's continue to be that point person God can use to support His ministries. Let us pray...

May 10

Disaster and Famine Relief

This Sabbath, our church joins many others in collecting a special offering to support ongoing disaster relief efforts. Funds collected today support both Adventist humanitarian organizations, Adventist Community Services and ADRA. Each serves in different geographical areas.

Adventist Community Services, also known as ACS, responds to disasters of all kinds across the North American Division which includes the United States, Canada, Bermuda, Guam, and Micronesia.

As we approach Christ's return, the Bible tells us that crisis events will increase. Emergency Management records have tracked disasters for over 50 years and confirm tornadoes are touching down with greater impact, hurricanes are moving at greater speeds, and violent killings in the form of mass shootings increase with alarming frequency.

Adventist Community Services stands ready to serve those affected by these and other tragedies. ACS Volunteers:

- open collection centers to receive and sort donations, sending them to areas of greatest need,
- provide emotional and spiritual care to the distraught,
- and deliver essential supplies to areas hardest hit by a disaster.

I John 3:18 tells us to love with action and in truth. Today, we ask that you give liberally, and we thank you for joining the team who extends the hand of mercy to people in crisis. Together we are serving communities in Christ's name.

May 17

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

When our kids were of age to work, it warmed our hearts when we saw them buying gifts for each other for special occasions such as birthdays and Christmas, or no occasion at all. They received great joy in seeing their siblings' reactions when opening the gifts.

God too, loves a cheerful giver. I learned in my study of giving that our motives for giving are important. Giving results from two motives -- either from unselfish love, or for personal reward.

The gifts exchanged between couples may serve as an example of unselfish devotion. On the other hand, many gifts are not gifts at all, but a means to an end. They may be given to promote, to influence, or to bribe. Some give out of pressure or obligation.

God measures the gift by the motive of the giver. But "the offering from the heart that loves, God delights to honor.... If we have given our hearts to Jesus, we also shall bring our gifts to Him. Our gold and silver, our most precious earthly possessions, our highest mental and spiritual endowments, will be freely devoted to Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us." (*Desire of Ages*, p.65)

Today, let's give from a heart that loves our God. Our offering for today is for the local church budget.

May 24

Minnesota Conference Ministries

The COVID-19 pandemic caused thousands of deaths around the world and made people rethink their purpose in life. We've all been affected by this. Recent wars displaced millions from their homes creating major cultural, political, and population shifts. These crises created openness in spiritual things. People are searching for meaning and peace. They're hungry to make sense out of all the chaos in the world.

Churches in our conference can be that haven and point of contact for people to hear about Jesus. Offerings collected monthly for the Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget give opportunities for ministries in all churches to be funded so it can plant seeds of hope and love.

Now is the time to invest in God's work. Why not ask God for bigger requests so He can bless us abundantly? We don't need to wait until we have more to give more. We can flex our faith in God now.

Note the promise, "The time has come when we are to expect large blessings from the Lord. We must rise to a higher standard on the subject of faith... The Word of God is our endorsement. We must take it, simply believing every word. With this assurance we may claim large things, and according to our faith it will be unto us" (*That I May Know Him*, p. 226).

Today, let's lay all on the altar and give our all to God. Our offering for today is for Minnesota Conference Ministries.

May 31

Local Church Budget

When God liberated the Israelites from Egypt, He instructed them to dedicate a tithe of their belongings to the sanctuary's service. This was a distinct contribution designated for a specific purpose.

The tithe was reserved for supporting those who served in the sanctuary. It was to be collected from the increase of all growth, and together with gifts and offerings, it furnished resources to sustain the gospel's ministry at that time.

Today, God expects from us no less. His blessings to us are not diminished, but rather greater, than they were for the Israelites. His kingdom continues to need funds and resources.

The tithe is set aside to those who are directly involved in gospel ministries such as ministers, teachers, missionaries, and Bible workers. Offerings, on the other hand, are used for the operational cost of the church and various ministries.

The great commission to “Go and make disciples” and tell people about the love of God must be carried forward. God has made substantial provision for this task through tithes and offerings. He intends that the gospel ministry IS fully funded. He considers the tithe as His own, and it should always be viewed as a sacred reserve.

Today, let's fulfill the gospel commission to “Go and make disciples” by funding it with the Lord's money. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

June 7

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

For many years gardening was often a challenge to us. It seemed like the vegetable plants we planted and cared for preferred to die! We never harvested anything. It was very disappointing. Every year, we would try again but with the same results. Finally, after watching enough YouTube channels on how to garden successfully, we learned that you need to have the right soil, watering system, and care. So we followed the recommendations.

For the first time, we were able to grow tomatoes, kale, and zucchinis. We were amazed to see such a big harvest. Gardening became one of our favorite hobbies in the summer!

One of the things we learned was to plant several dozen varieties of vegetables. Not just one kind! We wanted to produce enough crops so we could share with our neighbors. We were able to do just that this past summer.

The apostle Paul used farming terminology to convey the principles of giving. “But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully” (2 Corinthians 9:6, NKJV).

Likewise, remember that when we return our tithes and offerings, every time we give liberally, we are sowing bountifully so we can also reap bountifully. God will multiply the funds we give back to him. His miracles will abound!

Today, let’s sow generously! Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let’s pray...

June 14

Women's Ministries

Our offering today helps provide opportunities for Adventist women of North America to create deeper connections with other women—connections both within and beyond our church walls whose ultimate purpose is to invite every woman closer to Jesus.

We form connections like those one young woman found in a group started by the women of her church for mothers of young children. “This mom’s group has ignited my journey of finding faith in motherhood,” she said. “Knowing I am prayed over daily, and having Godly mentor moms in my life means more than I can tell you.”

We form connections like those of the dedicated women who lead an after-school life skills group for teen girls in their neighborhood, providing essential help and a brighter future.

We form connections like evangelistic meetings spearheaded by women bringing a message of hope and wholeness to their communities. These and many more touch points are made possible through the women’s ministries offering.

Additionally, this offering helps provide funds for leadership training, equipping women of all ages to better serve Jesus in a variety of ways in their homes, churches, and beyond. Thank you for generously supporting the Adventist women of North America in our mission to make a tangible difference for eternity.

June 21

Local Church Budget

One of the most exciting passages I discovered is found in Malachi. It says, “‘Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it’” (Malachi 3:10, NKJV).

God wants us to test and prove Him now by returning faithfully our tithes and giving our freewill offerings.

We live in a world that says our hearts will be glad the more we get, the more we hoard and keep. God says, “No. I have designed your heart to be glad when you give.” Now this is the heart of God!

What God promises is that He will open wide the windows of heaven to pour out all His blessings. Wow! Can you imagine this? His blessings may be spiritual, emotional, and/or physical blessings! It will be overflowing.

But remember, we give not to receive God’s blessings, but in response to His love for us and to receive His heart.

Today, let’s try God and bring our tithes and offerings into His storehouse so we can witness how He will perform miracles in our lives. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let’s pray...

June 28

Minnesota Conference Ministries

Maplewood Academy Buildings

Maplewood Academy is near and dear to the hearts of Minnesota Adventist. Many of you attended Maplewood yourselves, and probably all of you at least know Maplewood alumni. For well over 100 years this school has been actively producing committed followers of Jesus. Of course, finances are always tight and always will be. In many ways this is actually a blessing because it gives each one of the us the opportunity to participate continually in Maplewood's mission to help our young people grow in their relationship with Jesus. Giving is good for us, and an Adventist education is good for them.

Naturally our favorite part of helping Maplewood is contributing directly to students who desperately need financial help. Without our help, many students simply would not be able to attend. So thank you for your generosity in that regard.

A less favorite but indispensable part of operating Maplewood Academy is the upkeep of the facility itself. Perhaps during camp meeting you notice things that need to be done in and around the various buildings. The problem is not lack of caring about the facilities, it's a lack of money to pay for repairs.

So we invite you to make a gift today and each Sabbath to the Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget offering because that is the fund used for keeping up the beautiful Maplewood campus.

July 5

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

Growing up I was taught at an early age to show respect and honor to God and country. For example, I was taught to never put anything on top of the Bible, because the Word of God is holy; and to never let the flag of our country touch the ground, because people have sacrificed their lives for the liberty of our country.

When it comes to tithes and offerings, we should always honor God by giving to Him the first part of our income and blessings; not what's left after we have paid the bills.

Jesus addressed the concerns of people today, "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:32-33, NKJV).

The promise is that if we put Christ and His work first in everything, He will take care of all our needs. No need to be concerned about our food, clothing, or anything. God will surely come through and not only "add these things" but abundantly open the windows of heaven for us.

Today, let's return our gifts to the Lord by faith because of His gracious love for us. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

July 12

World Budget

We thank God for the growth of the Seventh-day Adventist Church since Global Mission began some three decades ago. We've reached many new people groups and entered new countries. We've planted thousands of new churches. We've seen literally millions of people find hope and salvation in Jesus. Of course, many mission challenges remain. But that's nothing new!

When the good news about Jesus spread from Jerusalem some 2,000 years ago, it happened because the disciples came together and prayed together. Then the Holy Spirit gave power to those gathered in the upper room and they responded to God by saying, "I will go."

Today, the Adventist church is supporting hundreds of missionaries around the world, who face many obstacles to preach the gospel. How do we even begin to reach people who don't believe in God and have never seen a Bible? How do you begin to reach people who are rich and increased with goods and feel they have need of nothing? Or preach to people who live in refugee camps in very poor conditions?

In the face of such huge mission challenges, some see walls, but we see opportunities. Many see a lack of funds, but we see the Source of all funds. Many see our weakness, but we see His strength.

God is inviting you to participate with Him in His mission of salvation here on earth. Who is willing to support our global outreach with your special offering? Better yet, who will say, "I will go?"

July 19

Local Church Budget

Someone came to their pastor and complained, “Pastor, we can’t afford to give our tithes and offerings. We’re just barely making it from week to week. I wish we just had extra money to give, but we don’t.”

When finances are tight, it requires more faith to return your tithes and offerings. Some will rationalize, “God really does not need my funds.” That’s true, our God is wealthy. But it’s especially important to remember that when funds are tight, that’s when it’s critical that you can’t afford NOT to return your tithe and offerings. We can’t expect to steal from God and be blessed. We all need God’s blessings.

Tough times force us to demonstrate our faith that God as our Partner will come through to provide even when it seems impossible. This is His part of the covenant. Trust in the Lord that He will provide as He promised.

"The more we bring to God's treasure house, the more we shall have to bring; for He will open ways before us, increasing our substance"(*Our High Calling*, p. 197).

Millions of Christians have put their faith into action with God. Not once has He failed to make it possible. Let’s live in faith so that God can bless us beyond our wildest imagination!

Let’s continue to trust in the Lord by bringing our tithes and offerings to Him. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let’s pray...

July 26

Minnesota Conference Ministries

A pastoral couple opened a chain of health clinics years ago. During the financial crash, they invested their funds to sustain clinic operations. On Sabbath, during the offering, the wife gave the last twenty-dollar bill in her purse. She figured that God could make better use of this money. Her husband also put the last twenty dollars in his wallet into the offering plate. Both wondered silently how they would pay the bills knowing they had only \$75 left in their checking account for food for their family and pay for school tuition until their next paychecks came. But they trusted God.

The next day she cleaned her home office and saw a pile of papers. She had forgotten to bill her corporate client for her consulting services for several months. Six months have passed since she provided the service. She was sure the company would decline payment.

But in faith, she called the company and informed them of her failure to bill them on time. Upon receiving the message, the company apologized profusely for this oversight and sent an overnight check for \$6,000!

God provided the answer for this couple's dilemma six months before their crisis. Before they even knew they would be in a bind, God already had the answer to their prayer planned before they could even ask.

Today, regardless of the mountains your facing, let's choose to trust God. Our offering for today is for the conference ministries. Let's pray...

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.

Likewise, every offering gift should be measured by the unfathomable Gift of heaven. The greatest offering one could make would then appear as nothing in comparison. "How vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable!" (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol.4, p.119).

If we can catch a glimpse of just how much God loves us, we would faint. All self-interest and selfish motives will disappear, we will be lost in awe and wonder. It would spur us to shower our Lord with more gifts and with praise and thanksgiving.

Our offering for today is for the local church budget. 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. 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.

We must remember that the giving must keep pace with the prospering hand of God. In other words, God will prosper you and raise your income or give you some other forms of blessings to meet the needs of His work.

We should also increase the gifts we return as God's blessings increase. No one can outgive God. His blessings are always greater than the gifts.

The reason God does this is because there's a greater need in the church to reach more people for the kingdom.

Let's by faith answer the need and keep pace with the upswing in His blessings. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

August 23

Minnesota Conference Ministries

Communications

In 2023, a devastating fire left the St. Paul Eastside Seventh-day Adventist Church in ruins. As flames consumed the building, local media covered the event live, thrusting the church into the spotlight. Seeking guidance, the church turned to the Conference, sparking a powerful collaboration. This media attention opened unexpected doors, allowing the church to connect deeply with its neighborhood.

Despite the loss of their building, members continued their community kitchen, hosted events, and even conducted prayer walks. Their resilience shone through when, in August 2024, they held a special community event in the park across from their partially rebuilt church. They invited the entire neighborhood, offering food, activities, and hope. A TV reporter who had first covered the fire returned to showcase how the church remained a pillar in the community despite overwhelming challenges.

This journey highlights how the Conference Ministries budget is crucial. It funds not only advice in times of crisis, but also resources like Northern Light Magazine, the Union Outlook Magazine, and various other avenues of communication. Your support helps turn crises into opportunities, enabling the church to thrive and continue its mission, even in the face of adversity. Please give generously to support the Conference Ministries Budget today.

August 30

Maplewood Academy

Developing Leaders for God's Service

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today's offering supports Maplewood Academy's vital role in developing future leaders for our church and community. At Maplewood, students are not just educated; they are equipped to be witnesses for God in their families, churches, and communities.

Through its comprehensive campus ministries program, Maplewood offers students numerous opportunities to grow spiritually and develop leadership skills. From participating in small group Bible studies and worship teams to engaging in mission trips and community service projects, our young people are learning to be the hands and feet of Jesus in a world that desperately needs His love.

Your generous gifts today will help Maplewood Academy continue to provide these transformative experiences. By supporting leadership development at Maplewood, we are investing in the future of our church and fulfilling Christ's commission to make disciples.

As we give, let us reflect on the words of 1 Timothy 4:12: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity." Your support will empower our youth to become exemplary leaders, ready to serve God and humanity with passion and purpose.

September 6

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

My mother was a great cook. Growing up in a big family of eight, my mother cooked meals using the largest pots. I was amazed how she could create big meals from a very small pantry. I called my mom the miracle chef.

I was often intrigued how Jesus performed the miracle of the five loaves and two fish. One of the powerful lessons I learned from this story was not about the miracle, but why Jesus chose to focus on the generosity of the little boy who gave up his lunch! The disciples didn't coerce the boy or purchase his lunch. The boy freely gave his lunch to Jesus. Andrew even questioned the size of the offering, "...but what are they among so many?" (John 6:9, NKJV).

Now, Jesus could have performed the miracle from nothing, but instead He chose to use the boy's lunch offering to multiply it into a feast to feed thousands of men, women, and children. God looks at our willingness to give. This is the basis Jesus performs His great miracle.

I believe that every time we give out of love to God and ask Him to bless the offerings, He blesses and multiplies it so that it can reach thousands for His kingdom.

Today, let's share with the Lord our five loaves and two fish. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's ask God to multiply these funds for His glory. Let's pray...

September 13

World Budget (Radio Ministries)

We recommend playing the video at awr.org/offering, but if you can't, feel free to use this reading!

Imagine learning about God through a message in a bottle! That's exactly what happened to a devout Muslim in Israel, who found a bottle containing a flyer for Adventist World Radio's video Bible study series. It made him curious, so he, his wife, and their 10 children decided to watch. His daughter Sarah gasped during one of the videos. She'd recently started having dreams where she was learning about the Bible, and she exclaimed to her family, "The woman in this video is saying exactly what the man in my dream told me!" After watching these videos, the entire family decided to get baptized.

This wasn't an isolated incident. AWR's radio station in Nazareth has started broadcasting programs in Israel, the West Bank, Palestine and beyond, and hundreds have been contacting the station and studying the Bible as a result.

But the Middle East isn't the only supposedly "impossible" place being reached with the gospel! Last year, in Europe, 1,530 churches across 38 European countries participated in AWR and Total Member Involvement's *Christ for Europe* initiative. Attendees included everyone from refugees in Ukraine to people who found out about the meetings during Coronation celebrations in London.

We encourage you to give generously to support all the radio ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

September 20

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

My favorite fruit is mango. A mango boasts an exotic and captivating flavor. The richness and complexity of a mango's taste make it a truly indulgent fruit! The initial taste is a burst of luscious sweetness, followed by a slightly tart undertone that provides a perfect balance.

When I read Psalm 34, "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Oh, fear the Lord, you His saints! There is no lack to those who fear Him."

This figurative language, drawn from Psalm 34:8, "Taste and see that the Lord is good," invites us to not just believe in God's rich goodness, but actively experience it in our lives.

To "taste" the Lord is to engage with faith in a deeply personal, intimate way. Just as we use our sense of taste to savor and appreciate different flavors, we are called to savor and appreciate the richness and diversity of God's love, mercy, and grace. It means opening our hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit and allowing God's word to nourish and guide us.

The goodness of the Lord is revealed in countless ways. It is present in the beauty of creation, in acts of kindness, and in the love we share with others.

Today, let's taste and see that the Lord is good by giving back our tithes and offering! Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

September 27

Minnesota Conference Ministries

We can learn a few lessons from nature: Like humans, ants exhibit social behavior, thriving in meticulously structured societies known as colonies. Remarkably, the unity within these ant colonies is so profound that they collectively work towards the shared goals of survival, growth, and reproduction, functioning much like a unified entity or a "superorganism."¹ Worker ants often use teamwork to move larger objects, coordinating their movements to ensure successful transportation. For instance, leafcutter ants carry leaves and other vegetation that can weigh up to 50 times their body weight. This is equivalent to a human lifting about 7,850 pounds!

Once a month, a Sabbath is set aside for Conference Advance offering. This is used for local evangelism to finance programs most local churches cannot shoulder on their own. Elementary education, child evangelism, academy operation, the monthly Union magazines, summer camps, and youth evangelism are also areas supported by the Conference Advance offering.

These designated monthly Sabbath offerings offer educational and life-changing programs which are only possible because individual members choose to contribute to the larger task. Collectively, when members and churches contribute to this fund, we can fund more ministries and reach more people.

Let's remember that we can impact many churches and communities when we give our offerings systematically for God's kingdom. Our offering today is for Minnesota Conference Ministries. Let's pray...

¹ Heather Campbell & Benjamin Blanchard, *Ants: A Visual Guide*, Princeton University Press, 2023.

October 4

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

My wife and I were committed to teaching our children to be self-reliant from an early age. We encouraged them to master basic tasks such as washing hands and dressing, and to take responsibility for their life choices, including choosing life partners and careers.

However, while cultivating their independence was a priority, we also wanted them to understand the importance of spiritual dependence. In a spiritual sense, the Bible does not promote self-reliance. Instead, it champions the idea of depending on God in all aspects of life. It teaches us that we must learn to trust God completely and surrender our worries and plans to Him.

In our pursuit of self-reliance, we often find it difficult to let go and trust God. We worry about our jobs, our health, our finances, and our future. We fret over things we cannot control, which leaves us anxious and stressed. This anxiety and stress consume our thoughts and energy, diverting us from the time we should be devoting to prayer, worship, and service to others.

We must learn to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5-6, NKJV). This reliance on God is achieved when we place our complete trust in Him, rather than depending on our own wisdom.

Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

October 11

Union Adventist University

In the parable of the Rich Fool, Jesus talks about a person who was poor spiritually because he invested in the wrong things in life. Despite his worldly affluence, he is deemed spiritually impoverished because he hoards wealth for self-gratification, while neglecting to invest in God's kingdom. Jesus concludes the parable with a warning, "This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:13-21, NKJV).

So, the key is to be rich toward God? How do we do that? It means treasuring what He treasures: our relationship with Him and others, love and compassion for hurting human beings, and a heart that seeks to do good and be generous.

Paul echoes this sentiment in 1 Timothy 6:18, urging believers "to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share." This isn't just about charitable acts or monetary donations. It's about an attitude of generosity that permeates all aspects of our lives, reflecting God's own generosity towards us.

Remember, we're most like God when we're generous with our money and our actions. What has God given you to invest in others?

Our offering for today is for Union projects. Union offerings cover ministries and services that individual conferences alone cannot provide. Let's pray...

October 18

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

My wife and I have the privilege of conducting discipleship training for pastors and church members around the country, speaking to diverse cultures and backgrounds. One of these encounters with the Samoan community left a lasting impression on us. What struck us most was their deep respect for pastors and elders, a reverence that is almost akin to the honor bestowed upon royalty.

The younger members serve the adults first during potluck with a unique level of respect towards their pastors, treating them with reverence. This act of respect wasn't just a duty, but a privilege and joy.

Reflecting on this cultural practice, it made us ponder upon the importance of prioritizing Christ in everything we do. We believe that when our actions and intentions demonstrate the highest respect for Him they are a form of worship that deeply touches His heart. He is blessed when we worship Him, when we voice our praise, and when we present Him with our offerings of love.

“It is the humble, grateful, reverential heart that makes the offering as a sweet-smelling savor, acceptable to God” (*Our High Calling*, p.197).

It is this act of giving with love that truly counts. It's not about the monetary value of what we give but the intention of our hearts.

Today, let's put God first in our lives through our tithes and offerings. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

October 25

Minnesota Conference Ministries

Church Buildings

Have you ever rented a church building instead of owning? It's quite common so chances are you understand the complexities of renting shared space. You may or may not have your own designated space so everything probably has to get setup Sabbath morning and then taken down and put away after service is over. Sabbath School rooms for children cannot be decorated because you can't leave anything out. Maybe your host church doesn't allow you to have a fellowship meal or if you can there are strict rules for using the kitchen.

All around, renting is a good option for startup churches, but we'd all prefer it to be temporary. Buying or building a church is the goal for most groups that rent. Do you know the conference will help with funds to buy or build a new church? They do, but where do they get that money from? Tithe cannot be used for purchasing, building or maintaining a church building according to Biblical principles.

There is a small percentage of the Conference Ministries Budget (formerly known as Minnesota Advance) that is designated for church buildings. This is how the conference helps your church or your sister church that rents to be able to own a building. It can take several years to save enough funds just to help one church buy or build.

As you see the need around you, please give to Conference Ministries Budget to support congregations who need their own building.

November 1

Local Church Budget

“Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years” (Deuteronomy 8:4, NIV).

When the Israelites trusted in God for their needs and were faithful to Him, He always came through. Imagine clothes and sandals that did not wear out over 40 years of use! Now that’s the miracle of God. That’s a testimony of His love and care of His children.

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

In our family, my wife and I remind ourselves that everything we own belongs to God! The first microwave we purchased as a married couple became a living testimony of God’s faithfulness.

This microwave, after ten years of usage, became a topic of discussion. My wife said, “Any time now, I want to replace this microwave when it stops working!” One morning, the microwave stopped working! My wife rejoiced at the thought of a replacement. I didn’t know anything about fixing appliances. Well, as I was visiting a church member that afternoon, he heard of our dilemma and offered to look at the appliance. In two minutes, he said, “Pastor, here’s the problem. I replaced the fuse and it’s now working!” The cost of the fuse? Twelve cents. That microwave continued to work for a total of 21 years—to my wife’s dismay—until we finally donated it to a family member!

Our God is always good! Let’s see how God will take care of our needs today. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let’s pray...

November 8

Annual Sacrifice for Global Mission

In 1857 David Livingstone was invited to receive a tribute and speak to students at Cambridge University in England. He had left behind a prosperous life in Europe to devote himself to preaching the gospel on the African continent. As he stood in front of the students, he uttered the following words,

People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay?—Is that a sacrifice which brings its own blest reward in healthful activity, the consciousness of doing good, peace of mind, and a bright hope of a glorious destiny hereafter?—Away with the word in such a view, and with such a thought! . . . I never made a sacrifice. Of this we ought not to talk, when we remember the great sacrifice which HE made who left His Father's throne on high to give Himself for us.

Today, we continue our tradition for every member of the Adventist church to give sacrificially so the General Conference can continue with the endeavor of Global Mission.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, we thank you for the sacrifice you made by coming to this world to save us. We want to give sacrificially of our offerings, that signify part of our lives. Bless these tithes and offerings.

November 15

Local Church Budget

A recent article by McKinsey & Company noted that nearly two-thirds of US-based employees who were surveyed said that COVID-19 has caused them to reflect on their purpose in life. Nearly half said that they're reconsidering the kind of work they do because of the pandemic.

The research stated that people who live their purpose at work are more productive than people who don't. They're also healthier, more resilient, and more likely to stay with the company. When employees feel that their purpose is aligned with the organization's purpose, the benefits expand to include stronger employee engagement, heightened loyalty, and a greater willingness to recommend the company to others.²

God gives us the privilege of partnering with Him in His kingdom work. It's incredible that He gives us the joy of giving, and in doing so we find our purpose in life.

God could have accomplished His mission of saving sinners without the aid of mankind. However, He knew that we couldn't be happy without being part of the great work that would cultivate in us self-denial, compassion, kindness, and goodness—in other words, the Fruit of the Spirit.

Today, let's practice our purpose in life by partnering with God in Kingdom work. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let's pray...

² (McKinsey & Company, April 5, 2021, article, "Help your Employees find Purpose -or Watch them Leave.)

November 22

Minnesota Conference Ministries

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

I remember the moment when my wife and I said, "I do" on our wedding day. We made a covenant promise and pledge before God that we would love and be faithful and true to each other. We expressed this covenant of love with words, actions, and gifts to each other!

The day we all accepted the Lord, we too made a covenant of love with Him. We honor Him when we take time to worship Him and share His love with others by acts of kindness.

But another way we develop our relationship with God and honor and glorify Him is when we return our gifts of time, talents, and our tithes and offerings to Him.

"The Lord made a special covenant with men, that if they would regularly set apart the portion designated for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, the Lord would bless them abundantly, so there would not be room to receive His gifts" (*Counsels on Stewardship*, p.77).

God has given us this opportunity to enter into a partnership with the Ruler of the universe who is not only interested in the orderly operation of the great galaxies of heaven but also interested in every detail of our lives.

Have you set aside your gifts for Him today? Let's support the ministries around our conference that help people learn more about our God of love. Our offering today is for Conference Ministries. Let's pray...

November 29

Union Adventist University

During their wanderings in the desert, the wilderness transformed into a unique classroom where God imparted life's essential principles to the children of Israel. Each day, He sent manna from heaven, teaching them invaluable lessons in reliance and gratitude.

God could have effortlessly created a river to quench their thirst or provided an excess of "natural" food for months of sustenance. However, He chose instead to instruct the Israelites to trust Him for their daily needs. For forty years, they depended on God to provide food and water.

In contrast, we have the convenience of turning on a faucet to get a drink or go to our pantry where there is enough food to last for days. It becomes challenging to rely on God when our basic survival needs are easily met.

However, Jesus said, "...Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Mathew 4:4, NKJV). But Jesus is speaking beyond the needs of the human body. He is referring to the needs of a human being consisting of a body, soul, and spirit. The words of God are the source of nourishment and life for our soul and spirit which only God can provide.

So, how can we learn to trust and depend on Him today? The answer lies in our faithfulness to dedicate our time, talents, and treasures to God for the advancement of His kingdom.

Our offering today is for our local Union budget. Let us pray...

December 6

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

In my younger years, my fascination with mathematics, particularly with the concept of multiplication, was immense. I was especially excited learning the principles of multiplication because it was one of the fastest ways to reach a higher total. Multiplication is a mathematical process that adds a number to itself repeatedly a specific number of times.

This mathematical principle later found an analogy in my spiritual journey. I realized that the growth of God's kingdom often resonates better with multiplication than addition. For example, it is better to have five people each doing one ministry and teaching others to do the same, rather than for one person doing five ministries by himself. This is the essence of “disciplers” — disciples who train other disciples.

Another way to step into the realm of such multiplication is through generous offerings to God. When we present our offerings to God, He multiplies them, extending the blessings to many. We need not dwell on the mathematics of our giving or attempt to rationalize the outcomes. Merely giving in faith is sufficient.

Reflect on the promise, “He will reward honest, simple reliance upon Him. The little that is wisely and economically used in the service of the Lord of heaven will increase in the very act of imparting” (*Desire of Ages*, p. 371).

Let's see how God multiplies the gifts we give to Him. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let us 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; to bring relief and comfort to your neighbors and to make compassion your priority.

December 20

Local Church Budget

Author Melvin Santos Speaking:

My then six-year-old son came up to me and said, “Dad, I need a lot of money, and I need to make it fast!” I smiled and inquired, “Why do you need a lot of money quickly?” I didn’t know what my son was thinking of doing with all this fast cash and why he needed the funds so urgently. I thought maybe he wanted to buy a new toy or bike for himself.

He said, “Well, Mom’s birthday is coming up and I want to buy a nice gift for her!” That sure cheered my heart, and so I gave him the funds!

My son was asking for money, not for selfish reasons but out of love for his mom.

When I think about church offerings, every gift we give should be measured by the unfathomable Gift of heaven. The greatest offering we received from God is Jesus, and there is no way we can measure His love and sacrifice for us. Anything we give would appear as nothing in comparison.

“How vain the endeavor to measure with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable!” (*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol.4, p.119).

Let’s return our tithes and offerings in response to the abundance of God’s love for us. Our offering for today is for the local church budget. Let’s pray...

December 27

Minnesota Conference Ministries

Adventist Education

There are two views of Adventist education. Well, more than two, but two that we will talk about today. One view is that Adventist education is a luxury—nice if we have extra money, but expendable if we don't. The other view is that Adventist education is a necessity with eternal consequences to be provided for our young people at any cost. It is families who hold the second view that we are appealing for today.

The reality is that the number of families who recognize that Adventist education is a necessity is declining, which increases the financial burden and places it on a relatively small pool of committed families. Fortunately, there are also many families, perhaps like yours, whose children have finished school, but you understand and believe in the power of surrounding every young person with a strong Adventist environment during their growing years. You recognize that Adventist schools provide the most important evangelism we can do because it focuses on our own children. Therefore you are willing to continue to give so that other struggling families can give their children an Adventist education.

The Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget offering helps to relieve the financial burden on faithful families who are working and sacrificing to this end. Please give today and each Sabbath to the Minnesota Conference Ministries Budget offering and help keep Adventist schools operating!