2023 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

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Director Stewardship Ministries North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists

Stewardship Directors

Marcos Bomfim, General Conference Michael Harpe, North American Division Elias Zabala, Atlantic Union Paul Musafili, Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada Emmanuel Asiedu, Columbia Union Jermaine Jackson, Lake Union David VandeVere, Mid-America Union Mark Remboldt, North Pacific Union Stephen Mayer, Pacific Union David Long, Southern Union Tony Anobile, Southwestern Union Don Lloyd, Guam-Micronesia Mission

2023 OFFERING APPEALS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

Pastor and Elder calling for the offerings:

Typically, on the 1st and 3rd Sabbath of each month, the offering appeal is for the Local Church Budget.

We are making 2 suggestions:

- 1. We are giving the heading of those Sabbaths a slight title change to "LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRY/MISSION (BUDGET)," here on the printed offering appeal each month that you receive from the Conference. You don't have to change your tithe envelope, as people remember "Budget." We hope this will better help you members to think of the "mission reason" your church exists, not just that your church has bills to pay into the "Black Hole" of a thing called Budget.
- 2. Although we give you the NAD standard reading for those 1st and 3rd Sabbaths, we are encouraging you to take your own initiative and consider one of the options listed below:
 - 1) Take one Sabbath per month and feature one of your local church's ministry activities.
 - 2) Have your ministry leader describe what that ministry has done, people served or what is prayerfully planned for the coming year.
 - 3) Perhaps interview the ministry leader, and just ask 3 simple questions, such as what we shared above.
 - 4) Possible ministries to feature could be:
 - a. Each of your children's SS departments, one per month, such as kindergarten, primary, juniors, teens, youth, etc. b. Your Church school if your church is supporting one.

 - c. Each of your Outreach ministries or Personal Ministries.
 - d. Any Compassion ministries your church does through the year.
 - e. Along with that would be Adventist Community Services.
 - f. Your Food Bank if you offerone.

 - g. VBS or summer ministry.h. Pathfinders and Adventurers.
 - i. An Adult SS Teacher/class
 - Any other ministry your local church leads, provides, j. serves and is engaged in.

In other words, tell the story of what your church is doing in ministry, the reason for its existence, and why it is great to be a part of supporting my local church's mission!

We believe in the local church. And we hope and pray that these suggestions might help your local members think of the ministry of their church congregation with their financial support through their offerings.



About the Author



Steve Case grew up as a Seventh-day Adventist with parents who taught him how to plan his finances. This started with an allowance for completing chores and paying tithe first, followed by offerings, savings, and personal spending. These foundational practices have remained in his personal life and his work.

Steve has served as a youth pastor and seminary professor, emphasizing youth ministry for decades, with a new focus on intergenerational church—all ages helping each other grow spiritually. As the president of Involve Youth, he speaks at youth events, trains and creates resources for youth and youth leaders, coordinates the Doctor of Ministry concentration in Intergenerational Church for Andrews University, and leads several short-term mission trips for Maranatha each year.

Steve knows what it's like to experience plenty as well as want (by North American standards), learning Paul's admonition to be content in all circumstances. In his personal life, Steve knows firsthand the pain and loss from divorce, and the grace of second chances. He's re-married to Marit—an ordained Seventh-day Adventist pastor. His adult daughter continues to make him proud while regularly challenging him.

The NAD Stewardship department surprised Steve by asking him to write the offering appeals for 2023, requesting greater participation by the congregation rather than just sitting while one person reads a paragraph from the front of the church.

About the Readings

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🏂 Activity

You will notice this graphic in the readings for several Sabbaths throughout the Offering Appeals in 2023. What this means is that Steve Case wants some participation from the worshippers. Since Steve is trying to reach the youth and young adults of our church, he encourages participation to appeal to younger worshippers. Even if your church doesn't have young people, please try to apply the principles and adjust the activity for the circumstances of your local congregation.

IMPORTANT: Please read all the activity directions in advance and make the necessary preparations for that Sabbath. Some examples of activity preparation include a quote to be put on a power point slide or printed in the bulletin, a song to be played before the offertory reading for that Sabbath, cards to be printed for every worshipper to make a decision, and the list of the 7 T's of Stewardship to be printed in the bulletin on five Sabbaths. Please prepare in advance so these Sabbaths can be impactful.

About My Personal Giving Plan

The North American Division encourages the use of the "My Personal Giving Plan." This plan was developed as a guideline to assist members in systematic giving. The plan suggests that, in addition to returning 10 percent of a member's personal income as tithe, certain percentages may be dedicated as offerings to three main categories:

- Local Church Budget: 3-5 percent
- Conference Advance: 1–2 percent

(education, evangelism, VBS, summer camps, and Union magazines)

• World Budget: 1–3 percent

Visit <u>https://www.personalgivingplan.com</u> to see a more extensive breakdown for each category.

The My Personal Giving Plan encourages each of us to renew our commitment to the principles of Christian stewardship. While it blesses the church as a whole, its real impact is on us as individuals in our faith-based covenant with God.

Everything in God's creation is orderly and purposeful. The same can be said of the My Personal Giving Plan. Like all plans, it requires thought and consideration. No great work can be built upon emotional or sporadic giving.

Calendar of Offerings – NAD 2023

Special Offerings

January 14	Religious Liberty
February 11	Adventist Television Ministries Evangelism
March 11	Adventist World Radio
April 8	Hope Channel International, Inc.
May 13	Disaster and Famine Relief
June 10	Women's Ministries
July 8	World Budget
August 12	Christian Record Services
September 9	World Budget (Emphasis: Radio Ministries)
November 11	World Budget (Emphasis: Annual Sacrifice)
December 9	Adventist Community Services
Thirteenth-Sabbath Offerings for 2023	
First Quarter:	East-Central Africa Division (ECD)
Second Quarter: Inter-European Division (EUD)	
Third Quarter: Trans-European Division (TED)	
Fourth Quarte	r: West-Central Africa Division (WAD)
Summary of Offerings	
Local Church Budget 27	
Conference Advance 12	
Union Design	ated 2
NAD	5
World Budget	6

Where Do My Offerings Go?

13th Sabbath Offering

You've heard how everyone in an Amish community comes together for a barn raising. Well, Seventh-day Adventists also have projects where we all pitch in to accomplish a goal. That is the purpose of the 13th Sabbath offering. Every 13th Sabbath, the church focuses on one of its world Divisions to accomplish a mission goal. The offering often goes toward constructing a building that will be used for education, evangelism, or media outreach. The 13th Sabbath offerings have been used to establish schools such as Central Philippine Adventist College. A recent offering made a youth camp possible in Belize. All the church members around the world join hands in these projects through sacrificial giving. In 1913, the 13th Sabbath overflow amounted to 474 dollars. Now, it exceeds a quarter of a million dollars. We call it an overflow offering because it encourages extra giving beyond the usual mission offering. In practice, 25 percent of the 13th Sabbath offering is considered overflow. The rest is more broadly distributed to continue mission work around the globe. You can also give a 13th Sabbath offering anytime by marking it on your tithe envelope. Do you want to be part of something big? You'll be part of a worldwide community expanding Adventist mission work when you give to the 13th Sabbath offering. Remember: Our giving funds the mission to finish the work.

Birthday Thank Offering

On your birthday, you usually get a present. However, in church, many people give a gift on their special day. It is called a Birthday Thank Offering. Have you ever given someone a thank-you gift? Maybe they watched your cat for a weekend or sang a song at your wedding, and you just wanted to show how grateful you felt. Well, church members sometimes offer a gift of pure gratitude to God. It might be on the occasion of a birthday, thanking God for the blessings of the past year. Or maybe thanking Him for one blessing in particular, such as a promotion at work. Or a new grandbaby. They mark it on their tithe envelope as a Birthday Thank Offering.

So, what happens to the Birthday Thank Offering? This gift is directed to church Divisions outside North America to do mission work. Much of it is used in evangelistic activities, but some also goes to clinics, hospitals, and educational institutions. A portion of your gift goes to administer the General Conference mission program, helping to move missionaries into new fields and advance the Adventist message. Thus, your gift of gratitude goes to missionaries and church institutions around the world who in turn will accept it with gratitude. It shows that being thankful can be contagious, doesn't it?

Conference Advance

Your local Conference is a sisterhood of local churches that helps each congregation within its boundaries to accomplish important objectives that are beyond the reach of any one church alone. A Conference Advance offering addresses these specific needs as well as a variety of special projects. One of the largest portions goes to fund Christian education. Another substantial part of the Conference Advance offering is set aside for evangelism in the local community. It is also used to finance programs and advertising that most local churches cannot shoulder alone. Child evangelism, inner-city evangelism, Vacation Bible School, summer camps, and youth evangelism are also areas supported by the Conference Advance offering. Another benefit of the Conference Advance offering is the popular Union papers and magazines that are shipped free of charge to church members. These informative publications help to unite believers over a large area and create a sense of community. All of these educational and life-changing programs are possible because individual members choose to contribute a suggested amount of 1 to 2 percent of their income to Conference Advance.

Perhaps the most obvious need addressed in the My Personal Giving Plan is the local church. Like every family, the local church family has financial obligations to meet. Some are easy to see like power and heat, but many are not as obvious: children's magazines, Sabbath School Bible study guides, teaching supplies, staff salaries, cleaning services, church school operating expenses, property insurance, worthy student fund, and community outreach. These are but a few of the costs that must be met month after month as the local church seeks to be a light in the community. Because these expenses are constant, My Personal Giving Plan recommends that 3 to 5 percent of one's income be set aside for the local church budget. This systematic giving ensures that all share both in the blessings and the responsibilities of the local congregation.

Mission Investment Offering

The Mission Investment Offering is a partnership between you and God. You pick a project and dedicate the income to the Mission Investment Offering.

Here's an example involving chickens! When Kelly Rose Bishop was a teenager, she decided to commit 10 percent of her egg business to investment. She sold eggs to regular customers and to people who just stopped by her house. After two months, she noticed that her sales had gone up by 50 percent. That's how the partnership worked. She promised to give 10 percent of her income (that was her part), but she believes that God blessed her little business because the 10 percent grew due to a new larger income. That was God's part.

There are many ways to enter into partnership with God. For example, you might dedicate the money you save using coupons at the grocery store, or you can dedicate the money you save by skipping dessert when eating out. One person picked up aluminum cans that she found on her morning run and gave the proceeds to investment. Every dollar you raise goes to advance Adventist missions overseas. Come up with your own mission investment idea today.

Sabbath School Mission Offering

When the Sabbath School Mission Offering envelope comes around, it is easy to slip in a dollar or two. But when you find out where it goes, you might want to give more!

The mission offering travels to church Divisions outside North America where the needs are great. Much of it is used in evangelistic activities, but some also goes to aid clinics, hospitals, and educational institutions. Adventist World Radio gets help from this offering, and a portion of your gift goes to administer the General Conference's mission program, which helps to train and move missionaries into new fields to advance the Adventist message. The offering that you give in your Sabbath School room literally goes a long way as it aids mission work around the globe.

World Budget Offering

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a worldwide church, and the world budget is our contribution to this global mission.

From the earliest days of the Adventist Church, men and women have responded to Christ's Great Commission by looking beyond their own shores. Today, Seventh-day Adventists make up one of the fastest growing Christian churches in the world, with more than 3,000 people being baptized every day! In more than 200 countries and in more than 600 languages, the message of Jesus's soon return can be heard.

Historically, it has been the privilege and duty of materially blessed members in developed nations to plant seeds of growth in poorer regions of the world. New evangelistic strategies that address ever-changing global realities are constantly being developed, and our offerings give life to these new programs. My Personal Giving Plan recommends that 1 to 3 percent of our income be set aside for this global outreach. Working together, we can make sure the Adventist message continues to grow worldwide.

Special Projects Offerings

These offerings include ministries such as Women's Ministries and Christian Record Services. My Personal Giving Plan doesn't recommend a specific percentage for these since the need and scope will vary from project to project. For example, these offerings support undertaking local church building initiatives or a mission trip. The special projects also include requests for help from denominational entities such as ADRA and Adventist World Radio, as well as other Adventist supporting ministries that you may wish to assist.

2023 North American Division Sabbath School Mission Investment Projects

COLUMBIA UNION

The Columbia Union is planting a Slavic Seventh-day Adventist church in the greater Cleveland, OH region to serve and minister to the existing Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Moldovan population. We also want to extend services and ministries to the incoming Ukrainian refugees.

LAKE UNION

Local youth leaders are devising and implementing evangelism initiatives for their congregations. The cost is split between the union and local church, but more local churches wish to participate than there are union funds to match.

SOUTHERN UNION

There is a fast-growing group of Karen refugees in the Clarkston area of Atlanta, Georgia. Several congregations have been providing basic necessities, but their limited understanding of the language impedes their ability to minister to their needs. The solution is a recently hired, full-time, experienced Karen pastor.

The pastor plays a prominent role in the Karen community and is successfully establishing connections with various help centers and governmental agencies. We want to see this congregation become a full-fledged SDA Church with a solid ministry to the Karen population. 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 2023.

Primary Author: Steve Case Secondary Authors: Michael Harpe & Rudy Salazar Editors: Michael Harpe, Rudy Salazar, & Lisa Rasmussen

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Happy New Year! Did you make any New Year's resolutions? Some people don't make New Year's resolutions because they have tried making resolutions before and don't want the discouragement that comes from repeated failures.

And yet we make commitments and re-commitments all the time. Vibrant relationships involve commitments and re-commitments, including forgiveness when we mess up. Weddings call for commitments, and anniversaries spark natural moments of recommitment. The start of a school year launches commitments for students, staff, and families.

Beginning a new year provides a natural time to make a commitment, or a re-commitment, to Jesus. Today, I'm inviting you to acknowledge explicitly that "all you are" comes from Jesus and give all you are back to Jesus. Let's actively symbolize this.

Please stand at this time. I know you're not accustomed to doing this during the offering—unless you're a deacon. But I'm asking everyone here to stand to their feet today for the offering. Yes, you.

When the offering container comes to you, pass your tithe envelope or your cash around yourself from the front to the back and back to the front (demonstrate it in the front and have the deacons demonstrate it as well). (Alternate: place it over your heart and then raise it to heaven.)

Yes, you can put your offering in the offering plate, but first symbolize your full commitment to Jesus by encircling your entire self with your offering (or placing it over your heart and then raising it to heaven). And then feel free to sit down after that time. Let's commit and re-commit ourselves to Jesus as we start this New Year!

Religious Liberty

Did you know that just 150 years ago, being a Seventh-day Adventist in the United States could be a risky business? Take the case of Pastor James Scoles from Springdale, Arkansas. He volunteered to help finish painting his congregation's newly built church and decided to complete the work one quiet Sunday morning. "I went over to the church," he said later, "and finished up a small strip of painting on the south side... and here I quietly worked away for perhaps two hours."* For this act, Pastor Scoles was arrested and jailed—and it was just one of many cases where Adventists and other religious minorities were prosecuted under state Sunday laws.

Today, we may not be arrested for working on Sunday, but religious freedom must still be defended. As Ellen White reminded us, we must remain vigilant and hold high the "banner of truth and religious liberty" in these last days. Today, we have the opportunity to support the vital mission of *Liberty* magazine and the work of our Public Affairs and Religious Liberty leaders. With each issue of *Liberty* magazine that rolls off the presses, and with each visit to a legislator's office, or legal case argued, our religious liberty leaders are working to defend the precious, God-given gift of freedom for all people. With our offering today, we have a chance to raise high the banner of religious liberty.

* A. T. Jones, *Civil Government and Religion* (Oakland, CA: American Sentinel, 1889), p. 114.

January 21, 2023



Local Church Budget

In Christ's parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30), it seems God gives people what they have. We then develop and use these, and then we give an account to Christ when He returns. Not everyone receives the same talents or the same number of talents.

What talent(s) has God given you? Some might be obvious, while others could seem minor or even uncertain. Let's take a moment corporately to consider what God has given to each of us. You can do this on your own, as well. You might already have a clear answer or two from God, or maybe you need more time. Perhaps each of us should do this at least once a week.

However, the next question for us to consider would be, "What are you doing with what God has given you?" Yes, it comes from God, but He gives it to you to develop and to use for His glory and for the benefit of others.

Every member here present, please hold out your hands in front of you, cupped together, demonstrating that you are receiving talents from God (demonstrate this posture as you speak and encourage listeners to participate actively).

Holding your hands cupped together in front of you, pray a short prayer, asking God what talents He has given you. And ask Him how He wants you to use them. I will finish with a blessing on our tithes and offerings and the way God is going to use your talents to advance His kingdom.

Now consider, "What are you doing with what God has given you?"

Let's pray together, thanking God for our talents, and asking His guidance for their use.

January 28, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING – GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND ACADEMY

When you give to Georgia-Cumberland Academy, you are directly impacting the lives of young people in ways that affect their eternal destinies. Aaron, an international student from China, is one of those young people. Aaron came to GCA without a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. His experience at the school was challenging because he was not able to able to return home for three years due to the pandemic. During his struggles to learn English, pass classes, and deal with homesickness, he found a deep and lasting relationship with God during a Week of Prayer. Aaron made a forever decision to place his faith in Jesus and follow Him into baptism. The relationships he formed and the spiritual environment of Georgia-Cumberland Academy helped nurture this decision for Aaron. Multiply Aaron's experience by hundreds of others and you begin to see the impact of a place like Georgia-Cumberland Academy!

You can help students thrive in a strong spiritual and academic environment when you give to GCA through our Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering today.

By ourselves, no one of us could build, operate and staff an academy for 300 students. But together, we can! Together we can provide a place where students can learn the lessons necessary to take their place in society, and to be spiritual leaders for Christ in this generation. Your gift today to the Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering* will help to continue this vital educational ministry and make it possible for students to attend Georgia-Cumberland Academy.

*Each Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering benefits the following ministries:

50% Evangelism

20% Church and School Capital Building assistance

10% Cohutta Capital Building assistance

10% Georgia-Cumberland Academy

5% Atlanta Adventist Academy

5% Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Schools

We Seventh-day Adventists have a reputation of being faithful in returning our tithes to God, at least compared to most other Christian denominations. However, our tithing might contradict what's in our hymnal, and I'm talking about a well-known hymn. Either we need to change our giving or we need to change the lyrics in the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, specifically song #309.

Here's how the revised version of this song should go: "10% to Jesus I surrender, 10% to Him I freely give." Join me on the chorus, "I surrender 10%, I surrender 10%, 10% to thee my blessed Savior, I surrender 10%."

Something about that just doesn't sound right, does it? Jesus never asked us for 10%; He's always asked for everything. That's why the hymn goes, "All to Jesus I surrender, all to Him I freely give."

Yes, the Bible talks about a tithe being 10% as a practice of worship and reminds us that everything comes from God, but let's remember that everything belongs to God, including the local church offering. With what's left, I buy food to take care of my body or to pay my bills; even this belongs to Jesus. When we bring our offerings to God, we acknowledge that EVERYTHING comes from Him and we can trust Him to supply everything we need.

Today I invite you to give everything to Jesus and allocate a portion of that to the offerings at this church as you actively worship God.

February 11, 2023

Adventist Television Ministries Evangelism

The world we've come to know may never return to what we once referred to as normal if for no other reason than the precious influence of Jesus' time on earth, though it has lingered like a sweet perfume for 2,000 years, has lessened the impact on the lives of everyday people now because hearts are hardened. Nevertheless, you can make a difference in the lives of others whose hearts are still open to knowing Him by supporting Adventist Television Ministries in reaching the masses for Jesus.

One pastor recalls the day a woman came to church with her family in tow all because of a TV media ministry. Though he studied with her, she had apparently viewed our programming for so long that there was hardly anything left to tell her. What a wonderful day when she and her family were baptized.

Adventist Media Ministries undergird your local ministry and make it more impactful. Breath of Life, Faith for Today, Jesus 101, and It Is Written are each designed to reach a specific audience through a unique worldview.

Whether people know their Bible well or not at all, they must still be presented with the *Adventist* story. And yes, your offering can help reach around the corner or around the world through streaming, touching hearts and changing lives with a Christcentered message of hope and wholeness. Please give liberally to advance our message through Adventist Television Ministries and broaden your outreach so Jesus can come and we can go home.

"Tithes and offerings." What are they?

"Tithe" literally means one-tenth, or 10%. If you have \$10, onetenth would be \$1. If you have \$1,000, one-tenth would be \$100. People who "tithe" take their income, like their paycheck or their profit when they sell something, and give 10% of it to God as their tithe. Malachi 3:10 says, "Bring ye" or "you bring." For those in a relationship with God, this statement means, "If you love me, bring the tithe into the storehouse."

In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, tithes and offerings are received at the local church, and then the tithe begins its journey. There is an immediate benefit to the local church from the tithe in the form of a full-time or part-time pastor, teacher/principal, disaster response, and access to the Conference, Union, Division, and General Conference leadership and services. The journey continues and tithe is sent to the Conference (storehouse) where 75%-85% remains to fund ministries and workers in the territory. We follow the New Testament teaching that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel (1 Cor. 9:14). The rest is sent to fulfill the mission of the gospel to reach the world everywhere.

"Offerings" are any donations you make beyond the return of tithe—10%. The majority of offerings remain at the church for various ministries and church budget operations which include church upkeep and special offerings important to your congregation, your community, or you personally.

Let's be faithful with tithe and offerings so that none of these vital ministries are neglected.

February 25, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING -- CHURCH AND SCHOOL CAPITAL

It was only a few years ago that the LaGrange, GA, Hispanic Company was able to buy their very first church building for worship and mission. It was a small church that was a former Salvation Army church. But a small building was all they could afford. In the next 3 years, this Adventist Hispanic Company has grown so much that they needed a different church. Recently a former Masonic Lodge building became available for sale. The LaGrange Hispanic Adventists moved out by faith and put an offer on the building that was accepted. After their offer was accepted, other potential buyers stepped up and offered to pay more. But our church's realtor held firm to make sure that our members could close on this purchase and have the larger building that they needed.

By our self, none of us could probably provide the means to be able to build this new lighthouse for the Adventist message. But together, we can. Together you and I through our gifts to the Georgia-Cumberland Church Ministries Offering* today, are helping new church buildings take shape.

*Each Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering benefits the following ministries:
50% Evangelism
20% Church and School Capital Building assistance
10% Cohutta Capital Building assistance
10% Georgia-Cumberland Academy
5% Atlanta Adventist Academy
5% Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Schools

March 4, 2023

🏂 Activity

Local Church Budget

This is the time during the worship service when the person in front says something like, "Now is the time when everyone can participate in the worship service." This implies all people present should take out a wallet to put something in the offering. It also suggests that the other parts of the worship service aren't for everyone.

Let's really do something today in which everyone can participate. Let's all stand up and move to the aisle nearest you. That's right; we do want everyone to participate in the worship service at this time! So please stand and make your way toward the nearest aisle (pause and encourage participation).

Before passing the offering plate and expecting everyone to put in money, let's go bigger. Instead of money, let's give God what He really wants—ourselves. If you are willing to give yourself to God today as your act of worship to God, please come forward. When you get toward the front, you can kneel before God or stand or bow or raise your hands in praise to the Almighty Creator—the awesome One who made you.

Money makes a great offering, but the best offering is to give yourself to God. Today I ask everyone to participate by giving not just money, but yourself, to God. This is true worship.

After we dedicate ourselves through silent prayer, return to your seats, and the deacons will receive the tithe and offerings.

World Budget - Adventist World Radio

Just over a year ago, hardened assassins from the New People's Army in Mindoro, Philippines, laid down their guns and chose a new life—and baptism—after listening to Adventist World Radio and studying with local Adventist pastors. No longer "Former Rebels" but "Fully Reconciled," these men and women wanted to get right to work in sharing what they had found with their family, neighbors, and friends.

Just after their big baptism, they declared that they would "each one reach one." They decided amongst themselves that each of them would lead someone to Jesus so they would soon have 700 people ready for baptism! Only a couple months later, 700 more Former Rebels had given their lives to Jesus as a result of these converted friends witnessing to them. They had used the projectors and Bible study materials AWR had given them, and by February 2022, they had already reached their goal for the year!

AWR is currently working with these new believers so that each of their villages will have a church building. In addition, they are helping AWR reach into places like Mindanao to reach *current* rebels and assassins whose lives would also be changed with the love of Jesus! Please pray for AWR as its radio waves travel to some of the most difficult places on earth—including the Middle East and North Korea—to help reach every "nation, tribe, language and people" (Rev. 14:6).

When does Spring begin? That probably depends on where you live in North America. Most schools will take a "Spring vacation," with students and families vacationing to warm climates.

Some places are already experiencing warmer temperatures and signs of new life on trees and shrubs—plants that may have looked lifeless during the winter months. Of course, many places in North America won't have signs of Spring for another week or two, or maybe a month or two, but Spring will come, and the miracle of rebirth reminds us of the new birth Christ offers each of us.

What does this have to do with our call for the offering this Sabbath? At least two things.

1. Seasons change. Systematic giving to God remains a good practice for prioritizing God and living for Him on a regular basis. However, seasons can affect your giving pattern, sometimes resulting in smaller gifts and sometimes resulting in larger gifts. What season are you in right now? And when have your giving seasons changed?

2. God gives new life. We might think primarily about money when it comes to tithes and offerings—our gifts to God, but God continues to be the One who first gives to us. Even when it seems like we have little or nothing, God gives new life!

Whether Spring has arrived, or you hold to its promise to arrive soon, respond now to God's gift of new life for you.

March 25, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING -- EVANGELISM

One of our local church members recently said: "I have always wanted to give Bible studies, but I didn't know how to start or where to find someone that wants to study with me. I'm so excited that now I am giving my first Bible study thanks to our regional Bible instructor that helped me. She not only trained me in the class, but she took me with her and helped me through the whole process. I'm so grateful for this program in our conference."

When you are supporting the Conference Bible Instructors you are supporting the hundreds of members that they are personally training all over our conference. This is the divine model as stated in the book Christian Service: "God will recognize the fact by an outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God." ChS p. 253

Evangelism. It is one of several ministries that benefit from your Georgia-Cumberland Ministries offering* which is being received today. Today, there are 20,000 people showing an interest in God's word. By ourselves, none of us could reach each of these people.

But together, we can! You offering today helps to reach even more in our Conference with the message of a soon coming Savior.

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50% Evangelism
20% Church and School Capital Building assistance
10% Cohutta Capital Building assistance
10% Georgia-Cumberland Academy
5% Atlanta Adventist Academy
5% Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Schools

Happy April Fools' Day—a day of frequent pranks followed by someone gleefully spouting, "April Fools!" Has it happened to you already today? Did you do it to someone else?

The Bible mentions the term "fool" a number of times, but never in a glib or "happy trickster" sort of way. Twice in the Psalms we read, "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Ps. 14:1 and Ps. 53:1). If you're in church today, you probably aren't the fool found in Psalms.

We're more susceptible to being the "fool" found in Luke 12. Christ's parable warns against the natural trigger called "greed." In this story, a farmer realized some bumper crops, so he decided to enlarge his storage capacity, then take an early retirement so he could just "eat, drink and be merry" (Luke 12:19).

Sound inviting?

Jesus came down harshly, not because of what the farmer had, but because of what he didn't have. According to v. 21 (NLT), "A person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God." One way to have a rich relationship with God is to give offerings with a thankful heart.

Does this mean we're fools if we don't put everything we have into the offering? Not necessarily. It does mean that when we make our relationship with God our highest priority, the result is wisdom (Prov. 9:10) rather than being a fool—on April Fools' Day or on any other day.

Hope Channel International, Inc.

God is using Hope Channel International, Inc. to transform lives for a better life today and for eternity. With 70 global networks and growing, broadcasting in over 80 languages, Hope Channel is fulfilling the mission to preach the gospel "in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14).

Hope Channel is also an evangelistic resource center. *Wake Up with Hope* is a daily morning program that nurtures viewers' souls and their spiritual needs. *3AM: Morning is Coming* is a program that encourages young people to understand the Three Angels' Messages. *Hope.Study,* an online Bible study course platform, continues to grow—within the first year of its inception, 144,850 people have started a course. People are searching for understanding and truth in this broken world. Heroes II, Hope Channel's brand-new video game app, is inspiring a new generation to study the Bible. Imagine if we could reach every gamer with the gospel!

All these opportunities are made possible through your generous support of Hope Channel. Watch Christ-centered programming on DirecTV 368, HopeTV.org/Watch, Roku, and the Hope Channel app. We want the message of hope to reach people until there are no more people to reach. Only then can the end come! Your faithful financial giving will be blessed to do just that. "Whoever refreshes others will be refreshed" (Prov. 11:25).

"Tax Day" is April 15 for U.S. citizens, while it's April 30 in Canada, but when do you actually pay your taxes? Some do it ASAP, while others wait until the last minute, and still others file for extensions. Did you know that some people make quarterly payments throughout the year rather than a lump sum in April? Bermuda has no Tax Day, but it collects a payroll tax throughout the year.

Do you view giving your tithe to God as a tax—something the government requires of its citizens to fund its services? Does God tax believers so His church has money to operate? Some might view it in this manner.

Today I invite you to view it differently—your voluntary gift to God. We include "offerings" during our worship service because giving to God is an act of worship. Sure, everything comes from God, and He doesn't *need* our money since He already owns "the cattle on a thousand hills" (Ps. 50:10). But giving enables us to participate in worship—like joining the congregation in singing or praying along silently during the main prayer of the church service.

When you give a birthday gift because you feel obligated, it's rarely as pleasurable for you or the recipient as when you give a gift because you want to give.

Take that same approach as you give your offering to God. It's your gift, and you're giving it to God! Let's worship!

April 22, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING – COHUTTA SPRINGS YOUTH CAMP

Every Friday night at Cohutta Springs Youth Camp, campers are asked to fill out decision cards and each year hundreds of campers decide to follow Jesus. In 2021 one such camper marked that he wanted to dedicate his life to Jesus through baptism and in 2022 he followed through with that commitment back at the place he made that decision. When he was asked why getting baptized at Cohutta Spring Youth Camp was so important to him he said, "Every year when I come to camp I feel close to Jesus, this is where I experience Him."

A portion of your gift to the Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering* will support Cohutta Springs summer camp ministry. As an individual church member, most of us could not operate an Adventist summer camp ministry. But together, we can. Together all of us can support Cohutta Springs summer camp and through our summer camp ministry, boys and girls can be led to dedicate their life to Jesus during a summer week of intentional ministry wrapped in Christian fun.

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"Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly, will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously... God loves the cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:6–7).

The law of sowing and reaping is very simple. One stalk of corn yields around four ears of corn. If I only sow three seeds of corn, I will enjoy about 12 ears of corn on the cob. But if I sow 100 seeds then I will harvest 400 juicy, sweet ears of corn that I can share with friends and neighbors or sell at the farmer's market. The more you sow, the more you will reap. The word is multiplication. What you sow, God multiplies. The Bible says that God is the One who makes the food grow. He is the One who multiplies the harvest, and God tells us that the more we sow, the more we will reap.

The law of sowing and reaping is true not only in agriculture but also in finances. Our passage today tells us that the more financial seeds you plant, the more He will prosper you. God's multiplication ensures that when you give generously, you will also reap generously; the Bible promises it.

I invite you to be a cheerful giver and sow abundantly by providing for our local church budget.

Prayer: Dear God, help us to sow generously and be cheerful givers this morning. Bless the ministry of our local church as we work together to seek and save the lost. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Perhaps the best-known text in the Old Testament book of Malachi is, "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse." Malachi added God's challenge: "Test me... and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it" (Mal. 3:10).

Today, some Christians promote the "Prosperity Gospel," which draws on verses like this. Give to God (or my church or ministry), and God will give you more money than you gave. Forget investing in the stock market or real estate; give your money to God and watch your bank account surge.

While God wanted to illustrate His blessing through material prosperity to the Israelites in Old Testament times, Christ certainly didn't exhibit lots of money. In the New Testament, Paul predicted that those who sowed sparingly would reap sparingly, while those who sowed generously would also reap generously (2 Cor. 9:6). However, Paul further explained that abundance would be in good deeds and righteousness (vv. 8–10).

Have you put God to the test when it comes to blessings? What did you "sow" in the past? What will you "sow" this year? Are you prepared to receive God's blessings, whether they are financial or whether they come in another form—like faith, godliness, joy, fellowship, and love for God and others?

Let's give to God and rely on him to provide the blessings in the forms He chooses and at the time He chooses.

Disaster and Famine Relief

You've read the news and watched the footage—witnessed the aftermath from hurricanes, fires, floods, and other disasters tearing apart communities. Families are displaced, having lost their home, livelihood, and even loved ones. What happens next?

For many, the answer is Adventist Community Services (ACS) Disaster Response. The ACS network of trained volunteers respond across the North American Division (NAD), offering services, goods, and a caring heart.

Adventist expertise has traditionally focused on leading and operating the warehouses where donated goods are sent to be sorted, inventoried, and distributed to the affected community. Recent years have seen the Adventist role expand to meet a variety of needs such as sheltering, delivery of goods, rebuilding communities, and providing emotional and spiritual care.

Almost four months after Hurricane Ida swept through Louisiana, the Houma Nation was still in desperate need of help as many homes were damaged and winter was approaching fast. ACS Disaster Response leaders came to the area to learn how they could help those who had been overlooked. One resident asked in desperation, "What are we supposed to do?"

After assessing the situation, ACS was quickly able to bring blankets and other household items to share. In addition, the North American Division ACS Disaster Response sent funds to local teams who purchased space heaters to keep people warm while they rebuilt their homes. This money was from gifts like yours.

Today's offering is shared between Adventist Community Services Disaster Response, who responds to disasters within the NAD, and Adventist Development and Relief Agency's international disaster response work. Thank you for joining the teams that extend a hand of mercy to people in crisis.

Sometimes when people go to visit another person or family, they take a gift for the host. Were you invited for a special dinner? Then take a pie or a bouquet of flowers. Were you invited on Saturday night for some table games? Maybe you'll take some snacks—sweet, salty, or healthy! This simply demonstrates good manners. The gift isn't more than the meal you receive, but it acknowledges a relationship that isn't merely one-way. Good relationships involve both give and take.

When David successfully took the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, he gave everyone in Israel gifts of food, with a much larger gift to God. David also gave his music leader a song, found in both Ps. 96 and 1 Chron. 16, which includes this modern way of singing it:

Bravo, God, Bravo! Everyone join in the great shout: Encore! In awe before the beauty, in awe before the might. Bring gifts and celebrate, Bow before the beauty of God, Then to your knees—everyone worship! (Ps. 96:7-8 MSG)

We have come to worship God at His house on this Sabbath. This includes bringing our gifts and celebrating in worship. No, we don't give as much as God gives us, but we give because that's part of the relationship we have with our great God and part of the worship we practice each week.

Prayer: God, please accept our gifts at this time. Bless our humble offering we give to you today in Jesus' name, Amen.

May 27, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING -- EVANGELISM

Gladys and her husband Larry were contacting people whose names came in through the Georgia-Cumberland LEADS evangelism program, and they met Betty who had been watching an Adventist television ministry every weekend. She was delighted to meet some Seventh-day Adventists and said she had been praying that the Lord would send someone. Gladys left some lessons with Betty and a copy of The Desire of Ages. Over time Betty attended the Dublin church and one day asked about joining. So, Gladys starting going through study lessons with her. Often Betty would ask, "Why don't preachers in all the churches teach this?" as she would learn more Biblical truth. Betty was glad to learn that Seventh-day Adventists practice full immersion at baptism and keeping the seventh-day Sabbath as well since she had become convinced of that while listening to the Adventist television ministry. On June 25, 2022, at the Dublin SDA Church, Betty was one of a group of eight who were happy to be "put under the water" by retired Pastor Hal Peggau and to be raised up to walk in newness of life. We praise God for Betty's choice to follow Him all the way and for her desire to give others clear answers about her newfound faith.

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It's that time of year when school graduations take place. You, or someone close to you, may have already celebrated this milestone, or perhaps it's just around the corner.

Graduations matter! They mark a significant accomplishment—the culmination of years of study, hard work, and hopefully, worthwhile education along the way. The regalia might look funny, but it represents something. For some, graduation is a miracle they once thought might be impossible. For others, it's the expected result from their investment.

And then what?

The day after graduation might mean starting a job or maybe continuing with more schooling. Time marches on. Even with photos and video clips of graduation, you must still face another day. As you look back, one question that often surfaces is, "Was it worth it?" Did all the time and money and study pay off, or was it merely a passing chapter of life with little to show for all the investment made?

That's true for all of us, whether or not we're formally graduating.

What do you have to show for the investments you've made? God repeatedly reminds us to invest in Him and in others for eternity. Is it worth it? It actually turns out to be more than a passing chapter of life. It *is* life—and eternal life at that. The investment of our time, temple, talent, and treasure (the pillars of stewardship) pays off when we take it to graduation and beyond.

Women's Ministries

Women are specifically designed by God to meet the needs of other women. Women's Ministries is the best way to connect the church with unchurched women in your community and introduce them to Jesus Christ.

Across the North American Division, from the United States to Canada and from Bermuda to Guam-Micronesia, the women of the church are engaged in serving others. They give Bible studies, hold evangelistic series, and minister to those in shelters for battered and homeless women. They provide for the needs of families seeking refuge on our shores from oppressive regimes, teach English as a second language classes, tutor school children, and make bags of love for children who are displaced from their homes or their parents. The women of the church are making a significant difference in their communities and their congregations.

COVID didn't slow down ministry, it just moved it online. Local, Conference, Union, and Division women's ministries offered online and live webinars, retreats, and seminars. Zoom became the place to get together to talk, study, discuss books, and pray together.

Established in 1898 at the urging of Ellen White, the Women's Ministries Offering funds evangelistic outreach events and leadership training for women across the North American Division. These women partner with God in service through ministries that seek to encourage, equip, and challenge girls, teens, young adults, and women to grow deeply in God and serve Him uniquely with their gifts and talents.



According to 2 Cor. 9:7, "God loves a cheerful giver."

That raises two questions: 1. Does God love you? (wait for response); and 2. Are you a cheerful giver? (wait for response).

Hopefully the message you receive here each Sabbath is that God loves you. Are you also a cheerful giver each Sabbath? We're about to give you the opportunity to be cheerful!

Some here may have grown up listening to Christian singer Steve Green's children's songs, including "God Loves a Cheerful Giver," with the opening line being, "God loves a cheerful giver, Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha!"

% (Play song. <u>https://youtu.be/-UZ9td0LBpM</u>) (2-minute song)

The lead-in to the song challenges the idea of "giving 'til it hurts" by referencing 2 Cor. 9:7, "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Instead of "giving 'til it hurts," try "giving 'til it tickles!"

Anybe we should try it this week. Instead of solemnly passing the offering plate, smile as you give. Or try laughing! Now that could be fun!

Yes, God loves you! And God invites you to be a cheerful giver. Let's give until it tickles—Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha, Ha!

June 24, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING – ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

The Pineda family were so eager for their girls to be in an Adventist school that they relocated to Savannah, GA, to be closer to an Adventist school and their church, the Savannah Hispanic Church, which met at that time in the school gymnasium. As they had the opportunity, Ana and Arturo spoke to church friends in Hardeeville, Bluffton, and Savannah, encouraging them to take that step of faith and enroll their children in an Adventist school. As the three Pineda girls grew up, people noticed that they were cheerful and obedient, and that they had a heart for God and for service. Over the years, more than a dozen children have experienced the blessing of Christian education at Savannah Adventist Christian School in part because of the testimony of this faithful family. Judeline, Jailyn, and Josselin loved their teachers and friends, and they came to love Jesus more and more. In time, all three girls took their stand for Christ, were baptized, and became members at the Savannah Hispanic Church. They took on leadership roles at church and at school, both informal and formal. Judeline was one of the first Student Association leaders at Savannah Adventist Christian School and spent her 9th and 10th grade years as Student Association Chaplain

By yourself, you may not be able to staff and operate an Adventist Christian elementary school. But together, we can! Together, we can provide 34 or more Adventist Elementary schools across the Georgia-Cumberland Conference through our gift today to the Georgia-Cumberland education

Offering*. Together, we can provide schools that lead young people into lives of service for Christ.

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Happy Independence Day!

If you live in Canada, today is *the* day. If you live in the United States, it comes this next week. For both countries, independence came from no longer being under the British crown.

Some might compare this to a child growing up and becoming independent of one's parents—something pseudo or fabricated until there's financial independence as well.

Independence Day—for your nation or for kids who grow up and stand on their own—how does this compare to our relationship with God? When do we declare our independence from Him? Is this something we forge, or is it merely fictitious? Does our increase in responsibility release God to care for others who need Him more?

Consider ancient or more recent history, and you'll find throughout earth's orbits around the sun that our "independence" from God might find a place in our imagination, but not in reality. Can you change the earth's rotation, add 100 years to your life, make an actual sunset rather than just paint it on canvas, answer the individual prayers of billions of people each day, put your finger on sub-atomic particles, or change a heart of stone to a heart of flesh?

You don't need to. God remains in control and invites you to be "interdependent" with Him rather than "independent" of Him. Make this Sabbath your "Interdependence Day" by giving to God, who gives life to you.

World Budget

Have you ever wondered what happens to the mission offerings you give each week or as part of your promise offerings? Think of your mission offerings as a vital river flowing through the entire world, providing life-giving support to build God's work in every mission field. But exactly where do our offerings go? What do they achieve? And what do they support?

Seventy percent of your weekly mission and promise offerings help support the work of about 400 missionary families working with the 13 world Divisions, plus the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission and the Israel Field, to help these regions build and sustain mission activities. The remaining 30 percent of your mission offerings help several church institutions such as the medical mission work of Loma Linda University, the outreach of Adventist World Radio, and the humanitarian ministry of ADRA, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.

Thanks to your faithful offerings, millions of people from the most challenging areas of the world have found salvation in Jesus and have joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Thousands of new congregations have been established in unreached areas, and new believers are being trained in how to share their new faith with others in their neighborhoods. Your river of mission offerings helps grow and sustain mission work throughout the world. Please keep this life-giving river flowing.

Can you outgive God?

This idea is that when you give something to God, He gives you more than you gave to Him.

But does it work? If you give God a dollar, or \$100, or \$1,000 or \$100,000, will you get back more than you gave to God?

For some of us, just paying our bills is a great accomplishment. Others have extra or prioritize investing in a retirement account, real estate, or the stock market, hoping they will get back more than they put into their investment. Often it works, although sometimes it doesn't.

Can you outgive God?

Remember, whatever we give actually came to us from God, the original Giver (James 1:17 says: "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father..."). God started this by giving us something to give—like an older person giving a child something to put in the offering plate.

When Jesus told the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30), it seemed clear that He expected us to take what He gave us and put it to use—to yield even more than He gave. When those recipients gave an account of what their master had given them, commendation went to those who invested, and the master gave them even more.

Today I invite you to take what God has given you and give it to Him; then let Him give you more—whether that's money, opportunities, talent, heart, love, or life.

You can't outgive God, but it's great to try!

July 22 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING – CHURCH AND SCHOOL CAPITAL

The Collegedale University church launched a church plant in 2008 to focus a ministry in the downtown, inner-city section of Chattanooga. It is comprised of a significant number of young adult families who support public activism, advocacy and service, in the spirit of our engaged Adventist pioneers. For nearly 15 years they have been renting space in the inner city while reaching out within a 2-3 mile radius, actively serving and connecting in their neighborhood. This church, named, The Well, serves in the community with others, to provide summer elementary school tutoring, assist families moving from homelessness to full time housing, providing summer ministry to children in the inner city, feeding breakfast to over 250 each first Sabbath of December, and reaching out to former Adventist young adults who live in downtown Chattanooga that no longer make church connectivity a priority. A Couple of years ago, they lost their lease in the space they had been working out of. Late in 2022 a commercial building came available just a couple of blocks away that would still keep them serving in the target neighborhood where they were having an impact. Through much prayer, sacrifice, and your offerings to the Church and School Capital fund, they were able to purchase this property last December.

By our self, none of us could probably provide the means to be able to build this mission center for the Adventist message and ministry. But together, we can. Together you and I through our gifts to the Georgia-Cumberland Church Ministries Offering* today, are helping new church buildings take shape.

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"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

The one thing that stands out in this Bible verse is that it doesn't give us an option NOT to give. The Bible takes for granted that we are going to give. The issue is how much have you decided to give? Zacchaeus gave 50% of his wealth. The poor widow gave 100% of what she had—two copper coins. Barnabas sold a field he owned and provided for the preaching of the gospel. The people of God have been giving for the Lord's work throughout history. God's children don't spend all their income on themselves but think of sharing their wealth for the preaching of the gospel.

We find three biblical principles of giving in this passage. First, you need to decide how much you are going to give. We need to plan in advance what we are going to give to God. Second, don't give reluctantly or under compulsion. The opposite of a cheerful giver is a sad and ornery giver. God doesn't want you to give because you are being pressured to give. Third, God loves a cheerful giver. God wants you to give from the heart, willingly and cheerfully. Are you happy that you can contribute to God's remnant church?

Today, I encourage you to provide for your local church expense and give, not reluctantly but cheerfully.

Prayer: Father in heaven, bless the lives of the people here today as they provide for our local church by giving cheerfully to preach the gospel in our part of the world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Activity - print cards for August 5 (Choose either this version or the one on the next page.)

God	
Today I give you my:	
Time	
Talent	
Treasure	
Temple	
Name	





At this time during our worship service, we typically collect money, whether that's cash or checks. Some people give each week as part of their worship to God. Others give once a month or once every pay period. Some give online, and still others do a combination, maybe planning in advance so they can participate at this moment rather than just reaching for some spare change or the customary dollar.

This week we're going to add more options! We have a simple card for each person. You can fill this out now and put it in the offering, or you might choose to think about it longer and give it at the end of today's church service. (Ask for the cards to be distributed at this time. You will need to plan in advance to have these ready now. Two different versions of the card are available.)

The card lists the "4 T's" of what God has given us and asks us to give back to Him—Time, Temple (body/heart), Talent, and Treasure.

What will you give to God today? Whatever you check, you'll need to ask yourself the specific amount(s) and how you will do that. Use this card to communicate with God about your relationship with Him and your gift(s) today.

Christian Record Services

Imagine the scene recorded in Mark 10. A huge crowd was following Jesus. Voices buzzed around Him, clamoring for His attention. And then, a desperate shout reached Jesus' ears (or, perhaps, struck His heart).

"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stopped in His tracks and called out to Bartimaeus. Immediately, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. Jesus asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?"

Without hesitation, Bartimaeus declared, "Rabbi, I want to see!" Jesus answered, "Go, your faith has healed you!"

I love that we can share the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ with people who are blind or experiencing vision loss! Christian Record Services, a ministry of compassion of the Seventh-day Adventist Church since 1899, is serving nearly 18,000 members throughout the United States and in countries around the world.

Christian Record Services offers an array of services and programs, including Bible study lessons, books, magazines and Bibles in audio, braille, and large print from a library of more than 2,000 titles. Members can also deepen social, educational, and spiritual connections through PhoneFaith, scholarships for higher education, and 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 mission to *empower* people who are blind to *engage* with their communities and *embrace* the Blessed Hope.

You have, at your control, the power to increase or decrease your love for God. The same can be said about your love for this church—you have the power to increase or decrease your love for it.

How?

Jesus stated it plainly in Matt. 6:21: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Here's how the Amplified Bible explains it: "Where your treasure is, there your heart [your wishes, your desires, that on which your life centers] will be also."

Let me explain it this way. God has set things up so that your heart will follow wherever you make your investment. If you neglect your friends or family, your love for them will diminish. If you invest more time and money with them, your love for them will grow! The same is true with your love for God and His church. Your love for God and His church increases as you place your treasure—your money, time, skills, and service—with God and His church.

I can testify today that it works this way for me. How about you? The amount of time you spend at work or school, on a hobby, or virtually anything will impact how important that is to you. Your heart follows where you place your treasure.

Today I'm inviting you to increase your love for God and for His church. And you can do that simply by giving at this time.

August 26, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING – ATLANTA ADVENTIST ACADEMY

Many young people in today's world struggle with their identity. At Atlanta Adventist Academy's recent spiritual retreat, Pastor James Mello spoke on the year's theme, "Image-bearers". He encouraged and motivated students to understand and live out their God-given reality of being living representations of the love and Gospel of Jesus Christ. Students were brought to tears as crucial conversations unveiled and debunked the lies and myths that prevented them from fully embodying their identity as a person made in God's image. Those lies were replaced with the truth of who they are as stated in the very beginning of the Bible "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Genesis 1:27)." Atlanta Adventist Academy is grateful for your prayers and support as we keep the fire that was lit at Spiritual Retreat aflame throughout the duration of the school year.

Individually, most of us cannot build and operate a Christian day academy. But together, we can! Together, through our gifts to the Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering today, we provide of young people to learn to lead lives of service for Christ. Each Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering benefits the following ministries: 50% Evangelism 20% Church and School Capital Building assistance 10% Cohutta Springs Capital Building assistance 10% Georgia-Cumberland Academy 5% Atlanta Adventist Academy 5% Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Schools

Labor Day Weekend is here—for the United States, Canada, Bermuda, plus Guam and Micronesia—throughout the North American Division.

Ironically, instead of working on Labor Day, most people have a holiday with no work! In other words, many "play" on "Labor Day."

Does that seem wrong, or is it actually right—in a counter-intuitive way? Is it like:

Laughing so hard that you cry;

Letting something go and then finding it returns to you on its own;

Saying, "It doesn't matter" when it really matters a lot; Being groggy because you've slept so much;

Teaching people a lesson, but they learn nothing at all;

Hiding something from people so well than that you can't find it yourself;

Getting ahead because you helped so many get ahead of you; Standing tall before others because you kneel before your Maker;

Giving away what you have and finding you have more than you had at the start.

Those who think Labor Day is for working need a new perspective because it's the holiday given for the work you've already done. When we put it in spiritual terms, it means we give to God and others because we've already received so much from both God and others. Our offering today provides the opportunity for you to do it!

World Budget: Radio Ministries

The Voice of Prophecy radio ministry began with an offer that founder H.M.S. Richards Sr. simply could not refuse. The *Los Angeles Express* newspaper promised Pastor Richards several *free* 15-minute slots of radio time each week if he would place weekly advertising for his tent meetings in their paper.

Always wanting to embrace new methods to reach souls, the 35year-old Richards jumped at the chance. On October 19, 1929, only days before the Great Depression hit, Richards was on the air, sharing the hope of Jesus with the people of Southern California.

By World War II, the Voice of Prophecy had become the first religious coast-to-coast broadcast in North America on the Mutual Broadcasting Network. That same year, 1942, it launched a Spanish-language broadcast that would later be called La Voz de la Esperanza.

More North Americans access radio regularly than any other major media format. Eighty-eight percent of Canadians report having listened to radio in any given month, while 93% of Americans say they listen to radio every week. Online audio also remains a fastgrowing market, as millions turn to digital platforms for more engaging content. As listeners tune in week by week, they are invited to go deeper with the Lord through the radio ministries' Bible schools and evangelistic events.

Day by day and week by week, the power of radio evangelism continues to change lives. Please join today in giving generously to support the ministry of the Voice of Prophecy and La Voz de la Esperanza.

🏂 Activity for next Sabbath September 16

Create a Power Point slide to show the congregation this statement or publish the statement in your bulletin:

"When you clench your fist, no one can put anything in your hand. A clenched fist won't give, and can't receive." -Alex Haley (writer of the book *Roots*) September 16, 2023



Local Church Budget

Even though the Bible says, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35), sometimes it's just not possible to give. Let's illustrate this because it might help each of us when it comes to the part of our worship service where we can receive a blessing, but only if we give.

A (You will need to have a collection of small objects in a sack with you to do this illustration. Invite someone to join you in the front for a "living illustration." You can ask the person in advance or take a chance and invite someone on the spot. Often this makes a great opportunity to bring a young person on the platform to participate actively in the church service.)

(Say to the volunteer who has joined you in the front of the church:) I'm going to ask you to hold out your hand and clench your fist (demonstrate for your volunteer). Good! Just hold it there as together we illustrate the statement, "When you clench your fist, no one can put anything in your hand" (Alex Haley quote, available as a PowerPoint slide). Another way of saying it is, "A clenched fist won't give, and can't receive."

Let's try it. I have something in this sack to give you. How does this work when your fist is clenched? (Pull out one of the objects, like a golf ball, ping pong ball, apple, etc.) With a closed fist, you can't receive my gift.

Let's try it again, but this time release the fist and open your hand. What a difference that makes! But I have more! Can you receive more? Let's try. It might work only if you give what you have received.

Today I invite you to open your fist—to give. Only then will you be able to receive.

September 23, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING - EVANGELISM

Pastor Neil Reid tells how his son discovered churches! "One day while Laurell and I were driving in Rochester, New York, suddenly we heard our two-year-old son shouting at the top of his voice from his elevated seat behind us, "Church! Church!" While I kept my eyes on the road, my wife turned to see him excitedly pointing out the window towards a stately building with a steeple and a cross on top. She laughed and replied, "Yes Nakeil, that's a church!" Everywhere we traveled through my pastoral district for the next several months, he gleefully announced the presence of just about every church along the route."

Churches are more than buildings where people gather for worship and celebrate major life events like baby dedications, weddings and funerals. They are silent testimonials to every passerby of the presence of a body of Christian believers who have received the gospel of Jesus Christ. While the building proclaims its message mutedly from one location 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year, believers are called to share the good news resoundingly, articulately, and powerfully everywhere they go. Jesus said in Matthew 10:7-8 "And as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

Since we have freely received the gift of the gospel, let us freely give to share it with others.

Evangelism. It is one of several ministries that benefit from your Georgia-Cumberland Ministries offering which is being received today. By ourselves, none of us could reach all of those responding to the Adventist message right now.

But together, we can! You offering to the Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering* today helps to reach even more in our Conference with the message of a soon coming Savior.

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10% Cohutta Capital Building assistance
10% Georgia-Cumberland Academy
5% Atlanta Adventist Academy
5% Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Schools

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap" (Luke 6:38).

Gloria and Enoch embarked on their long-awaited vacation. The plan was to spend a couple of days visiting their son's family and their three granddaughters and then go to their favorite beach on the coast to enjoy the sun and water. That Sabbath, as they attended church with their granddaughters, the pastor made a special offering appeal to those in attendance to cover the expense of replacing the roof on the church. Gloria and Enoch felt impressed to give all the money they had saved for their beach vacation to the church for the new roof and to spend the rest of their vacation with their son's family instead. To their surprise, when they returned home, Gloria found a letter in the mail from her work at the hospital stating that they had miscalculated her wages and needed to pay her back wages. Enclosed was a check for exactly double what she and Enoch gave to the Adventist church to help with the roof.

The Bible promises that when you give, it will be given to you. We invite you to give for your local church budget so the work of the Adventist church will continue here at _____ [name of your congregation].

Prayer: Dear Jesus, help us to believe in your promises that you will provide for us when we give of our resources to advance God's kingdom here on earth. In your name, Amen.



Some parents hand their young child something to put in the offering. When does that stop?

Let's try it today, but let's involve everyone! Do you have something to put in the offering plate today? If not, get something right now, even if it's an empty tithe envelope.

In a moment, I'm going to invite you to give your offering to someone else to put into the plate today, but first, I want you to think about what you are giving and the reason you're giving it. Some of you may have already given your tithes and offerings this month, or maybe you give online, so you aren't giving anything today during the church service. That's fine. You can explain that.

Let me repeat the two questions:

- 1. What are you giving today?
- 2. Why are you giving it?

Let's have everyone stand now (wait for everyone to stand). Please move into groups of two. If you see someone left out, you can form a group of three to make sure everyone's included. Once you're together, sit down together for a moment and share your answers to our two questions. (Pause and help people get together with others for this sharing experience.)

Okay, let's take about 60 seconds for you to give the other person what you were going to put into the offering today and share your reason why you're giving as well. (Notify at 30 seconds and end around 60 seconds).

Now we'll collect the offering, and please give what has been given to you this Sabbath.

October 14, 2023 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This may sound counter intuitive but Adventist Christian Education in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference is experiencing a significant growth spurt since the onset of Covid-19. Much of the increase comes from non-Seventh-day Adventist families which through Gods providence positions us to fulfill our objective of changing lives through 180 days of child evangelism.

One of the key initiatives to assist in this enrollment growth is the GCC Student Evangelism scholarship program begun years ago to assist non-SDA families who the local church deems as having high potential to become Seventh-day Adventists.

Once an elementary age child is selected they are provided reduced or free tuition with the intent of evangelizing the child who in turn evangelizes the family to complete the kingdom growth cycle. Each school is provided at least one scholarship per year through the conference evangelism budget.

Because of your willingness to support such initiatives through generous giving, children's and family's lives are changed for eternity every year.

If you know of a family who could potentially benefit from such an opportunity please let your local school principal or pastor know so we can accelerate the finishing of His work in our territory.

By ourselves most of us could not operate and fund a Christian elementary school for our thousands of students. But together, we can! Together, through our offerings to the Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering* today, we provide schools that lead young people to lives of service for Christ.

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10% Cohutta Capital Building assistance
10% Georgia-Cumberland Academy
5% Atlanta Adventist Academy
5% Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Schools

October 21, 2023

Local Church Budget

Happy Thanksgiving!

You might think I'm a bit confused. In Canada, Thanksgiving was the second Monday of October—the 9th. In the United States, it won't be until next month—the fourth Thursday in November, which will be the 23rd. Why say, "Happy Thanksgiving" today?

Of course, any day can be Thanksgiving. And Scripture gives us many reasons to give thanks, such as these:

"I will extol the Lord with all my heart in the council of the upright and in the assembly...The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy" (Ps. 111:1, 7).

"It is good to give thanks to the LORD. . .. O LORD, what great works you do! And how deep are your thoughts. Only a simpleton would not know, and only a fool would not understand this" (Ps. 92:1, 5–6 NLT).

"Praise be to the Lord, for he has heard my cry for mercy. The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him" (Ps. 28:6–7).

National holidays for Thanksgiving come from expected harvest blessings. Most of us aren't farmers, but we have experienced God's abundant blessings in so many ways. So today, join me in Thanksgiving—we aren't limited to one day a year. Let's give to God from an abundant heart of praise and thanksgiving today!

October 28, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING -- EVANGELISM

Often the best way to spend a summer day is to be out on the water, enjoying the beauty of the lake. That was never truer than when the members of the Johnson City, TN, church experienced recently. Thanks to the hospitality of Tim and Connie Mercer, the entire church membership was invited to spend the day at their place situated on the shores of Boone Lake. The primary purpose was not boating, tubing and wakeboarding though. 13 individuals came to proclaim their commitment to Jesus through the waters of baptism. Pastor Rob Lechner in concert with several lay leaders orchestrated this amazing display of personal testimonies. The group of 13 represented several ethnicities and the ages ranged from 10-78. With the church family lining the edge of the pool, Pastor Rob shared stories from each individual. Each story was unique and was inclusive of other church members who had provided Bible studies, prayer and encouragement leading them to this day. Personal evangelism was the key to this day of great celebration. By taking an active role, each member of the Johnson City church has a part in sharing a love for Jesus that is contagious. It's an ongoing story as many more "Days at the Lake" are being planned.

Evangelism is the lifeblood of any church. By ourselves, none of us could probably carry on and support all the evangelism effort in the Northeast part of Tennessee. But together, we can. Together you and I through our offerings to the Georgia-Cumberland Church Ministries Offering* today, are making this evangelistic outreach happen.

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10% Georgia-Cumberland Academy
5% Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Schools November 4, 2023

Local Church Budget

Some people receive a regular income for their work, such as pastors and teachers, bank tellers and other hourly or salaried employees. They can plan accordingly. Their tithe remains constant, and their offerings might also be constant, even though some expenses might fluctuate while others remain steady. Other people might get paid in bursts with irregular amounts each time like farmers who harvest their crops, salespeople on commissions, restaurant waiters, and Uber/Lyft drivers. Their tithes and offerings fluctuate, just like their income.

The Jews gathered for three major religious festivals each year in Old Testament times. According to Deut. 16:16-17, "no one should appear before the LORD empty-handed: Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you." Notice this last sentence, "Each of you must bring a gift in proportion to the way the LORD your God has blessed you."

How much has God blessed you? Bring God a gift in proportion to His blessing. Tithing makes that pretty simple—one-tenth of your paycheck. The same can be said of your offerings—give in proportion to the way God has blessed you.

Maybe we need to pause and count our blessings! Don't give what you "can't" or merely give what you "can." Instead, give according to God's blessings to you.

Prayer: Thank you, God, and please accept our gifts to You today, just as You have blessed us. In Christ's name, Amen.

November 11, 2023

Annual Sacrifice Offering for Global Mission

If you could make a difference in someone's life by giving up something for one week, would you do it? What would you give up? The latest issue of your favorite magazine? A pizza? A new pair of shoes? Think what you can give up this week so someone you don't know can be introduced to Jesus, and then put that amount in an offering envelope marked *Annual Sacrifice Offering*.

Your gift might sponsor a seminar about healthful living or help support a Global Mission pioneer in a city where most people have never heard about Jesus. Just think! One day you could meet the person you sacrificed for in heaven.

If you have courage, ask God how much He wants you to give Him by giving beyond your regular tithe and promise offering. If you agree to give God what He is asking, He will provide what He has asked you to give.

This is your opportunity to sacrifice and share God's love with someone who doesn't know Jesus. Your gift will help reach every unreached person. What would you sacrifice for that individual?

Prayer: Lord, we humbly accept the advice that the Apostle Paul gives us in Heb. 13:16 where he said, "Sacrifices are pleasing to God" (ESV). So, Lord, we ask you to bless our offerings of sacrifice so that they might multiply and help Global Mission pioneers reach the unreached. In Jesus' name, Amen.

At grocery store check-out lines, you'll find an array of items for impulse buying. They hope you will add additional items to your cart while you wait in line.

The same thing happens with online purchasing. When you select something, SHAZAM! everyone else who made that same purchase ALSO bought this item or these two items. Just "click here" to add them to your virtual shopping cart. How many times have you purchased more than you intended simply because of impulse shopping?! Me too!

While impulse shopping might be fun (or hazardous), the Bible suggests a different way of giving. Don't base it on how well I do the offering call. Paul instructed the believers in Corinth to make plans and take action each week, at the start of the week. We call this "planning" or "systematic benevolence"—giving regularly as a lifestyle.

Paul wrote, "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come, no collections will have to be made" (1 Cor. 16:2). Because Paul didn't come by the Corinthians' church each Sabbath, the people started each week by putting God first with their personal giving. You might have a container where you put your offering as you start each week, and then bring it to church on Sabbath and give it to God, just as you planned.

November 25, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING – GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND ACADEMY

People who are looking at educational options for their children sometimes say, "We will never be able to afford Adventist education." In fact, some people never even investigate what it would take to get their child into Adventist education because they are so convinced that they could never afford it.

At Georgia-Cumberland Academy, families receive the encouragement and help they need to afford Adventist education and God blesses these efforts! Quite a few years ago a single mom who should never have been able to afford an Adventist education at Georgia-Cumberland Academy enrolled the first of her 4 children. This hardworking nurse was a woman of faith and a strong believer in Adventist education.

By the time her youngest son graduated, this woman had invested in 16 years of education from Georgia-Cumberland Academy. She had worked hard; her kids had worked hard and now her last child was graduating. She stood in front of a church full of people during graduation weekend and shared her testimony of God's faithfulness and goodness in getting her kids through. She testified to answered prayers and regularly experienced miracles.

How did it happen? Generous, faithful people who wanted to have an eternal impact on young lives chose to give. These four young people made it through GCA and went on to become professionals because people like you gave to make it possible.

By ourselves, no one of us could build, operate and staff an academy for 300 students. But together, we can! Together we can provide a place where students can learn the lessons necessary to take their place in society, and to be spiritual leaders for Christ in this generation. Your gift today to the Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering* will help to continue this vital educational ministry and make it possible for students to attend Georgia-Cumberland Academy.

*Each Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering benefits the following ministries:

50% Evangelism

20% Church and School Capital Building assistance

10% Cohutta Capital Building assistance

10% Georgia-Cumberland Academy

5% Atlanta Adventist Academy

5% Georgia-Cumberland Elementary Schools

December starts off the Christmas season in earnest for many people, even if merchants have been pushing the need to buy gifts for weeks already.

What makes the Christmas season special for you? Is it the music, the decorations, special foods, family gatherings, or the gifts—what you might receive, as well as what you might give?

Gift-giving can be problematic. What if someone gives you a gift, but you don't have one to give in return or vice versa?! Which matters more: the amount of money you spend on the gift or giving a "perfect gift" to a particular person? Let's reverse that; what if someone gives you a gift and it's not something you've ever wanted or will ever use? Should you put on a happy face and say something like, "How can I ever thank you enough for this gift?"

Each Sabbath we collect an offering as you give your gifts to God. We don't limit this to the Christmas season because Christmas happens every time we come to church. We come to worship the greatest gift of all time—the gift of God coming to this earth in the form of Jesus Christ.

Our gifts, whether they are wrapped in beautiful Christmas paper or given as cash or checks or through online giving with a credit card, show our thankfulness to God.

So, "Merry Christmas!" And let's take this opportunity to give our gifts to God.

Adventist Community Services

People come in all shapes and sizes, and so do their needs. Adventist Community Services offers diverse services tailored to fit the needs of the vulnerable in their community.

David walked into Joseph's Storehouse Food Pantry, an ACS center in Oklahoma. The staff soon learned that he had recently been released from prison and was saving money to rent an apartment. At the time, he was living in a tent near a creek just outside of town and had no way to cook. David chose food that was ready to eat out of the package.

Realizing that more was needed, a volunteer invited him back the next day to pick up cooking items. The volunteer went shopping for items they didn't already have at the center and soon, David received a small cook stove, fuel, can opener, and cookware when he returned. ACS continues to assist David with food when he runs low, and prays for his safety and for God's continued presence.

Whether giving food and cooking gear, dental care, clothing, after school tutoring, or English language skills, your ACS offering paves a pathway forward for somebody in need.

Ellen White shared, "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'" (*Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).

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.

The Christmas story of Christ's birth in a stable includes visits by local shepherds and Wise Men from far away.

The shepherds, although the low-class people of Bethlehem, played a vital role for God's people. Jerusalem, located only five miles (eight kilometers) from Bethlehem, needed "spotless lambs" for daily sacrifices and many more during festivals like the Passover. These shepherds took care of the little lambs to ensure they would be pristine enough for sacrifice. Maybe that's why the angelic host appeared to the shepherds in Bethlehem, giving them a personalized invitation to visit the spotless Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. However, the shepherds had no gift for Baby Jesus. Instead, they joyfully proclaimed His arrival to the world (Luke 2:16–18).

The Wise Men represented the other end of the social and economic spectrum. Even though they were part of the wealthy intelligentsia, they still found themselves drawn to something far greater than themselves. Following the star, they came to Jerusalem (Matt. 2:1) and directly to the temple (*Desire of Ages*, p. 60), asking, "Where is the newborn King of the Jews?" Prejudiced and defensive religious leaders could point the Magi to nearby Bethlehem, but they refused to go there themselves. However, the Wise Men went. In fact, "wise men still seek Him." And they worshiped and gave gifts.

This Sabbath you're invited to worship and to give gifts, just like the Wise Men thousands of years ago.

December 23, 2023 GEORGIA-CUMBERLAND CONFERENCE MINISTRIES OFFERING -- EVANGELISM

One year ago, Dr. Ron Clouzet, pastor of the East Ridge, TN Adventist church told thrilling stories of how God had worked through the members of the East Ridge church as he conducted evangelistic meetings. Almost the entire church membership participated in some way or another. Among the many miracles stories was one man who felt impressed to come to a Christian church just a few weeks before the meetings were to begin. His heart was touched and a complete turn-around in his life took place as he was led to become a new Adventist Christian. Another lady had not attended the Adventist church for over 30 years and she vividly felt the Lord impressing her to come back to church. She showed up just as the meetings were starting. Over 12 people gave their hearts to Christ and the end of the meetings and became baptized and another 11-12 started preparing for baptism.

Evangelism is the lifeblood of any church. By ourselves, none of us could probably carry on and support all the evangelism efforts in our Conference. But together, we can. Together you and I through our offerings to the Georgia-Cumberland Church Ministries Offering* today, are making this evangelistic outreach happen.

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December 30, 2023 COHUTTA SPRINGS

It's not every day that the Georgia-Cumberland Conference can minister to someone in France, but that is what happened recently.

We had a Cohutta Springs Youth camper come all the way from France because his cousins, who also live in France, had come to our camp previous summers. The family are not Adventist but they came across Cohutta Springs Youth Camp as a result of an internet search. After the camper had been dropped off at the airport on his way home, one of our camp staff reached out to him to make sure he made it to his flight and this was his response. "Thank you for asking. I'm in the plane, thinking about all the amazing activities that I did at Cohutta, about all the great people that I've met, and about all the knowledge of God that was talked about and how it helped me in my faith in Jesus. I want you to know that I've a wonderful time. So, thank you, and just remember that I love Cohutta and that I will never forget these two incredible weeks."

A portion of your gift to the Georgia-Cumberland Ministries Offering* will support Cohutta Springs summer camp ministry. As an individual church member, most of us could not operate an Adventist summer camp ministry. But together, we can. Together all of us can support Cohutta Springs summer camp and through our summer camp ministry, boys and girls can be led to dedicate their life to Jesus during a summer week of intentional ministry wrapped in Christian fun.

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