

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 Budget

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 Budget 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 Budget 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 Budget offering. Another benefit of the Conference Budget 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 Budget.

Local Church Budget

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.