

## A Few Words About Money

We have a unique financing system in the Seventh-day Adventist Church which seeks to do the most good with a limited amount of funds. I would like to take a moment and explain the basics of how it works. When a person puts money in an offering envelope and marks it, "tithe," all of it is sent to the local conference office. In our case the Ohio Conference in Mount Vernon, Ohio. 68% of that amount or roughly 2/3 is kept by the local conference and the majority of it is used for pastoral salaries and expenses. The remaining 1/3 is sent to the union office which in our case is headquartered in Columbia, Maryland and is called the Columbia Union. The union keeps 1/3 of this 1/3 and sends the remaining funds to the division which in our case is the North American Division headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland. The division keeps another 1/3 of this 1/3 and sends the remaining to the General Conference also headquartered in Silver Spring, Maryland. In summary roughly 2/3 of your tithe stays in our local conference (Ohio) and the remaining 1/3 goes to other divisions of the world church.

If you put money in your offering envelope and do not mark it it goes to our local church budget which, of course, takes care of the needs here at Centerville. The majority (61%) of our local church budget goes to support Spring Valley Academy which has an annual budget of approximately 2.5 million dollars. In our local church budget we have approximately 150 different items costing us annually about \$400,000. NONE of this \$400,000 is funded by tithe. All of these monies must be raised in addition to tithe. It is from this \$400,000 that we do all of our local ministries. Because we have 150 different accounts it was voted at the last board meeting on August 24 that if funds in an account are not used for one year, it is the prerogative of the Finance Committee to roll 50% of those funds into the general account which can be distributed as needed. After 2 years it is the prerogative of the Finance Committee to roll 100% of those funds into the general account and distributed as needed.

Having said all of this, it is always the decision of each giver what specifically they would like to contribute to. The categories on the offering envelope are designated as follows: Tithe, Church Family Budget, World Budget, Worthy Student Budget, Special Projects, Family Life Center and miscellaneous offerings. There is also space on each envelope to write in a category to contribute to. In closing I want to thank you for your faithfulness in giving to the Lord's work. I hope this short explanation helps you to have clearer choices as you decide how you want your money to be used. What a privilege is ours that we can have a part in distributing the Lord's resources for the building up of His kingdom and the finishing of the work so that we can go home to be with Him. Undoubtedly there will be souls in the kingdom because you decided to give as the Lord has asked you to do. Praise His holy name!