

Advent's Financial Situation

The current recession has cost a number of our members their jobs, and others are taking cuts and needing to be careful with expenses. So, in spite of the great enthusiasm for the mission of Advent that you can feel whenever you come here, we are not receiving enough offerings to maintain our ministries through the year. Each week our giving is slightly less than last year or the year before, and this shortfall has been consistent since January. We managed to finish last year in the black, but this year we may soon be sinking into red ink (actually, as of Easter our income for the year has been \$18 more than expenses, but normally at this time of year we would want to be \$20,000 **ahead** of expenses, because historically we receive less offering in the summer.

Advent has no extra "slush fund" to draw on. If we do not improve our offerings in the weeks ahead, we will not be able to meet our commitments or carry forward Advent's mission. You don't want this to happen, and neither do I. What can we do?

- * I ask every one of you to consider whether you can increase your giving to Advent. The Lord has given us all that we have—can we increase the proportion that we give back to the Lord's work?
- * If you have fallen behind the amount you estimated that you would give, and you are able, please bring your giving up to date or even ahead.
- * We essentially need an extra Sunday (our budget calls for about \$20,000 a week). Can you give double for one week, giving Advent an "extra Sunday" of offering?
- * Will/Did you receive a tax refund? Give 10% to support Advent's mission.
- * Sign up for Simply Giving. This program makes it simpler for you to give what you plan to give, and simpler for the congregation to pay bills because the money comes in steadily throughout the year.
- * Mail in your offerings when you are out of town or unable to attend. Your offering envelopes are mail able.
- * Make a special "Pentecost Power" offering on May 23, the day of Pentecost, which is also the last day of Sunday School. We'll have one service only at 9:30, with a festive party after worship.
- * Finally, step out in faith with a tithe (giving 10% of your income, as the Bible recommends) for **one week or one month**. If you find you cannot manage tithing 10%, commit to a percentage of your income that is a workable challenge for you. I pray that you will find joy in tithing, so that it becomes your regular practice (see God's promise to tithers in Malachi 3:10).
- * You may have your own ideas for improving our financial situation. The Council, the Finance Committee, and the Stewardship Team are working on this too. Let us know your ideas.

Upcoming Events

Great ministry keeps happening around here! Dinner theater April 29-May 1. Don't miss the evening with Mary Johnson and O'Shay that Pastor Tim talked about in his Easter sermon. That's May 16 at 6:30 p.m. The annual Garage Sale will be June 10-12. Bring your good stuff to be sold and pitch in to help—it's a service to the community and helps Advent maintain our building. Vacation Bible School (grades 1-5) is the next week, June 14-18. The Middle School mission trip to Rockford, IL is the next week, June 20-26. The 2nd Annual Golf Tournament is June 21—invite your friends! And watch for the Grace Hall Gala—a big party to celebrate our newly completed Hall—and raise some money to offset the "summer slump."

Advent is an awesome congregation of great people with a commitment to Christ's mission and a huge heart for service. We can all be proud to be a part of this wonderful, welcoming community of God's people. We can be confident that when we invite others, they, too, will be blessed at Advent. Thanks for all that you do to build up this body of Christ!

Pastor Morrie Wee