



Community of Christ

CHRIST'S MISSION, OUR MISSION

March 4, 2016

What Would It Take?

The church's current financial woes represent a challenge—and an opportunity. Doctrine and Covenants 162:7d directs us:

Each disciple needs a spiritual home. You are called to build that home and care for it, but also to share equally with the church.

To this point, members have responded generously to world mission tithes, giving \$13 million in calendar year 2015, which was \$1 million more than planned. At the same time, members continue to be more generous in giving to local mission tithes. Now they're in a position to fix that inequity—and solve the worldwide church's budget woes.

This is the time to move the split to 50/50—not by reducing local giving, but by giving sacrificially to world mission tithes. After that, giving should increase equally for both. The following questions and answers provide suggestions:

QUESTION: What financial response is required from church members to support current staffing levels and avoid layoffs?

ANSWER: We would need an increase in world mission tithes that is timely, reliable, and sustainable.

To avoid staff reductions from our current level, several criteria would need to be met:

1. World mission tithing plans totaling \$6 million must be sent to the Presiding Bishopric by March 22, 2016, for calendar year 2016.
2. All tithing plans must be in addition to our planned \$13 million of world mission tithes for the year. This means leadership would plan a budget based on \$19 million of world mission tithes for calendar year 2016.
3. Tithing plans received must indicate ongoing support so staffing levels could be maintained for the next three years. Based on about a 3-percent annual increase in global staffing and other expenses, this would mean the Presiding Bishopric would need to be able to plan on at least the following level of world mission tithes each year:
 - a. \$19.5 million for calendar year 2017
 - b. \$20.0 million for calendar year 2018
 - c. \$21.0 million for calendar year 2019

4. By 30 June 2016, or halfway through the calendar year, world mission tithes received would need to be about \$10 million.

By March 22, 2016, e-mail your world mission tithing plan to the Presiding Bishopric (PresidingBishopric@CofChrist.org). Each tithing plan should include:

1. Contributions you are ready to make immediately. Send contributions as a check payable to “Community of Christ” along with your tithing plan directly to the Presiding Bishopric at:
Presiding Bishop of Community of Christ
1001 W. Walnut St.
Independence, MO 64050 USA
2. How much in additional world mission tithes you plan to give in calendar year 2016.
3. How much you plan to give for the next three years: calendar years 2017, 2018, and 2019.
4. Confirmation that this tithing plan is an increase to what you gave in calendar year 2015 to world mission tithes and not a replacement for what previously was given. You should include what you originally planned to give in calendar year 2016 and what the increase is, **OR** you should identify if you are giving world mission tithes for the first time.
5. A schedule for when you will contribute world mission tithes (i.e., once a year or monthly) and how you will make the contribution (i.e., electronic direct payments, directly mailed checks, or offering envelopes).
6. Put “My World Mission Tithing Plan” in the subject line of the e-mail.

QUESTION: What does a world mission tithing plan need to look like?

ANSWER: You may respond in unlimited ways. The key items to include were listed in the above question. However, here are a few examples of how a world mission tithing plan e-mail might look.

Example 1:

SUBJECT: My World Mission Tithing Plan

In calendar year 2015, I gave \$1,000 to world mission tithes. Here is a check for \$2,000 for calendar year 2016. It represents a contribution above my current level for 2016. If I can free additional funds by the end of the calendar year, I’ll try to give more. I also commit to giving \$200 per month starting in calendar year 2017 through at least 2019. I will investigate ways to give that electronically, or I’ll use my envelope.

Example 2:

SUBJECT: My World Mission Tithing Plan

I currently give \$500 per year to world mission tithes. I am prepared to increase this amount by \$700 per year. I plan to give \$1,200 each year through calendar year 2019 to world mission tithes. I will contribute \$600 by June 30, 2015, and am creating an

automatic donation through pre-authorized transfer (PAT) for \$100 per month starting in July 2016.

Example 3:

SUBJECT: My World Mission Tithing Plan

I do not currently contribute to world mission tithes, but I am prepared to start. I plan to give \$1,200 for calendar years 2016 and 2017 and \$2,400 for calendar years 2018 and 2019. I will contribute \$600 by June 30, 2016, and then \$100 per month for the next two years and \$200 per month for calendar years 2018 and 2019.

QUESTION: How might church members work together to accomplish this goal?

ANSWER: People might choose to respond in unlimited ways. Here are a few ideas of how it could work.

1. If you can't increase your contributions to world mission tithes from your calendar year 2015 level, ask 10 friends if they can or talk to your congregation about what it might be able to do (see #5 below).
2. One way to make the goal of \$6 million additional world mission tithes would be if 6,000 people would contribute \$1,000 more to world mission tithes now and plan to contribute another \$1,000 each March through 2019.
3. A second way to make the goal would be if 6,000 people would contribute \$100 more a month to world mission tithes and plan to continue this through 2019.
4. A third way to make the goal would be:
 - a. if about 1,000 new contributors to world mission tithes would pledge to give \$1,000 per year; and
 - b. if about 6,000 existing contributors to world mission tithes would pledge to give \$600 more per year or \$50 more per month; and
 - c. if about 1,000 existing contributors to world mission tithes would pledge to give \$1,500 more per year or \$125 more per month.
5. Additionally, congregations can work together to help meet the goal by one of the below ways. If your congregation decides to do one of the following please have the pastor or congregational financial officer send a world mission tithing plan for the congregation to the Presiding Bishopric and include the date the congregation acted on approving this plan as part of the e-mail.
 - a. Donate a lump sum from reserves in the Affiliate Investment Pool.
 - b. Allow the World Church to apply a 4-percent spending rate to the congregation's balance in the Affiliate Investment Pool for a period of years.
 - c. Set an amount in the congregation budget to donate to world mission tithes in addition to what individuals contribute.
 - d. Start dividing undesignated offerings from the second through fifth Sundays 50/50 between local and world mission tithes.