



FUNDING

THE MISSION



WHAT IS TITHING?



“All churches care about is getting your money!”

Sound familiar? Many think this is true of all churches. What has contributed to this perception? Television preachers and Hollywood have much to do with it. Of course I'm not making a sweeping statement about all TV preachers - some are honest, with pure motives - but many promise financial windfalls, physical healing, relational restoration, job promotions, or anything else people desire, if we'll simply send money to their ministry. Of course this is not biblical. It is extremely rare to find a movie or show that does not portray preachers as money-hungry, manipulative, odd characters who are out-of-touch with common people, and shouldn't be trusted. God does promise in Matthew 6 that if we seek first His Kingdom, all our needs will be met. Also, God often blesses us far beyond our needs or what we deserve; but to promise specific blessings tied to specific financial actions is going far beyond God's Word.

Before we get into specifics, let me share two thoughts. First, if you never give one penny, you are still welcome at New Life. New Life will always be a church anyone can attend, and feel loved, valued, and accepted whether they invest their resources in the ministry of the church or not. New Life has people who believe so deeply in the ministry of this church that they give generously in order that you can attend without feeling obligated to give.

Second, New Life will always uphold what the Bible teaches about finances. Scripture speaks truth into all areas of our lives, including finances. Jesus taught that how we use our money is an indication of our values and priorities. (Matthew 6:19-21) We teach that God calls us to be diligent earners, generous givers, wise savers, cautious debtors, and prudent consumers. We offer Financial Peace University - a powerful series that teaches us how to handle money God's way. We believe these teachings are an important partsharing the hope of New Life in Jesus.

So rest assured, you will never be pressured to give, and you will be taught Biblical financial principles. I trust this document will answer most of your questions about what God expects of us in regard to our finances, and the specifics of New Life's finances. After you read it, if you have further questions, please contact me and I will be happy to respond

Financial Accountability

Who makes and oversees financial decisions?

New Life operates on a fiscal year of June through May. Each spring, the pastors and ministry team leaders prayerfully discuss strategies and needs for the coming year to fulfill New Life's mission of doing good and sharing the hope of new life in Jesus. These requests are passed along to our finance team. The finance team goes through the requests line by line, discusses compensation package adjustments for pastors and other employees, and projects anticipated income for the following year. The finance team passes an overall budget recommendation to the church board. The board diligently studies the recommended budget and salaries, projected income, and overall financial picture of the church. The board has the authority to adjust any of the numbers. When the board is satisfied the budget reflects the mission of the church and makes good financial sense, they vote to approve the budget.

Throughout the year the finance team and church board monitor spending through a variety of detailed reports. If pastors or ministry team leaders want to spend money not accounted for in the budget, the board must approve the funding. In short, the pastors and ministry team leaders set the budget; and the finance team and church board provide accountability and oversight for all spending.



Church Board: Members of our congregation elect the church board who oversee all financial decisions and spending of the church.



Denominational Oversight - We are part of the North Central Ohio District Church of the Nazarene. At the end of each fiscal year, we give an exhaustive report of our ministries and finances to our district and general church leaders.



Accountant Reviews - New Life hires an outside accountant to over-see our bookkeeping.



Open books - New Life has an "open books" policy. If you would like to review New Life's finances, contact a pastor.

FINANCIAL FLOW

When we receive tithes and offerings, they are counted, recorded and deposited by members of our offering counting team, under the direction of our finance and administration team. The deposit information is then given to our accountant, who oversees all disbursements and budget reporting.



Counters

Counters record and count offerings each week. Precautions are taken to make sure no individual is ever alone with cash.



Accountant

The deposit information is given to the accountant, who records all disbursements, income, and budget reporting.





WHAT IS TITHING?

Have you ever reached for a toy in the hands of a toddler? If you have, you are well aware of what often happens. They clutch the toy tightly, close their shoulders, make a mean face, and turn their back to you, often while screaming for you to get away from their stuff. Many of us carry this natural-born selfishness into adulthood.

People sometimes give because it will benefit them personally, as in getting a tax break, making them feel good around the holidays or helping them manipulate the agenda of the organization to which they are giving. Other times people give to charity out of a sense of duty.

The Bible gives us a different picture. It is a picture of a generous adult that has matured and is not enslaved by the “must-haves” of our culture; someone obedient to the teaching of Scripture, full of joy when giving, and whose generosity is motivated by a deep compassion to help others. The practice of tithing is a spiritual exercise that helps a selfish person develop into a generous giver.

To tithe is to return to God one tenth of the income He has blessed us with, in gratitude and devotion through the ministry of the local church. We use the term ‘return’ in recognition that it is already God’s, based on scripture. For those investing the money, it displays their trust that God is ultimately their Provider. It is an expression of thankfulness to God for His blessings and provisions. For the church receiving the tithe, it becomes a much-needed resource for ministry and operations.

The custom of returning the tithe was a practice among nations of the ancient world. The practice of returning a tenth of one’s income or property extends into Hebrew history before the time of the Mosaic Law (the first five books of the Old Testament).

The first recorded instance of tithing in the Bible occurs in Genesis 14:17-20. In Genesis 28:22, Jacob, long before the Law of Moses, promised that he would give to the Lord a tenth of all he received. The Law of Moses prescribed tithing in some detail in Leviticus 27, Numbers 18, and Deuteronomy 12. The tithe was an expression of gratitude to God by His people. Basic to tithing was the acknowledgment of God’s ownership of everything in the earth.

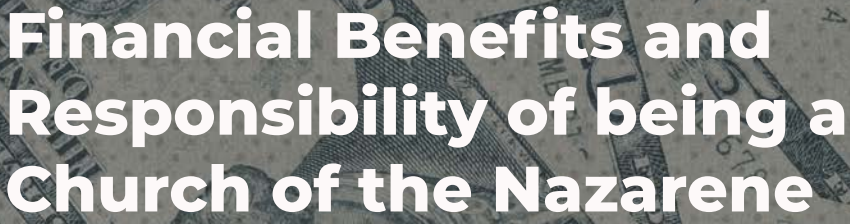
In Matthew 23:23, Jesus gives a harsh correction to the Pharisees: "How terrible it will be for you teachers of religious law and you Pharisees. Hypocrites! For you are careful to tithe even the tiniest part of your income, but you ignore the important

things of the law - justice, mercy, and faith. You should tithe, yes, but you should not leave undone the more important things.” Jesus is scolding them for ignoring justice, mercy, and faith. He is saying these words are not just the Law of Moses; these are the Laws of God that should be followed at all times. Jesus makes it clear that tithing is important, but does not exempt them from following all of God’s teaching - justice, mercy, faith, love, etc. We can return 10% of our income back to God through the church for the work of ministry and yet still be living a life of disobedience to God. However, if we live a life pleasing to God, one of the expressions of our gratitude will be honoring the biblical practice of tithing.

Why do many people find it difficult to tithe? First, many Christians lack a basic Biblical understanding of tithing. Second, they do not trust God enough to follow through with His guidelines for tithing. Third, they already have great debt and so many bills that they would have to change their lifestyle and/or financial situation in order to be able to tithe. Fourth, there are many who want to claim the name of Christ but are simply disobedient to this clear scriptural teaching. Even so, there are many who tithe. New Life Church of the Nazarene has been built on the foundation of people who return 10% of their increase to God’s work through New Life. They give generously without fanfare and with joyful hearts.

Giving is the antidote for greed, selfishness, and attitudes of entitlement. It’s like an antibiotic for a terrible disease. Giving is the purest form of gratitude, because it is the tangible way we say, “Thanks.” When we give back to God, we acknowledge that everything we have and all we are comes from Him. Giving is the solution to what’s wrong with our attitude toward money because it changes our hearts. Giving lets us see the world through eyes of compassion. Giving develops our faith and pulls the plug on our compulsive spending behaviors. Giving calms down that thing that lives inside some of us that says, “I want more and more and more!” It quiets our insatiable desires because it takes our eyes off ourselves.





Financial Benefits and Responsibility of being a Church of the Nazarene

It is a tremendous benefit and blessing to be part of the global Church of the Nazarene. The Church of the Nazarene has over 2.6 million members in over 30,000 churches in over 160 countries, effectively reaching multitudes of people-groups with the message of hope, and love of Jesus Christ. Every week Nazarenes worship in over 200 languages. We have hundreds of vocational missionaries and volunteers serving throughout the world, as well as 56 Nazarene colleges and other education institutions. The Church of the Nazarene also has 60 medical facilities and numerous compassionate ministry centers.

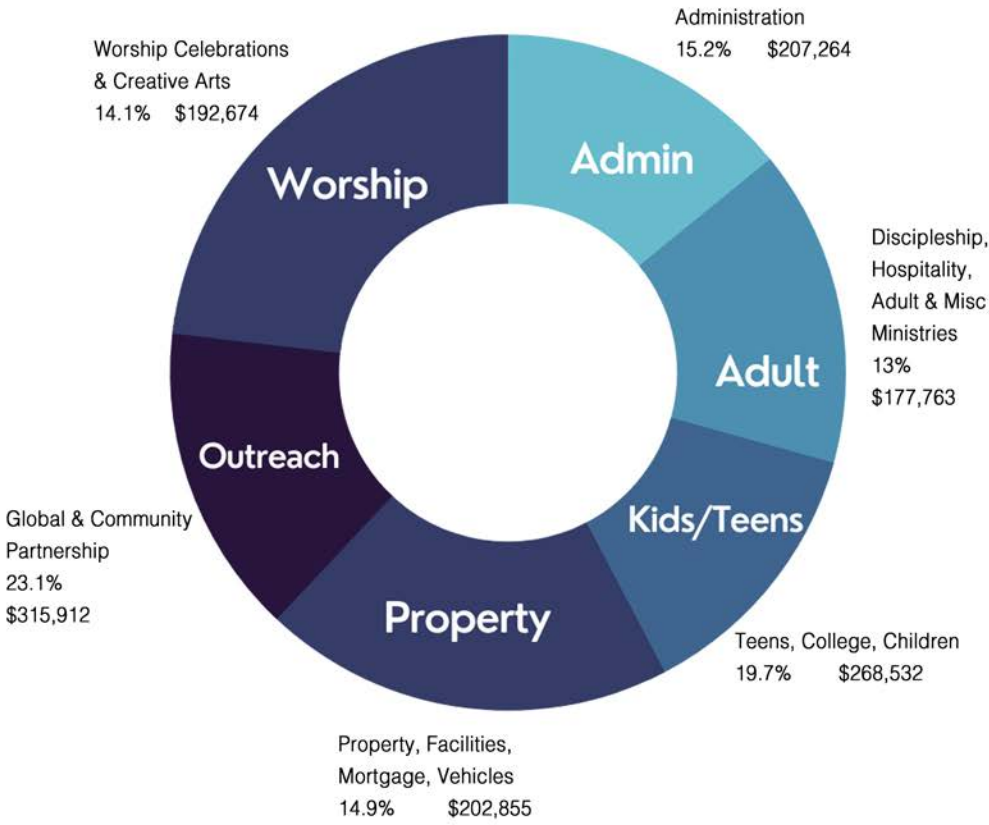
The accountability of being part of this denomination is a great benefit. Annually, we report detailed records of all income and expenses to district boards. To build facilities, buy and sell properties, or hire pastoral staff, there must be district approval.

The resources, ministries, and partnerships afforded by being part of a tight-knit, scripturally-grounded denomination is a tremendous blessing. Wonderful district and regionally-sponsored events for children and teens (ie: camps, talent competitions, Bible quizzing, training conferences, etc.) are only a few of the many advantages of a strong denomination.

Part of the responsibility and privilege in this partnership is to financially invest a portion of resources to ensure ministries around the globe are funded and strong. The goal is for each local church on the North Central Ohio District to contribute 15.25% of their total income to go towards this connectional partnership, distributed as follows:

- 5.5% to the World Evangelism Fund
- 2.25% to Pensions & Benefits
- 2.25% to Educational Institutions:
Mount Vernon Nazarene University and Nazarene Bible College.
- 4.65% to support various works, administrative expenses, and ministries of the district

2023-2024 Budget = \$1,365,000

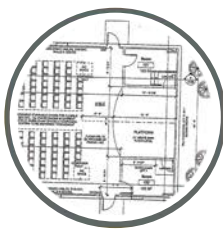


Opportunities to Give



Tithe

10% of our income



Building Fund

Facility Growth and Expansion



Ministries

Specific events or fundraisers



Missionaries

Support for missionaries



Mission Supplies

For projects on mission trips



Teen/Children

Support for camps or mission trips

There are many ways to give above your tithe at New Life throughout the year. Tithing is returning 10% of our income, or increase, back to God with grateful hearts through the local church as non-designated funds for general operating expenses, ministries of the church, salaries, global missions, and denominational support. Then there are opportunities to give above and beyond your tithe for special projects or needs.



GIVING METHODS

- Church Center App
- Online Giving is offered through our website (www.newlifenz.net). See the “Give” menu at the top of the front page.
- Sunday morning offering. Drop boxes are on the back wall for your convenience. Checks or cash are fine. If cash is given, and you want it to be reflected on your year-end charitable donations statement, it will need to be placed in an offering envelope, with your name included.
- Checks and cash donations can be dropped off at the church office in an envelope with all the relevant information.
- Checks may be mailed to the church office.
- You can set up through your bank to have a check automatically sent to the church on a consistent basis.



New Life

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

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