



Zion Lutheran CHURCH

Faithful From Generation to Generation

Volume 1, Issue 3

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We Give Thee But Thine Own...

by Heather Hewett



**Bill and Heather
Hewett**

I am not a life-long member of Zion. When I was a single mother, a friend, Bill Hewett, a single father, invited me to worship. I joined the church before our marriage, largely because I knew it would please Bill's family, who had been Zion members for three generations, and because I wanted to have our two boys experience choir and Sunday School.

Bill and I were married July 1986, and when the stewardship campaign came up in November, Bill announced that, because we now had two incomes, we could double our gift to the church. My initial reaction was why on earth should we do that? That's when I first discovered Bill's interest in tithing. He felt that as our income increased, our giving should increase accordingly. I didn't really understand tithing at that point, but since it was obvious to me that *most* Zion members were not doing this, I didn't see why *I* had to, and I told him so.

That's when Bill brought up what I will call, for lack of a better term, the "magic penny" principle. I know it sounds corny, but he said, you're not just giving your money away—it's like the magic penny that the Sunday School kids sing about. I didn't have a clue what he was talking about at first, but gradually I understood that Bill viewed tithing as making an investment in the church. And the more I thought about it, the more I realized that I had benefited from being a member of Zion, as had our kids, and that it was now my turn to give something back. So we started tithing.

I also became more involved with the activities in the church. It was while I was helping out with Sunday School that I finally began to really understand tithing. Each week the kids sang a song during their offering that starts, "We give thee but thine own..." and that's when I realized that tithing is more than an investment, it is an act of faith—an acknowledgement of God's gifts to me.

When we had our one-on-one interview with Greg Gibbs a couple of months ago, we said that we were thinking of giving something around the "challenge" level. When Greg asked me last month to write down what we were planning to give, I wrote \$30,000. Then Greg asked the Campaign leadership team to write an amount on a little sticky note what we would prayerfully consider giving. For some crazy reason I wrote down a ridiculous amount. Later, when I showed it to Bill, he agreed—it was indeed a ridiculous amount! But I stuck it on the refrigerator anyway and we started

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Important Dates to Reserve Now!

- 5/1: Ministry Emphasis
- 5/10: Advance Commitment Gathering
- 5/22: Commitment
(Note: Only one service at 10:00 a.m.)
- 6/5: First Fruits

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The Wisdom of Children

by Tom Single



The Single Family

Like many of us, we realized that in order to make sure that our contribution to the campaign was over and above our normal giving, it would need to come from our monthly budget. That meant finding some things to cut back on.

We also wanted to make sure that the sacrificial giving was a family affair. We started small, such as cutting back Tom's cell phone bill—over a 3-year campaign, that ends up being about \$2,000. Realizing that things could add up pretty quickly, we were ready to find

more opportunities and to use the campaign as a learning exercise for our children.

One evening after explaining that sacrificial giving means giving something that they considered valuable, our kids offered (and it was their own idea) to give up our annual family trip to Disney World. They decided that it was more important for God's church to be able to reach new people than for them to go to Disney again.

After the prayerful exercise, Monica and I were excited to know that we are able to give a significant amount to the campaign, but more importantly, our children already understood sacrificial giving better than we could ever have hoped!

Advance Commitment Gathering

Would you like to make an advanced commitment (before Sunday, May 22) to the Capital Stewardship Campaign? If so, you are cordially invited to the **Advance Commitment Gathering on May 10 at 7:00 p.m. in Stellhorn Lounge.**

Child care will be provided.

May 10
7:00 p.m.

Please sign up in the church office and indicate if you need child care.

LEVELS OF GIVING TO PRODUCE \$2,000,000

—	Gifts At	—
1	Gift At	\$200,000
2	Gifts At	\$100,000
3	Gifts At	\$75,000
3	Gifts At	\$50,000
10	Gifts At	\$25,000
20	Gifts At	\$18,000
20	Gifts At	\$15,000
20	Gifts At	\$10,000
25	Gifts At	\$6,000
35	Gifts At	\$4,500
—	Gifts At	—

Individual Giving Levels

- Leadership: \$50,000+**
- Challenge: \$25,000+**
- Pacesetting: \$10,000+**

Giving is for 3 years, over and above our regular giving.

“NOT EQUAL GIVING, BUT EQUAL SACRIFICE”

Ways to Give: Cash, Real Estate, Stocks or Bonds, Life Insurance Policies or Cash Values of Policy, Antiques, Works of Art, Jewelry, Coin or Stamp Collections, Income Tax Refunds, Irrevocable or Revocable Trust, etc.

Zion's Lemonade Stand

by Nadine Nelson

We at Zion are a family of faith; a family with members of all ages. Most importantly, we are a part of God's family and want to belong, to be included, and to work together. Our children at Zion also want to help our capital campaign—to deepen our faith and increase our financial resources.

Recently in BibleLand, our children were told about our campaign and asked to share with others in writing, what they could give to God and Zion.

Children put their whole being into what they are doing. Enthusiastically they said, "We don't have any money so all we can give is ourselves." They did NOT say, we can't do anything." They "got it." God wants us.

They laid on the floor in The Garden Room, paper and pencil in one hand, a cookie in the other, and worked diligently on the assignment.

One child said "I don't think its right to keep all the money for ourselves. We should give it to the poor!" It was explained that 10% of the money we raise will be given to help others. How did she "get it" so much faster than most of us?

Melissa asked how to spell "would." When asked if she needed anything else spelled out for her, she politely said, "No, thank you." Melissa had written, "I would give my 'hrt' (heart) with my love to God." Doesn't God want our "hrts" no matter how we spell it?

McKenzie wrote, "I can give Him love. I can give Him help. I can give Him money by making a lemonade stand. I can give Him faith!"



Could any of us resist a lemonade stand outside the back door of Zion, with excited children trying so hard to help God and Zion by selling us lemonade and Wash-tenaw Dairy donuts?

Our children's generation is raring to be "faithful" and contribute to Zion's campaign. Can't you just taste how good that cold, lemonade is going to be on a warm, sunny Sunday at Zion? Hmm! Get ready customers!

We Give Thee But Thine Alone

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thinking about how we might be able to give that "prayerful" amount.

There is no doubt that we have been very blessed by God—we are in good health, both have good jobs, have always had enough money to pay our bills and to save some for retirement and since we don't spend excessively, we have virtually no debt. But we realized that there was no way our income would support our giving at even the challenge level, let alone that ridiculous amount posted on the refrigerator. We talked about cutting back a little on our other charitable giving, but that just did not seem right. There was only one more thing to do, and that was to pray for an answer.

The answer, as it turns out, is that

God wants us to spend some "magic pennies" of another kind. Years ago I received a gift of stock from a distant relative. It wasn't worth a whole lot then, but over the years it appreciated in value from dividend reinvestments. I sold some shares a number of years ago in order to purchase some undeveloped land up north to keep it from turning into another subdivision. We don't plan to ever sell it—just keep it as a part of our estate. Checking it out recently, we learned that this land has appreciated 10-fold. We had absolutely no control over this—you can't even blame it on the miracle of compound interest—it just happened!

Bill and I had already discussed leaving 10% of our estate to the church. Ten percent of this appreciated value just happens to be the amount that I wrote on that sticky

note. This is just too much of a coincidence not to be God's will. We have decided not to wait until we're buried to give our church its 10%, because the church needs the money now. We plan to cash out some of our other investments and give that money. And as long as the magic penny principle keeps working it's not going to hurt our investments at all. I don't know if it was God's hand that made me write that ridiculous amount on that sticky note, but it was surely God's blessings that allowed us to find the way to give that amount. So if anyone asks me why they should give, all I can say is count your blessings—and your magic pennies!





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WHAT
 will be
 MY
 Sacrifice?

Principles

The Stewardship Principle

- We recognize that God owns all that we possess.
- Our Lord provides resources for our lives and through us, the resources for godly work and for the church.
- We are merely stewards/overseers/managers of what God has provided for our lives.
- We are accountable for all that has been placed into our lives, not just a portion of it.
- Our giving is an expression of our love and gratitude to God.

The Voluntary Principle

- Apostle Paul stated, “Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” (II Corinthians 9:7)
- Paul said, If the eagerness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has—not according to what one does not have.” (II Corinthians 8:11)

The Sacrificial Principle

In the Old Testament, people came to worship with a sacrifice in hand. Sacrifice means “to set apart” or “to make holy.” Sacrificial giving is the act of making sacred or setting apart our financial resources for God. Sacrificial giving examples in the Bible include: The widow who gave her two coins (Mark 12:41) and the little boy who gave his five barley loaves and two fish that ultimately fed the five thousand. (John 6:9)

And Jesus said, “From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required.” (Luke 12:48)