

ECCF Sketch

(say "etch'a")

Jan-Feb 2015 The Evangelical Covenant Church of Elgin: A Church of Disciples who Make Disciples

Note(s) from the Pastor

2015: The Time Has Come

Once again we met our budget of \$118,000, and we exceeded it in terms of special projects and giving, raising a total of around **\$139,000**.

2015 will be a time of looking back and looking forward, as we celebrate 125 of congregational life. Our celebration makes this the perfect spring to rejoice in Pastor Greg's ordination, and the perfect summer to send teens to CHIC.

This is also the year, as Pastor Greg is ordained, that we look to our mission as a church in critical moment and decide whether to invest in a future for the church. We have been blessed by Pastor Greg's ministry to all generations and constituents, his preaching, and his focus on our children, youth and families. The budget for 2015 is casting a vision for Pastor Greg to join us full-time, starting Sept. 1.

The plan is that Pastor Jonathan will remain in his current half-time role as senior pastor, and that the role that Pastor Greg is filling will be made full-time. The vision is not that duties will be added to Pastor Greg, so much as that TIME will be added to Pastor Greg.

This presents us with a challenge as we look to the budget for 2015. To accommodate the requests and our direction of staffing we will need to raise around 144,000. To raise \$144,000 will require, on average, a \$10 per week per income ABOVE meeting budget in 2014 of \$118,000. *But you have already been doing this. When the non-budgeted special items are accounted for, you gave \$139,000 to the church in 2014. There is generosity, faithfulness and vision at work in our congregation.*

Perhaps some wish they could do more, but they need some coaching in household spending and priorities. Several years ago I distributed a pamphlet on the tithe. Copies are still available and more can be made. The tithe, which is 10% of household income, is the Old Testament standard. The New Testament standard is that we give our whole lives

to Christ, to pour out generously without reference to any law.

On the reverse page is a tithing chart to help you with your calculations. If you are not yet giving to the Church at a 5% level this may be the time to seek God's will in prayer, and rise to the challenge. It may be that you feel convicted to look to the Old Testament's minimum standard of 10%, not out of fear for any law, but out of a desire to practice discipleship and faithfulness in all things in your life with Christ.

Congregational Annual Meeting February 8, 12:30 PM

Annual Reports

Annual Reports are submitted by the committees, auxiliary ministries, and task forces of the Church.

- *Annual Reports final deadline: Jan. 21.*
- Printed Reports will be distributed Jan 25.

On Missionary Giving and Support

One question raised at a congregational meeting is whether the offerings we take every Easter Sunday for our missionaries, and also when they visit us,

a) should go towards their promised support, or
b) be over and above their promised support.

The not-for-profit industry standard is that all donations always meet the promised support first (option "a"). **Of course all designated monies only ever go to their designations.** The Missions Committee proposed we keep to this industry standard (option "a", and the Council unanimously agreed.

What this means for Cathy Campobello in 2014:

1. We promised Cathy \$1200 in 2014 budget.
2. On Easter Sunday her share of the missions offering was \$600. When she visited us in the fall she received an additional offering of \$1300. This means that we promised her \$1200, and thanks to your generosity, **she received \$1900!** Praise the Lord.

Questions? Please talk to Pastor Jonathan.

2015 Anniversary

Our anniversary committee is gearing up for a special 125th anniversary year that will take us all through 2015. The main event takes place the week-end of November 7-8. Meanwhile there will be print publications and directories and several special events. A budget item has been opened, and in 2015 the request is \$2,000 from the general budget.

If you would like to make donations to the anniversary fund, please make the checks out to the church and mark “2015 anniversary” in the memo.

STEWARDSHIP: Tithes, Offerings, Opportunities

Below are some guidelines for giving to the offering for you to take to God in prayer, for 50 Sundays/year.

<u>Income</u>	<u>5% Offering</u>	<u>Tithe Offering</u>
\$15,000/year	\$750/year, \$15/week	\$1500/year, \$30/week
\$30,000/year	\$1500/year, \$30/week	\$3,000/year, \$60/week
\$45,000/year	\$2250/year, \$45/week	\$4,500/year, \$90/week
\$60,000/year	\$3,000/year, \$60/week	\$6,000/year, \$120/week
\$75,000/year	\$3750/year, \$75/week	\$7,500/year, \$150/week
\$90,000/year	\$4,500/year, \$90/week	\$9,000/year, \$180/week

Some tips that Amy and I learned early in our marriage from Christian financial work-shops:

1. Give to God’s work first, and see whether you manage to meet your monthly needs. Amy and I put this to the test and God is amazing!
2. Make it a priority to get out of debt and avoid increasing debt. Pay ahead on loans, and arrange your spending so that you retire credit card balances with every bill. Having interest charges working against you is very discouraging: you never feel like you are getting ahead, and it is your church that often feels the pinch you are in.
3. If you want something, save up for it. Do not go into debt to buy luxuries, fashions and “bling.” Some large ticket items combined with emergencies mean that you may have to incur debt, such as for a car or a home. That is all the more reason to save up for the luxuries ahead of time – a computer, a television, a saxophone, a new coat to match the shoes, etc. When you can, create an emergency fund for medium-ticket items such as for new home appliances. “Planned obsolescence” is a fact of life that needs preparation.
4. Eating at home is always cheaper and usually healthier than eating out – unless you can find a home-cooked meal for \$2/plate!