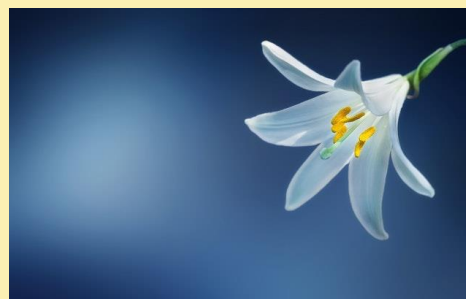




## Message from Your Mission Funding Team

Lent, the period leading to Easter, is a time of contemplation and reflection. It gives us an opportunity to simplify our lives and find room for those things that are important and transformative. It's a time to let go of worry and anxiety, to instead live open-handed, generous lives filled with faith and assurance.



Easter is a story of generosity. There is no greater way to celebrate the gift Christ gave so freely than to make room for tangible expressions to others of God's love. Let's mark this season of Lent and Easter with intentional acts of generosity that reflect our grateful response to the one who gave everything that we might live life more abundantly.

Onward!

Stassi Cramm  
presiding bishop  
minister

Dar Shepherdson  
bishop of Canada

Ken Barrows  
mission funding

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## A Disciple's Generous Response

Living Christ's mission happens individually and collectively within our congregations and in the world. The exploration of whole-life stewardship is also an individual and a collective process.

In recent months more than 140 congregations, mission centres and other jurisdictions have responded to the financial needs of the church, living out the words of Doctrine and Covenants 165:2e.

Stewardship as a response to the ministry of Christ is more than individual giving. It includes the generosity of congregations and jurisdictions that give to worldwide ministries of the church to strengthen community in Christ in all nations.

Presiding Bishop Stassi Cramm shares:

"The response of congregations and mission centres to the financial challenges we are facing has been an amazing blessing to the church. We are so grateful for these expressions of generosity and pray that each of these groups has been blessed in return."

The value of a group discussing how they collectively support Mission Tithes is that it reminds everyone we are members of a worldwide church. The discussions help disciples understand and connect to local and worldwide mission. Some people will never experience mission outside their local congregation. Having conversations about how mission is occurring beyond the congregation and how the congregation can support that mission helps disciples connect with the global identity of the church.



How is your congregation or mission centre working to strengthen community in Christ in all nations?

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## Tips and Insights

Thrivent Financial shares these ideas in "[Living Lent Out Loud](#)."

- **40 ways in 40 days:** Commit to giving back to others in a new way each day of Lent.
- **Bag it/save it/share it:** Instead of eating out, take your lunch to work or school during Lent. Give the money you save to a homeless shelter, or send it anonymously to someone who is struggling to make ends meet. If you decided

to limit your purchased snack intake during Lent, stash the money you would have spent on snacks and give it to a food pantry or school program.

- **Pray it forward:** Each day of Lent, add another person to your prayer list.
- **Offer it up:** If you've held onto a grudge, forgiveness is a special Lenten gift only you can give.
- **Cause and effect:** Make a positive impact on a cause you care about.
- **Share your time and talents.**
- **Make a personal donation:** Follow your values to choose a cause that you'd like to support with a financial donation.
- **Give thanks:** Send thank-you cards to friends, neighbours, teachers, physicians, colleagues, church leaders or others who have touched your life.
- **Caller ID:** Call someone each day during Lent just to tell the person how much his or her friendship means to you.
- **Lighten a load:** See if family members, friends, neighbours or coworkers could use an extra hand.



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## Reminders

A financial update is due to be released around March 15th. You can find the report [here](#) when it is available online.

Remember to mark your calendar for President Steve Veazey's next webcast, "Hope Rising," at 6:00 p.m. CDT on Sunday, April 8.

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## Contribution Update

### ***Worldwide Mission Tithes***

Estimated contributions to Worldwide Mission Tithes in January were \$1,150,000. This is great news as we kick off a new year. The Worldwide Mission Tithes goal for 2018 is

\$14.7 million. Sustaining the level of giving demonstrated in January makes attaining this goal well within reach.

### ***Bridge of Hope Tithes***

In Canada pledges to Bridge of Hope total \$8.5 million, in the United States the total is approximately \$59 million.

## **Mission in Action**

Have you checked out the [new website](#)! Find all the latest news and events for both Canada East and Canada West mission centres. Thank you to all those who made this wonderful, new site possible.



## **Pathway to Abundant Generosity**

This month's scripture is from Philippians, and the reflection is "[The Whole-Life Generosity Cycle](#)" by Patrick Johnson (excerpted).



Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross.

-Philippians 2:5-8 NRSV

As Jesus showed us, generosity is rooted in our relationship with God and flows from God's presence within us. Like the waters from a bubbling fountain, we are refreshed, and that blessing overflows to others.

Whole-life generosity is a progressive cycle: Our relationship with God prompts a response of gratitude, which we express by releasing what we have received from God to bless others. In turn, our relationship with God is strengthened, our gratitude grows stronger, our release is greater and our adventure of whole-life generosity grows and advances.

Jesus lived a life of generosity during His walk on Earth - feeding the hungry, healing the sick, setting free those bound by sin and shame. Through Jesus' example of whole-life generosity, He was ushering in a new way. He told those around him that God's kingdom was at hand - a kingdom of compassion, forgiveness, justice, mercy and joyful sacrifice. Sacrifice even unto death.

Stare at Jesus long enough and you will become a giver. Give long enough and you will become more like Christ.

-Randy Alcorn

It's only after embracing the truth of the generosity God has shown to us that we can begin to emulate God in living out whole-life generosity. If Jesus is our source of whole-life generosity, then as we grow closer to Him, we will become more generous like Him.

By simple mathematics giving is key to the world you seek to live in. If I take, I alone gain. If I give or share, then two at least are enriched.

-Rasheed Ogunlaru

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