

REDISCOVER MACEDONIA

A spirit of gratitude and generosity



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Try-A-Tithe Sunday

In an effort to connect giving with discipleship and faith practices, the focus of Try-A-Tithe Sunday is to invite and encourage each household to grow toward a tithe, to a tithe and beyond a tithe as they have been blessed. This may begin with a designated Sunday each quarter (i.e., the first Sunday) or a designated Sunday each month (i.e., the second Sunday). In the later case, a household would give the usual offering on the 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays, then on the second Sunday, Try-A-Tithe Sunday, households are invited to step up in faith and give 1/10 of their weekly income to support God's work through their congregation.

Here is an example:

- ◆ The Adams family has an income of \$52,000/year - \$1000 a week
- ◆ Currently they usual giving is \$35/week – or 3.5% of their household income
- ◆ On Sundays 1, 3, 4 and 5 they would continue to give \$35 each Sunday
- ◆ On **TRY-A-TITHE SUNDAY**, the 2nd Sunday each month, they are invited to “try tithing” which in this family's case would be giving \$100 for that one week.

Note this giving of a tithe is intended to be additional giving for the year, not to be offset by lower giving in later months.

When introducing this to the congregation, it may be helpful to have a Proportionate Giving Chart available, especially on the day you designate Try-A-Tithe Sunday.

Frequently Asked Questions About Tithing

Q. What is biblical tithing?

A. In general, biblical tithing refers to the practice of giving one tenth of one's income for the work of God. In the Hebrew Bible, tithing was understood as a response of gratitude and an obligation. In the light of the New Testament, some Christians believe tithing is still an obligation, whereas other Christians understand tithing to be a loving, freely chosen response to God's gracious provisions for life - God's grace! Tithing is understood by many Christians to be an important discipline of one's faith life.

Q. What are some of the most important Old Testament references to tithing?

A. Yes, there are several examples

“... and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house;
And of that you give me I will surely give one tenth to you.” Genesis 28::22

“All tithes from the land, whether the seed from the ground or the fruit from the tree,
Are the Lord's; they are holy to the Lord.” Leviticus 27:30

“Set apart a tithe of all the yield of your seed that is brought in yearly from the field.”
Deuteronomy 14:22

“Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts: see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessings. Malachi 3:10

Q. How does the New Testament deal with the opportunity to tithe?

A. We understand that Jesus and the apostles assumed that the tithe was a healthy guide for one’s personal stewardship. In Matthew 23:23 Jesus warns the scribes and Pharisees not to misuse the tithe as an "excuse" for neglecting other weightier matters of justice, mercy and faith. St. Paul follows the same logic in emphasizing that believers should give proportionately, as God has blessed them.

In 2 Corinthians 8 & 9, Paul describes the example the Macedonians set for other believers. In 2 Corinthians 8:2 & 3, Paul says directly “for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means.”

Another translation says “Although they were going through hard times and were very poor, they were glad to give generously. They gave as much as they could afford and even more, simply because they wanted to.” But the enthusiasm for giving in Macedonia didn’t stop there!

Looking at verse 12, Paul instructs the Corinthians that they had something very important to learn from the Macedonians. It could be paraphrased like this: “It doesn't matter how much you have. What matters is how much you are willing to give from what you have.” This is point of being faithful and generous!

Nowhere in the New Testament is the teaching or practice of tithing repudiated.

Q. When one tithes, is the tithe on gross or net income?

A. There is no definitive answer to this question. One must choose the method that most adequately fulfills the intention of the person or household who tithes. It has been reported that many persons who file income tax returns use their Adjusted Gross Income as the base figure. This decision is clearly in the hands of the giver, and it is the faithful giver who responds generously.