



# IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE



## TREASURY NOTES

**APRIL 2007**

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### **Protect Your Volunteers**

Volunteers are the heart and soul for much of what a congregation does. Without volunteers a great deal of the mission and most of the programs a church accomplishes would not happen. Volunteers are in service to Jesus Christ and so, it is important that a congregation does everything it possibly can to protect their volunteers from suspicion or avoidable misunderstandings. This is especially true for those volunteers or employed staff members who are responsible for managing the finances of the church.

#### ***Here are some simple ways to protect your volunteers or employed staff.***

1. Make sure that two unrelated persons count the Sunday offering. Preferably before the offering ever leaves the church. They could complete a deposit slip or at least have a form to sign that includes the amounts for currency, coins and checks. All checks should be stamped for deposit only.

2. If possible make arrangements with a local bank to put the offering in the night depository or have a safe place in the church. If that is not possible, the funds should be placed in a bank bag or envelope that is sealed. The envelope or bank bag should not be unsealed until deposited or opened only when two persons are present.

3. Receipts and disbursement functions should be handled separately and assigned to different individuals. The people who count and deposit the offering should not be the same person who writes the checks and pays the bills.

4. If for some reason you have a person recording functions for receipts and disbursements then a second person unrelated to the first should reconcile the check book every month.

5. The Treasurer should provide a monthly check list to the pastor and the Finance Committee chair. The information must include the check number, amount of the check and to whom it was written. A church has no secrets when it comes to the way money is received and spent. If a check is voided for some reason, the check number should be listed, marked "void" and the check filed for the auditors.

6. There should be two signatories on all accounts. Thus, if the treasurer is incapacitated for some reason, the church still has access to their account. It is recommended the signers on the account be someone other than the Pastor. (I recommend that the pastor not be a named person on any account—even a Good Samaritan Fund. Confidential information can be managed in other ways.

7. Reports to the Administrative Council should always be from the previous time the council met. Thus, ending balances from one report should match beginning balances for the next report.

8. The bank is instructed and agrees to notify the treasurer and either the pastor or finance chair of any overdrafts.

9. Always conduct an audit of the accounts. The audit can be done by others in the church unrelated to the treasurer. The auditors should review each bank statement, deposits and disbursements. The General Church has provided an audit guide and it can be accessed through the conference web site and link to GCFA.

Remember most volunteers are good, honest people. Our task is to protect our volunteers; so don't let them down by ignoring these simple common sense safe guards. The United Methodist system does work when you use it. We have budgets, audits and rotations for reasons. Don't make excuses for ignoring

these simple procedures. They are there to protect the volunteers.

**Safe Guard Your Church Funds**

Proper handling of funds donated to local congregations is a critical responsibility. *The following are some symptoms that may alert you to problems with church funds.*

1. The treasurer is moving a lot of money from one account to another.
2. There is sudden change in income; either a lot more than in the past or less is coming in.
3. Funds designated for one use is being used for another; even if the church is calling it borrowing from a fund.
4. The treasurer's report to the Administrative Council does not contain details such as a list of all money received and checks paid as well as monthly, quarterly and annual cash flow comparisons. Understanding the annual giving and spending patterns can help avoid undo pessimism at points during the year. Also, if the pattern changes it is appropriate to ask, "Why."
5. If you have groups or committees setting up their own treasuries. If they are doing it because the "church" cannot pay its bills," why is it that all of these separate groups can? If a shortage of funds occurs, it should affect most accounts, not just the central treasury.
6. Rotate treasurers even in a small church where the work can be less. Just because the same person volunteers each year, remember rotation is important. More than one person needs the experience of what is required to manage the finances.
7. Questions about finances are not being answered. Any question regarding finances requires a clear and concise answer. No hedging or unclear explanations.
8. An inactive Finance Committee. Only an active finance committee that sets policies and insures that they are followed can help provide assurance to the congregation that all funds are being appropriately managed.
9. Regular quarterly statements are not being sent to those who give. They provide a needed check on receipts to insure that they are being recorded properly.
10. A volunteer becomes angry, defensive or simply uncooperative when asked questions. Remember, the church has no secrets when it comes to money and therefore all questions and comments should be welcomed and invited.

**2007 Journal Order Forms Available Soon**

About mid-April you should receive your copy of the Pre-Conference Mailing. In that mailing will be the 2007 Journal Order Form. This year please note that there will no longer be spiral copies available. Only regular (perfect) bound books and CDs. The cost is still \$15.00 for a Journal and Book of Resolutions and \$7.00 for a CD. The deadline for ordering is June 10. However, you may want to mail in your form as soon as you receive it to avoid the rush at annual conference. Forms must be filled out and returned with payment. Checks should be made payable to the Iowa Annual Conference.

Please send your orders to Jill Stanton, 2301 Rittenhouse St., Des Moines, IA 50321-3101. Payment must accompany the form - **do not** send your payment to the lock box. If you have any questions please contact Jill at 515-974-8917 or email her at [Jill.Stanton@iaumc.org](mailto:Jill.Stanton@iaumc.org)

**March Receipts**

	2006	4 YR AVG	2007
<b>Ministerial Support</b>	1,018,707 17.55%	1,053,420 17.47%	965,843 17.07%
<b>Administration</b>	405,054 13.03%	374,184 13.39%	420,469 12.54%
<b>World Serv &amp; Conf. Benev.</b>	704,648 12.26%	701,105 12.32%	749,346 12.11%
<b>Other Ministries</b>	33,405 15.65%	35,037 16.00%	30,419 14.95%
<b>Total Apportionments</b>	<b>2,161,814 14.53%</b>	<b>2,163,746 14.68%</b>	<b>2,166,077 14.06%</b>

**Dependents Graduating in May**

Just a reminder to clergy and lay persons on the Conference health insurance plan that if you have a dependent who will be graduating from high school and is not going to continue their education in a college or trade school, their health insurance coverage will end June 1, 2007. If your dependent is graduating from college the coverage will end June 1, 2007.

You may contact Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield directly at 1-800-944-2742 for information on short term health care for your graduate.