

FINANCE

DOCUMENT 7

We will look at how we manage our *finances* under these headings:

- Three guiding principles
- What amounts go where
- A few other things to note

Scripture leaves us considerable latitude in how we organize our finances for our shared mission. Here is how we, in Advance, have chosen to do it:

THREE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Excellence in the grace of giving

We are not embarrassed to provoke churches to excellence in the grace of giving (2 Cor. 8:7), both for their local mission and our wider mission.

The vast majority of our pooled finance goes to planting and strengthening

There may be times when movement funds are given to crisis relief or ministry to the poor, but we believe these areas are better handled at local church level, or sometimes hub level.

Empowerment of both partner churches and the movement leadership

If the movement asks local elders for too much money, local elders will feel disempowered in giving directly to situations of their choice. Yet, if the movement has insufficient funds, *it* feels disempowered. Therefore, we need a way forward that both empowers and resources *both* local elders and the movement.

WHAT AMOUNTS GO WHERE

We *encourage* partner churches to sow at least *10%* of their monthly income towards church planting and ministry to the poor, under the oversight of their local eldership team. We understand it may take some churches time to work up to this level, but we warmly encourage churches in this direction.

We *ask* partner churches to sow *2%* (i.e. a fifth of the 10% that they are giving away) of their annual income (of standard tithes and offerings) to our shared *global mission*. This money is used for planting and strengthening initiatives around the world, particularly endeavors that are outside the reach of a church or region of churches (hub or continent). We endeavor to keep an approximate 50/50 split between planting and strengthening. In the event of excess income building up in this account, the surplus is given to church planting.

We also *ask* partner churches to sow between 1% and 3% (elders decide the exact amount) to the *Advance mission on their continent* to plant and strengthen churches.

Although many churches regard these numbers (2% and 1-3%) as very small, we want elders to feel empowered to give money away *directly* to causes that they support. *Assuming* that they are giving away at least 10% of their income, this arrangement empowers them with 5%+ to sow wherever they like.

Partner churches know that contribution to Advance means a contribution to church planting and strengthening. Therefore, partner churches don't begrudge sowing money into Advance. *Our mission is their mission...is our mission.*

A FEW OTHER THINGS TO NOTE

We have high levels of accountability for global and continental funds, including detailed and transparent annual reports and audits where appropriate.

We try to make all Advance events self-funding.

We encourage partner churches to pay their own way in terms of travel, conferences and other costs associated with our mission. We encourage eldership teams to have a line item in the budget to *fund the travel of the lead couple and other eldership couples* to Advance gatherings and initiatives. We also ask them to consider their spending in this area *a priority*, because the health of the lead couple and the eldership couples might be the most important investment that a church can make. Where necessary, we encourage *better-resourced churches to consider coming alongside less-resourced churches* to help their lead couple and other key leaders to attend key gatherings and conferences. Churches that need assistance are encouraged to ask for help from other partner churches, because we are in this together and love to help each other out.

Under normal circumstances, and where possible, the travel costs of Advance team members, or those ministering, are paid for by the receiving continent, hub or local church(s). However, our culture is that it is more blessed to give than receive, therefore we encourage fighting for the privilege of paying!

Honorariums: We encourage a culture of honor and generosity, as we see in the Bible, but we have no Advance policy concerning honorariums. It is up to churches/hubs/continents to do as they see fit.