

FAQ – Guidance for church finance operations

How do we handle the weekly offering, simultaneously making provisions for health and safety as well as cash flow (example, processing mail)?

- Once every two weeks (unless you have a cash flow issue and need to do it once a week), have two people go to the office and collect the mail (or get it from the PO box). Sort out the contribution checks. In a small church, you usually know which ones these are.
- Have the two people, properly sanitized, at least 6' apart.
- Divide up the duties: one person open and record the checks in whatever fashion you normally record them. Have that person slide the checks down the table to the other person who would stamp the checks and prepare the deposit.
- It may be possible to deposit checks into your account with your cell phone app. Someone will have to do it but be sure to take proper precautions.
- The other option is to let one person do it all as long as there is not cash and the person is not the treasurer, finance chair or pastor.
- During these unusual times it is important to find a balance between flexibility and accountability. We still must assure everyone that the church is handling their gifts carefully and correctly. This is the time to encourage people who can to give electronically, if they are not already. Many are already used to doing that when they pay other bills. Making gifts to the church electronically is not different, and it's the most secure way to make a gift.
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How do we address the importance of parishioners continuing to give?

- Online giving is one great way. Take a look at this [article on our Greater NW coronavirus resources page](#) for tips on how to get started.
- Send a check to your church.
- One stewardship idea that came out recently is to send two self-addressed stamped envelopes to all those who are not able to give online with a pastoral letter of support and reminder of the need to support the local church.

Can churches defer payments until the crisis ends and we can again have a stable income.

- We are in discussion on what guidance to offer churches, know that churches may be placed in a position to have to make these decisions whether guidance is given or not.

Will the conference have funds to provide salary support to clergy whose churches can't pay them?

- The Conferences have limited salary-support funds with many grants already in place. Additional funds available likely would not match the anticipated need. We need to evaluate this carefully.

Is it financially possible for the conference to pay health insurance premiums during this time?

- This is being considered. How to offer equitable relief to churches whose pastors are not on health insurance is being considered concurrently.

How can a small church get financial help when their building is closed, but still use utilities?

- Leaders should always first talk with their District Superintendent but shutting off utilities might be necessary.