

Tithe - How is it used?

The use of tithe is a mystery for many members. We understand examples from the Bible, but how is this implemented in our modern context.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was established in the mid 1800's by enthusiastic, visionary young people. The gospel as we know it, was to reach all people, in all circumstances, by all means. It soon became apparent to early leaders that the establishment and vigour of institutions like schools, colleges, church buildings, hospitals, publishing houses, retirement homes and public services could become the focus of the church at the expense of 'Gospel Ministry'. It was recognised that the church was called to present a special message to the world, and that all other activities were complimentary. For this reason the use of tithe was restricted by inspired counsel and policy to the employment of 'gospel workers', their ministry and those that support them. In practice, tithe is used to employ Ministers, Evangelists, Bible Workers, Teachers of Bible, Pastoral workers in schools and the Conference structures that facilitate these workers. Tithe is also used for evangelistic materials and to a limited extent the technology required to produce those materials.

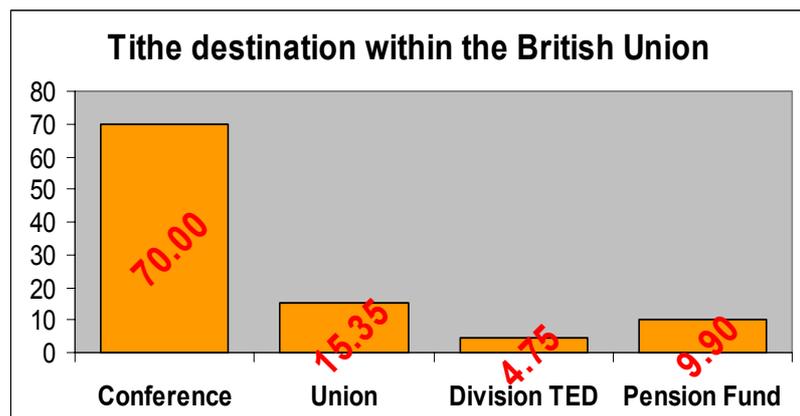
This definition may seem simple at face value. In practice treasurers often need to prayerfully examine the underlying motives of activities to determine the appropriateness of tithe use. Let me give an example: The purpose of the Pathfinder movement is 'soul winning nurture', but many of the activities are social and secular. How does one differentiate between such activities in the context of church, compared to the same activities in the context of our schools whose objective is also soul winning nurture?

The storehouse and tithe sharing.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has embraced a world inclusive mission. Our view is always outward and our church is structured to this end. Resources are pooled, with the Conference being identified as the 'storehouse' of scripture to ensure that gospel is transferred from areas of strength to areas of need. Within the British Union the net effect of tithe sharing works out as follows:

Within each of these entities tithe is substantially used to employ Pastors whose roles embrace, Pastoral Ministry / Nurture, Evangelism / Outreach, Church Management / Stewardship and the support systems of our functional departments including treasury.

Annual accounts are now available on respective web-sites giving specific detail.



The structure, direction and use of resources of each Conference is determined by its leadership and executive committee. These people are appointed at our constituency meetings, which gives a democratic determination to God's affairs among our people.