



September 22, 2021

Dear Pastor and Clerk of Session:

My name is Nathan Williams. I write as the Moderator of your Presbytery's Stewardship and Mission Education Committee **to ask for your help in bringing to your Session the opportunity to join with Sessions across our Presbytery in making a pledge of support toward God's mission through us.**

While we may think of "mission" as one part of our church's budget, in reality the church's entire life participates in God's mission to the world. It's **God's Mission--Our Witness!**

"The mission of God in Christ gives shape and substance to the life and work of the Church. In Christ, the Church participates in God's mission for the transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming to all people the good news of God's love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ." (F-1.01)

God's mission is far bigger than any one congregation can undertake on our own. The good news is that we are invited to partner with the wider church as together we bear witness to Christ's redeeming work in the world. One way we partner together is by giving to General Mission.

General Mission is undesignated money pledged by our churches toward the mission of the Presbytery of Des Moines, the Synod of Lakes and Prairies and the General Assembly. Each church's Session decides the amount of the pledge for its congregation.

How much for next year? You know your church budget better than we do. We are challenging each Session to consider growing its church's sharing through General Mission with an increase of one percent of its church budget **over your 2020 pledge amount.** Why use the 2020 amount? Many churches kept their mission giving even or declined to pledge during the uncertain times of the pandemic. We understand. Your 2020 pledge amount is probably a more realistic baseline. But, please decide what makes the most sense based on your church's situation.

What would this look like? Take your General Mission pledge for 2020, even if it is zero, and add to it one percent of this year's church budget.

For example, for a budget of \$50,000, the challenge would be to grow the General Mission pledge by \$500. For a church budget of \$100,000, the challenge increase would equal \$1,000. For a budget of \$300,000, the increase would come to \$3,000.

Attached you will find a **bulletin insert** highlighting mission work in our Presbytery and Synod. On the opposite side is a brief note from our Presbytery Moderator about the many ways we share in mission. Please use this insert to interpret General Mission giving to your congregation. We also prepared a video moment for mission to use during your worship services. You can find the moment for mission and the bulletin insert PDF on our Presbytery's website (<http://dmpresbytery.org>). You will find them under *Ministry and Mission* in the menu at the top.

In addition, if you would like someone from our committee to meet with your Session as a resource in your discussion, let me know. You may contact me at [pastor@wdmcovenant.org](mailto:pastor@wdmcovenant.org) or (515) 225-2254.

Also attached is a *2022 General Mission Pledge Form*. You will see there is a recommended percentage division. To follow this recommendation, check the first box. However, if your Session feels strongly about a different division of the dollars, then check the second box and write in your preferred percentages or amounts.

Please prayerfully consider a General Mission pledge for 2022.

### ***God's Mission--Our Witness***

A member of the Committee will contact you soon to make sure you received this information and to answer any questions you might have.

Thank you, Pastors and Clerks of Session, for placing our challenge and request in the hands of your Sessions. And thank you, Sessions, for sharing in our witness together through your pledges.

Nathan Williams, Moderator  
Stewardship and Mission Education Committee

#### Committee members:

Rev. Kip Harris (Carlisle, Scotch Ridge)  
Joyce Hoffman (Clive, Heartland)  
Rev. Kirsten Klepfer (Grinnell, First)  
Peri Van Tassel (West Des Moines, Covenant)  
Rev. Nathan Williams (West Des Moines, Covenant)

## Questions and Answers

***Q. Just how important is General Mission giving in the life and work of our Church?***

A. Very important. It is the main way we fund doing mission in partnership. Special Offerings are significant; Per Capita is important; Designated Giving is always welcome; but General Mission giving provides the muscle for the work of our church beyond the congregation.

***Q. When would you like our pledge turned in?***

A. We are asking you to return them to the Presbytery Office right after your October Session meeting.

***Q. Why so early?***

A. The Presbytery votes on next year's budget at its November meeting. Getting pledges in before then helps the Finance Committee develop a budget informed by the giving plans of our churches.

***Q. What if our budget won't be finalized by then?***

A. Give us your best estimate now on the pledge form, knowing you can change the number up or down, if needed, when your budget is finalized. All it takes is a phone call or an email to the Presbytery Office.

***Q. What if we have an issue with a policy or action of the Presbytery, or the Synod or the General Assembly?***

A. Let's talk. We would love to suggest more direct and less damaging ways to express your disapproval and seek change.

***Q. What if we run into budget trouble after we have turned in our pledge?***

A. We know unforeseen circumstances arise. You can adjust your pledge at any time with a phone call or an email to the Presbytery Office.

