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- Development Services (World Hunger Appeal - fund-raising; hunger education, communication)
- Global Mission (international relief and development; International Disaster Response)
- Church in Society (World Hunger Program - overall coordination; hunger education; ELCA Domestic Disaster Response)
- ELCA Foundation (fund-raising through major and planned gifts)

### **Responding to disasters**

In addition to the ongoing work of fighting chronic hunger and poverty, part of the World Hunger (and Disaster) Appeal's function is to raise funds for the ELCA's Disaster Response program. These specially designated offerings and donations, separate from World Hunger funds, enable the ELCA to respond to both domestic and international disasters. The ELCA responds to many major disasters each year, both natural and human-caused.

This is just a brief overview of ELCA World Hunger. Their website, listed below, includes many more resources including ways to talk about World Hunger in your congregation and many personal stories of how World Hunger has made a difference in the lives of people around the world. There is also information on their website on how to give, so visit now to find out how to get your congregation involved in fulfilling the goal set by the voting members of the 2007 Synod Assembly.

*Information in this article reprinted from  
[www.elca.org/hunger/whatwedo](http://www.elca.org/hunger/whatwedo)*

### **Get it Online**

- ELCA World Hunger - [www.ELCA.org/hunger](http://www.ELCA.org/hunger)
- The 2007 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly Resolution 'A River of Giving' to the World Hunger Appeal - [www.semnsynod.org/events/assembly/2007/resolutions/2007-04.html](http://www.semnsynod.org/events/assembly/2007/resolutions/2007-04.html)

## The Risk of Money in Church

It is certainly not the first time that I have read these words. They were most recently hand lettered on an article sent to me. But I have also heard these words spoken in person. You have too. It goes something like this, "if you continue in this direction, why should we continue to support the church with our weekly offerings?"

To view such a statement in the most negative sense, one sees it as a threat, "If you don't do what I want you to do, I will stop giving." Viewing such a statement in a more objective sense, it becomes more of a logical consequence, "If you don't do what I believe is right, I will find a place for my offerings that is closer to what I believe." But either way, the message is that money is being used as the leverage point. How do we get someone's attention? In our culture, seemingly even in our churches, it revolves around the pocketbook. If you want to make it hurt, you do it with money.

Interesting, I have never heard someone in the church say, "if you don't do what I want you to do, I will stop praying for you." I wonder why we never hear that? Perhaps it is because it isn't much of a threat. What is the big deal if someone quits praying for us? But if they withhold money, now they have our attention.

But does money establish a community of faith? How much time is spent at church council meetings focusing on money? How much ministry is derailed because of a concern for money? Yet how many of you have been members of congregations that have struggled and suffered just because a large gift of money was received? Tell our partners in Tanzania and in Colombia that if only they had more money, they could be a more vibrant church.

So, in this time of year when the focus is often on stewardship of money, here is the bishop warning against a focus on money, even in the church. Yes, friends in Christ, money does matter. But we are nothing without prayer and Word and Sacrament and community. That is what we cannot do without.

Shalom



Harold Usgaard  
Bishop

