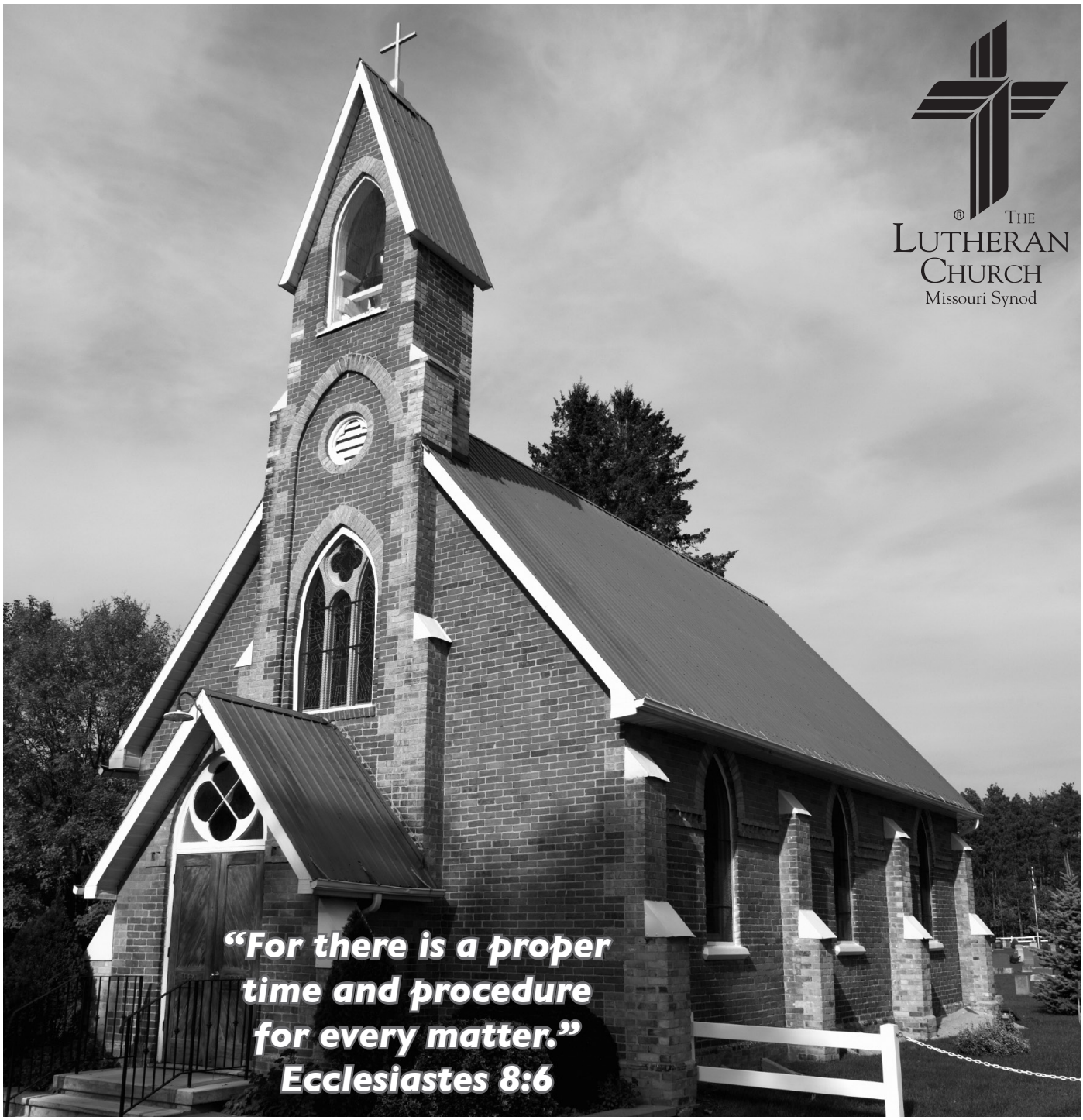
Congregational Treasurer's Manual



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Foreword

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

This quote from 1 Peter 4:10 is especially applicable to the gift of administration for the church treasurer. This manual is dedicated for your use with your gift of administration to the glory of God.

The treasurer's position for a church or school is one of the most time-consuming and responsible jobs in a not-for-profit organization. Regardless of the size of the organization, the treasurer is expected to provide timely and reliable information to councils, boards and voters' assemblies; to pay the bills on time; make certain adequate cash is available; to comply with complex and demanding payroll and tax requirements; and help the organization make responsible financial decisions for the benefit of its ministry. The treasurer truly must be the wise steward.

- The intent of this manual is to assist the congregational or school treasurer and any other person responsible for financial or administrative matters. The manual presents tax, payroll, insurance, finance and administrative matters that every church addresses at one time or another. It is written so every treasurer, no matter what the level of expertise, will be able to gain something from it.
- The manual is organized into two volumes, containing six major sections: "Employment Issues"; "Federal and State Tax Matters"; "Establishing and Administering the Organization"; "Supporting Organizations"; "Accounting and Finance"; and "Insurance."
- The chapters of payroll and bookkeeping are the most technical chapters and address tax and accounting issues that are common for the organization and its employees.
- The sections on employment issues and accounting and finance are designed to provide a more practical approach to the job through outlines on "how to" and examples of filled-in forms and records. First Lutheran Church of St. Louis, a congregation operating a school, and with a budgeted income of $852,100, is used to illustrate a bookkeeping system and a complete example of all payroll forms and reports that must be filed in one year.
- A detailed table of contents is at the front of each chapter.
- Volume 1 of this manual will be updated annually. Volume 2 will be updated and reprinted only as needed. Updates will be available through your district office, in printed matter, and on CD. It is also widely available on the Internet at www.lcms.org/ctm. Any items unique to the states in your district will be distributed by your district office.
- A comprehensive index (for Volumes 1 and 2) can be found behind Volume 2 and will also be updated annually.
- Although there may be other methods of reporting taxes and payroll as outlined in the manual, the methods presented are the recommended practices by the tax and legal counsel of the Synod for all Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregations and schools. The Synod is not able to provide legal or tax counseling services, and in the event of special problems, competent legal or tax advice should be obtained from local professionals.
- Any background information or inquiries regarding this manual or reports of errors or omissions can be addressed to the Accounting Department, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295, telephone 1-800-248-1930; or to your district office, which is noted in this manual.
- The Congregational Treasurer's Manual is a product of the District Business Administrator's Association, the Office of the Treasurer and the Department of Accounting of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Editing of this edition of the manual was done by Karen Sansone, Director of Tax & Compliance in Synod's Accounting Department, assisted by George Miller, Business Manager of Minnesota North District; Debbie Crites, Business Manager of Kansas District; Roger Sprengel, Schools and General Executive of the Southern Illlinois District; Marilyn Allen, Business Manager of Northwest District; Brenda Bacon, Business Manager of New England District; assisted by Charles Rhodes, Executive Director of Accounting, and Kim Merten of the Accounting Department.

Thank you also is given to other department heads of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod who provided information; congregational treasurers throughout the church who provided review comments; and the many others who encouraged the development of this manual.

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