

Frequently Asked Questions about “Simply Giving”

Q: *What is “Simply Giving”?*

A: Simply Giving is a safe, secure, convenient, reliable way for you to make your regular tithes and offerings electronically to Zion, even if you’re traveling, out of town, or unable to make it to worship on Sunday mornings.

Q: *How does it work?*

A: You authorize Zion to initiate recurring transactions for your tithes and offerings from your account at your bank or credit union. These transactions use the same network that is used for Direct Deposit via ACH such as payroll and Social Security and for Direct Payment via ACH, just like your insurance premiums, your car payment or your mortgage payment. And if your circumstances should change, the authorization for payments may be adjusted or even cancelled. This network has been in operation for almost 40 years and processes billions of transactions annually.

Q: *Is it safe?*

A: Yes! Not only are transactions secure since they don’t use the Internet, you’re also protected by federal banking regulations if there is any kind of error.

Q: *What about privacy?*

A: The information used to process the Simply Giving Program remains very secure. It is handled by Zion’s Business manager and your bank.

Q: *What’s the cost?*

A: To you? Nothing! Vanco, a Thrivent endorsed company, provides the service to Lutheran churches at a nominal cost to the church and at no cost to you.

Q: *I like writing checks. What’s the problem?*

A: Checks are expensive for Zion to process. They have to be gathered up, processed, endorsed, prepared for deposit and delivered to our bank under dual control. And, that’s every week. And, they can be lost, stolen or damaged.

Q: *I feel that I should be putting something in the offering plate every Sunday. What about that?*

A: You can continue to put your offering envelope into the plate when you’re in the service. We provide stickers for the envelope that say “I’m Simply Giving”. This tells the folks processing the offerings that you’re giving electronically. It also sends a positive stewardship message to your fellow parishioners.

Q: *What about special gifts or seasonal offering during Advent and Lent?*

A: You will still be able to make those kinds of gifts by check or cash, if desired. Please put your envelope number on the check, or if making a cash contribution, put your envelope number on the seasonal offering envelope.

Q: *Are there any other options for electronic payments for my tithes and offerings besides Simply Giving?*

A: Some employers offer payroll deduction programs for charitable contributions, which are sent electronically. Ask your human resource or payroll department about your employer’s options. Also, many financial institutions offer electronic bill payment options. You can set up Zion to receive your offerings through your financial institution’s bill pay services.

Q: *How do these programs benefit Zion?*

A: There are many benefits to Zion. Funds are made available to the church more quickly and predictably. There is less paper handling, copying and preparation expense. And, since your tithe can continue if you’re traveling or on vacation, there is no “summer slump” in contributions or catching up at the end of the calendar year.

Q: *Are there any other benefits to making tithes and offerings electronically?*

A: In addition to being good stewards for the church, we are also asked to be good stewards of our planet. Using electronic payments eliminates checks and other paper transactions saving trees, water and reducing pollution generated by transportation of paper checks and production of inks for printing. If you choose not to have envelopes sent to you, Zion saves on postage.

Q: *How can I learn more about electronic payments?*

A: Visit www.electronicpayments.org for more information.

Q: *I’m in. What do I do next?*

A: Fill out a Simply Giving Authorization Form, sign it, and send or give it to Jerry Knippa in the Church Office. We will take care of the rest!