

# How Much Joy Can You Stand?

by Richard Wolfram

Professional Church Workers (PCWs) are sent forth on a mission for the Master. Gifted and empowered by the Holy Spirit, they joyfully share those gifts as they work in their various ministry settings. Jesus expects His people, who are the recipients of those gifts, to provide fair and adequate support of their workers by their joyful and gracious giving. God's intent is that congregations use the weekly tithes and offerings given to Him to do His Kingdom work in each place. His Kingdom work includes support of PCWs. As God provides, it is a great system.

**“One dilemma that congregations can face is whether compensation should be based on what a congregation can afford or what the worker deserves.”**

Unfortunately, the devil does all he can to break it down and remove the joy from our lives. Let us not let him. One dilemma that congregations can face is whether compensation should be based on what a congregation can afford or what the worker deserves. It is important to remember Matthew's guidance, “The worker is worth his keep,” Matthew 10:10(NIV). A congregation's budget should never be balanced by providing less than adequate compensation to PCWs. I think Jesus would say, “My Father has provided for all your needs with abundance. As you return a portion of your increase to Him there is abundance to do His work.” However, God's great system does not work as well when His people on the average return to him less than 3% of their increase. The Children of Israel were required to give Him 10%+. Christians are free to give Him that and more. How much joy can you stand?

The Michigan District of the LCMS provides guidance for all congregations for the compensation of their PCWs. The District Compensation Guide is available online through the District website at [www.michigandistrict.org](http://www.michigandistrict.org).



It uses the compensation schedule of local public school districts as the beginning base to reflect the cost-of-living in a specific area. The workers' classification, education, and years of experience are then factored in as well. Additionally, there is an online calculator that can be used to determine what compensation a worker should receive. Every year the guide is updated to reflect current base levels.

A number of congregations have requested information about Sabbatical leaves. In response to those requests, this fall's update to the Compensation Guide will include Sabbatical guidelines for congregations and PCWs. The guidelines will help congregations develop their own sabbatical policy. They will speak to such things as funding, timing, sabbatical plan, and reentry plan.

One of the outcomes of the Michigan District Board of Directors is that PCWs be compensated at no less than the Michigan District Compensation Guide. Our loving and gracious heavenly Father has done everything necessary for that to be reality. Let us do our part as we strive toward the goal of having an abundance of professional church workers filled with integrity and joy, well respected, and supported financially.

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