

## CHURCH STATISTICS

### March Averages

Pledges: \$6,623  
 Contribution: \$6,564  
 Benevolence: \$106  
 Attendance: 142

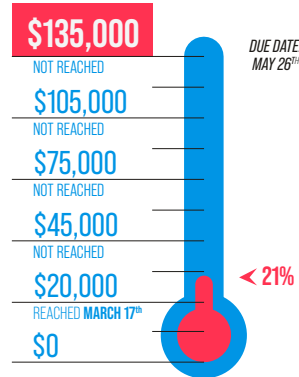
**"And the Lord added to their number..." (Acts 2:47)**

**Baptisms:** Yana Ghsoub (3/3), Nadege Amegbeto (3/3), Mackenzie Alves (3/10), Adeline Sinzélé (3/10), Oyinkansola Osinubi (3/10), Bianca Lara (3/10), Alivn Kisitu (3/10), Nahom Solomon (3/24), Maya Wanjohi (3/24), Doye Ebimami (3/24), Terrance Williams (3/27)

## WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS WEEK?

<b>APR 1</b>	Easter Monday	<b>APR 7</b>	Regional Worship Service Various Locations/Times
<b>APR 3</b>	Women's Midweek York University @ 7:30 PM	<b>APR 7</b>	Marriage Dynamics Class Virtual/Zoom
<b>APR 5</b>	Campus Devotional York University @ 7:30 PM	<b>APR 10</b>	Men's Midweek York University @ 7:30 PM
<b>APR 5</b>	Singles Devotional Location TBD @ 7:30 PM	<b>APR 12</b>	Campus Devotional York University @ 7:30 PM

## SPECIAL MISSIONS



# FOR IF THE WILLINGNESS IS THERE

SUNDAY BULLETIN

MARCH 31, 2024

**"Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have." (II Corinthians 8:11-12)**

## BIBLE TALKS | CONTACT INFO

**CENTRAL REGION:** Evan & Kelly Bartholomew (905) 699-4809 / (905) 699-4806

Mature Singles/Marrieds (OASIS): Ghislain Normand & Elizabeth Wademan (365) 724-2114 / (647) 860-3113  
 Single Professionals (Living Waters): Rich Chan & Maya James-Kumaresan (647) 562-8333 / (647) 451-2911  
 Toronto Metropolitan University (Thrive): Dylan Hoerner & Zonya Charles (416) 894-3601 / (437) 450-1922  
 George Brown College (Limitless): Nero Cabatuando & Glenda Almendo (416) 318-6421 / (647) 514-4677

**YORK REGION:** Kirk & Margie Hamula (647) 806-2576 / (647) 906-9481

Mature Singles/Marrieds (One In The Spirit): Tony & Vita Ventura (416) 904-0958 / (416) 904-0959  
 Single Professionals (Northern Lights): Kirk Hamula & Da-Shara Quant (647) 806-2576 / (647) 648-6125  
 York University (Triumph): William Koroluk & Patrina Gosine (403) 669-2250 / (647) 395-1124  
 York University (Risen): William Koroluk & Adreanna Garcia-Panton (403) 669-2250 / (437) 684-7070

**PEEL REGION:** Isaiah Famurewa & Valentina Lobo (647) 785-9969 / (647) 527-1431

Humber College (Catalyst): Isaiah Famurewa & Valentina Lobo (647) 785-9969 / (647) 527-1431  
 Single Professionals (Saved): Timothy Kalio & Nathalia Beltran-Mondragon (778) 302-0438 / (519) 807-8241



*Terrance (Terry) is baptized by the enthusiastic TMU brothers after Men's Midweek on Wednesday night!*

A few weeks ago, at our weekly Staff Meeting, I preached on the story of Zacchaeus. Since I had started doing people's taxes in order to raise money for our upcoming Special Missions Contribution, I was inspired to study out different tax collectors in the Bible. Zacchaeus was not only a tax collector, but a chief tax collector. And because being a tax collector was pretty much equated with being really sinful in the first century, (Luke 5:30) it is safe to assume that Zacchaeus, as a chief tax collector, was a very, very sinful man!

Despite his checkered past, Zacchaeus humbly climbed up on a sycamore fig tree in an effort to get a glimpse of the peripatetic Messiah. Jesus was evidently moved by his heart. So He called out



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The sold-out Central Region sisters baptized Bianca, Adeline, and Mackenzie in -10 °C weather!

choosing his worldly wealth over his salvation. In Zacchaeus case, he stated, **“Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”** (Luke 19:8) So the question comes: Why was Zacchaeus able to receive salvation after giving up *half* of his possessions, while the rich ruler was called to give up *everything*?

The answer to this very important riddle is simple: It is not about the amounts; it is about the heart. Similarly to the widow’s offering just a few chapters later, where she gives up her entire savings account of two very small copper coins, (Luke 21:1-4) Jesus was never about the amount. The real contribution that He was concerned with was the unseen currency of a willing heart. Zacchaeus had a willing heart; and the rich ruler, despite his well-put-together religious persona, had an unwilling heart. He did not want to let go of his wealth.



Our 2024 ICCM class is mostly serious... kinda!

This principle is such an important principle for us to comprehend in general; but in particular, as it relates to Missions Contribution. Although Missions Contribution is not a “salvation issue,” meaning you can fail to achieve your personal Missions goal and still go to heaven, [Amen!] I believe that Missions Contribution is an intentionally orchestrated methodology of God designed to test us, just like Jesus tested the rich ruler by

to Zacchaeus, and invited Himself to his home. After spending a brief time together, Zacchaeus emphatically stated, **“Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”** (Luke 19:8) To this, Jesus responded, **“Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.”** (Luke 19:9)

As I was studying out this inspirational story, it occurred to me that Luke, the gospel writer who recorded the story, very purposefully coupled Zacchaeus’ repentance with the account of the rich ruler a chapter before. Very different from Zacchaeus though, the rich ruler was not a wicked tax collector; he was a very well-spoken, well-mannered, and a deeply religious person. And yet, ironically, he chooses not to repent, while Zacchaeus – a much more wicked man in the eyes of the world – does repent. But the thing that stood out to me most about these two back-to-back biblical accounts is the seemingly different expectation that Jesus had for each of these men.

In the case of the rich ruler, Jesus commanded him, **“Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”** (Luke 18:22) In response to Jesus’ command, the rich ruler went away sad,

asking him to sell everything and give it to the poor. It is not about the amount, it is simply about the willingness of our hearts.



The mighty Peel Region Campus brothers persevere to see their first baptism of the semester in Nahom!

A great demonstration of this concept can be found in Paul’s plea to the Corinthian Church to imitate the generosity of the Macedonian Churches by taking up a collection. He said, **“I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love...”** (II Corinthians 8:8) Paul then goes on to describe how Jesus modelled a willing heart in coming down from heaven. He said, **“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.”** (II Corinthians 8:9) What an example! Jesus became poor so that we could become rich (in a spiritual sense). Therefore, if we were to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, which all of us decided to do when we



The awesome Peel Region Campus sisters follow right behind the brothers as they baptize Doye!

pledged “Jesus as Lord” at baptism, we would have the same sincere love that Jesus had for the lost, and choose to become poor so that others could become rich!

Paul then pulls it all together. He said, **“For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.”** (II Corinthians 8:12) Why was Zacchaeus’ gift acceptable when it was half as much as what Jesus demanded from the rich ruler? Because Zacchaeus had a willing heart! Jesus didn’t have to ask him to give up anything. He voluntarily gave up his wealth without being prompted at all. And because the willingness was there, the gift was acceptable!



The TMU sisters welcome Maya to the family after her exciting (but stealthy) baptism!

In this Missions season, I urge you to think about your own heart. Although you may or may not have much to give financially, it is not about the amount; it is about the currency of the heart. It is all right to have a weak flesh, so long as you have a willing spirit! (Matthew 26:41) Absolutely, Special Missions Contribution is a test. It is a test of the sincerity of our love. And I think it is a test that the Toronto Church is going to pass with flying colours because our spirit is willing! And if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable! To God be all the glory!

*Evan Bartholomew*  
Evan Bartholomew