



# PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation  
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## **Former Church Treasurer Sentenced For Theft Of Nearly \$1.5 Million From Church, Wire Fraud And Tax Fraud**

**LAS VEGAS, Nev.** – A former church treasurer was sentenced on Wednesday to four years in prison for stealing nearly \$1.5 million from the church in a wire fraud scheme, and committing more than \$500,000 in tax fraud, announced U.S. Attorney Daniel G. Bogden for the District of Nevada and Special Agent in Charge Tara Sullivan of the IRS Las Vegas Field Office.

Gregory J. Olson, 52, formerly of Las Vegas, now living in Ryder, North Dakota, pleaded guilty on May 9, 2016, to one count of wire fraud and four counts of tax fraud. United States District Judge Andrew Gordon presided over the hearing. Olson was charged by an indictment on Sept. 5, 2012.

“To steal from a church which entrusted its finances to you is not only sad, it’s deplorable,” said Special Agent in Charge Sullivan. “IRS Criminal Investigation and the U.S. Attorney’s Office will continue to pursue those who cause financial harm through embezzlement and fraud.”

“The defendant stole from the church and its members to satisfy his greed and he now faces a sentence of imprisonment for his calculated and callous actions,” said U.S. Attorney Bogden. “The U.S. Attorney’s Office and IRS will work together and aggressively pursue financial fraud and tax fraud schemes that ultimately cause harm to innocent victims and the U.S. Treasury.”

According to court documents, Olson stole more than \$1,466,292 from the Calvary Lutheran Church also called the Amazing Grace Lutheran Church of Las Vegas between 2006 and 2009. Olson

admitted that he defrauded the church through a long-lasting and wide-ranging scheme. Olson made unauthorized cash and check withdrawals from the church's bank accounts, false claims for reimbursement for church expenses, unauthorized receipt of mortgage loan proceeds, and solicited loans from individual church congregation members. Olson's fraud scheme bankrupted the church.

Olson also knowingly failed to report as income the money he had stolen from the church in his 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 tax returns. The total tax loss was \$541,770.

The case was investigated by the IRS-Criminal Investigation and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Gregg Damm and Dan Cowhig.

Additional information about IRS Criminal Investigation may be found at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

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