

# GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

## NOVEMBER 2019



*"Loving, Sharing, Serving  
Jesus with you."*

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## Holy Absolution: Preparing the Way of the Lord

If I mentioned to you your need for Private Confession, what would be your response? Let's see if I can guess...

Isn't that a Catholic thing? Why can't I just confess to God? Doesn't Scripture say that only God can forgive? Do I have to confess to a pastor? Isn't Confession for really bad sins like murder? Don't we do that on Sunday morning in the Divine Service? I'm too embarrassed/afraid to do that. Will Pastor think differently of me? Do I have to confess everything?

Did I cover any of your responses? I've just listed the most common ones I've received, but I'm sure there are more.

Private Confession is the most often overlooked gift which Christ has given His Church. You might be surprised that Lutherans of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries never did away with Private Confession, but instead made it a regular, weekly practice for Christians. For reasons too long to put in a gazette article, Confession in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and later fell into disuse and even was absent from many Small Catechisms until the 20<sup>th</sup> century! But although it is back in our Catechism, it hasn't made a big comeback, I think for many of the reasons above. Folks often misunderstand it or are afraid of it and stay away.

So, what is it? Our Small Catechism says that it has two parts: "First, that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven." In Matthew 16:19, Christ gave the keys which open and close the door to heaven to the Church, represented by Peter who gave the great statement of

faith: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus again repeated this teaching in Matthew 18:18. Peter and the disciples were given the authority to either bind a person's sins to them or release them from their sins. Later in John 20:22-23, after the resurrection of Jesus, Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." Christ was ordaining them to represent Him and use His power and authority to forgive sins.

Confession is as old as sin. Adam and Eve were called to confess by God, but instead they blamed each other (Genesis 3). Cain also, but he denied it (Genesis 4). The Israelites confessed to the priests, who then offered prayers and sacrifices for their sins. David confessed to Nathan the Prophet, who then gave God's forgiveness (2 Samuel 12). Jonah confessed his sin in the belly of the fish (Jonah 2). And John the Baptist, who was appointed to prepare the way for the Lord, gave a baptism of repentance and people came to him confessing their sins (Matthew 3:6).

More than good works and holy traditions, God wants a pure heart which recognizes one's sins and seeks the Lord's forgiveness (Psalm 51:16-17), for God knows all the hope and joy and blessedness a person receives who has the forgiveness of sins. But the person without the forgiveness of sins has only death and hell, for they are still under the curse. Absolution (Christ's words of forgiveness) lifts the burden and punishment from our shoulders and takes them to Christ who bore our sins on the cross. It reconciles us to God and gives

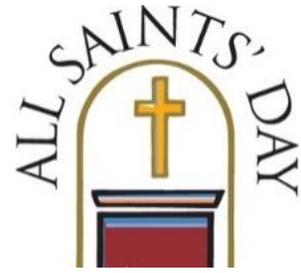
*(continued on page 2)*

## Holy Absolution: Preparing the Way of the Lord *(continued from page 1)*

us a peaceful conscience, so that we may joyfully serve Him.

Come to our Advent midweek services starting Wednesday, December 4, with the theme: "Holy Absolution: Preparing the Way of the Lord" and hear answers to all of the responses above.

*Pastor*



### **FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .**



St. Paul wrote to the Church of Christ in Corinth: "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9:7).

*God loves a cheerful giver.* But who is a cheerful giver?

Abel was. By faith, Abel gave the firstborn of his flock, and it was acceptable in God's sight. Abraham was. By faith, Abraham prepared cakes and a tender choice calf for God and entertained angels unaware. So also were David and Solomon. By faith, David would not make a sacrifice to God that cost him nothing, so he paid Araunah his due. By faith, Solomon built a house for God, where his name would dwell and thereby where He would dwell to be Israel's God and they His people.

What more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of all those who gave not simply for the joy of giving but for the joy of knowing the One to whom they gave.

So also our Lord, who for the joy set before Him, gave everything, yes, even His life, enduring the cross and scorning its shame. He gave to the shedding of His blood, willingly and resolutely setting His face toward Jerusalem to die for the life of the world. Though He was rich in every way, He became poor, so that by His poverty we might be rich beyond measure.

So then, let us – like Abel and Abraham, like David and Solomon, and even like our Lord Jesus Christ – give cheerfully to God for the work of His kingdom in our midst. Like them, let us decide in our heart – for the joy set before us – the joy of knowing the One to whom we give is the One who gives us all good things.

*- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, November 2019*



**Daylight Savings  
Time ends on  
Sunday, November 3.  
Don't forget to turn  
your clocks back  
one hour!**



**COME JOIN US  
in a  
WORSHIP SERVICE  
of  
THANKSGIVING & PRAISE  
on  
THANKSGIVING DAY  
Thursday, 28  
at 9:00 AM**





**EDITOR'S NOTE:**



We do not publish a January issue of *Gabriel's Gazette*, so please plan ahead and submit January news items along with your December issue items on the next deadline: **Monday, November 4.**




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**ADVENT BEGINS  
DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>.**



**Immanuel's Thanksgiving Dinner is scheduled for Sunday, November 24, at noon.** As in past years, the dinner is most enjoyable when there are many hands to lighten the workload.

Fortunately, our congregation has been blessed with many God-given gifts. If you are able to help with set-up, preparation, serving, clean-up, or donating food items, please mark the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. The contact person for this year's dinner is Tammy Metzger (219) 390-9959.





## Shepherds & Lambs

### The Sunday School Newsletter November 2019



**November is a time we concentrate on being thankful for all the things God has given us.**

Remind your children that we don't just thank God in November. Thanking God should be

a daily thing. I don't know how many times I've looked into the sky, at nature, at family, etc. and thanked God for them. Help your children realize the everyday things they take for granted come ultimately from our Heavenly Father. Help them look for things they thank God for. I like the phrase "Thanksgiving is Thanksliving"! How about this old kid's song rephrased:

If you're thankful and you know it, Praise the Lord  
 If you're thankful and you know it, Praise the Lord  
 If you're thankful and you know it,  
 Then your life will surely show it,  
 If you're thankful and you know it, Praise the Lord!  
 AMEN!!

**Eight students had Perfect Attendance in September.**

*Good job students!!*



**The children will attend a HARVEST PARTY on Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> from 6 to 8 PM.**

We will have activities, crafts, games and of course, snacks. We hope to have

a good turn out, so bring the kids!! They will need a flashlight for one of the activities!!! Hope to see you there!

**During the month of November, the Sunday School children are promoting Food Pantry donations.**

We are asking the congregation to participate with us by bringing in non-perishable items during November. A box will be in the Gathering Place. Donations will be given to our church pantry after Thanksgiving!



**Check out our Spiral Blessings Pumpkin in the Gathering Place.**

The students have written something they are thankful for on the outside of the pumpkin. We are inviting the congregation to join our project. Using a permanent marker, horizontally add something you are thankful for. We hope that by Thanksgiving, we have the entire pumpkin filled with blessings from God to all of us.

**God's continued Blessings to all of our Immanuel Families from Sunday School Students and Staff!!**



*Lynette Johnston-Martin  
Superintendent*



**THANKSGIVING WORD SEARCH**

- Apple
- Blessings
- Cornucopia
- Cranberry Sauce
- Family
- Feather
- Give Thanks
- Gobble
- Grateful
- November
- Pumpkin
- Scarecrow
- Thanksgiving
- Tradition
- Turkey

B	P	N	W	E	S	S	L	S	Z	V	R	M	B	J
C	I	O	V	Y	G	C	G	W	G	N	F	P	K	C
L	T	I	D	U	N	R	T	C	H	R	A	B	H	O
L	K	T	G	O	I	A	X	S	G	P	U	X	H	R
D	N	I	N	U	S	N	L	J	I	X	I	L	G	N
B	T	D	I	V	S	B	U	R	V	H	Y	S	F	U
S	R	A	V	S	E	E	F	R	E	Q	L	C	E	C
P	E	R	I	P	L	R	E	L	T	X	I	A	A	O
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L	V	K	N	K	P	A	G	O	K	O	D	R	R	D
B	O	E	A	I	P	U	U	X	S	D	L	O	O	A
Q	N	Y	H	N	L	C	M	X	X	Y	T	W	E	T
S	U	J	T	E	E	E	E	L	B	B	O	G	L	E



**PLEASE NOTE:**

The deadline to submit items for the December *Gazette* is **Monday, November 4.**



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**“Wireless communication is nothing new.  
I’ve been praying for 75 years!”**

## Thank God

Thank God for peace –  
 The world can't give  
 Nor can it take away  
 The joy that lives  
 Within our hearts  
 When trials come our way.  
 Thank God for love –  
 For those who care  
 To keep His peace on earth,  
 And for the light  
 Within our soul,  
 Confirming our own worth.  
 Thank God for hope –  
 And the desire  
 To make a better way.  
 To reach the poor,  
 Rescue the lost,  
 Search for the ones who stray.  
 Thank God, our Lord –  
 His Son with us  
 Empowers us to be  
 His voice, His hands,  
 His peace, His love,  
 Hope for eternity.

*--Anna Lee Edwards McAlpin*

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