

# GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

## NOVEMBER 2020



### Finding Peace in an Election Year

As I write this newsletter article, I'm remembering some of the extreme reactions after the 2016 election: weeping, cursing, raging, and acting as though the world were over. I know of an elementary teacher who spoke of little children coming in to class the next morning visibly upset and crying. Now, what kind of parent would allow their kids to be traumatized about an election result?

When there is no Christian church in a person's life, another church always takes its place, whether it is sports or government or something else. Without faith in God, the heart takes hold of something else and makes it an idol. The government often takes God's place in people's hearts, since it is a seat of power and authority and exerts great influence on our life together in this nation. People put great hopes in government to solve their problems, promote their doctrines and agendas, save the country from whatever is viewed as the enemy, and cause them to prosper.

It is easy to get caught up in the nation's hopes and anxieties over politics. And, while we might have a reason to be unhappy with election results and what is happening in government, it is helpful to put it all in perspective and to find peace in our God, whose grace and mercy we know in Jesus Christ. Here are some points to remember:

- God is ruler of all! He not only uses Christian men, but also ungodly ones for His glory. If God could use wicked kings like Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to bring about His justice upon the wicked and the righteous and to reveal God's glory, then He can find ways to bless and sustain His people in every generation through their appointed leaders.
- Despite our fallible leaders, God has always shown how He can abundantly provide what we need for daily life.
- Earthly rulers and kingdoms are temporary. Especially in America we do not need to endure our leaders for long before others are elected. God makes the world's rulers rise and fall and He promises that none of them will reign forever. And some day, Christ will return with His kingdom and end all earthly governments forever.
- God's kingdom is eternal and omnipotent. The Gospel, which is our only life and salvation, cannot be bound by any power, even those that try to restrict it and destroy it. God, who is just and gracious and merciful, will reign forever. Ultimately, we do not belong to the kingdoms of earth. Our home is in heaven, which has come to us through the Word and Sacraments and will one day come in glory.

No matter who are elected, our calling as Christians does not change. Especially in a time of deep divisions, anger, violence, and anxiety in our country, we Christians have an important role to play. We can show that nothing can take away the peace we have in Jesus Christ or prevent us from sharing His love. Through civil discourse, honor of authorities, love for country and our fellow man, mercy to the needy, and sharing the Gospel, we can show that life is more than politics. It is given, strengthened, preserved, and saved by God through His Son Jesus Christ, whom no authority in heaven or on earth could destroy. And our risen and ascended Lord promises, even in 2020 and beyond: "Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20)

*Pastor*



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

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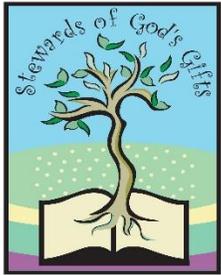
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**FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .**

Our Father in heaven has claimed us as His own. By the shedding of His Son's blood, His death for our sins, and His resurrection for our justification, God the Father has received us back into His family. By water – combined with His Word, promise, and Name – the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in us. We belong to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is in us, and we are in Him. And, being in Him, all things are ours. In Him, we are richly and abundantly blessed.

Our true treasure is that we belong to the most Holy Trinity, and everything that is His – righteousness, peace, eternal life – also belongs to us. Even our temporal treasures are gifts from His fatherly divine goodness and mercy.



We receive our treasures from Him, and thus, as good stewards of His varied grace, we manage them in such a way that they may be returned to Him. We bring them to Him, hallowed through prayers of thanksgiving and God's holy Word, as a sacrifice.

Thus, all our possessions, as gifts from God, are also sacrifices to Him. We eat to nourish our bodies. We share with our family, neighbors, fellow Christians, the poor, and even our enemies as holy things given by the holy God. His temporal gifts are blessings to and for us, and they bring blessings upon us even as they are pressed into His service for His kingdom.

Thus, we place all that we have into God's hands, and He never fails to remember us. He pours out the fullness of His promises upon us. We give thanks for all that He has done, is doing, and will continue to do. We give thanks by not taking for ourselves, but giving to all, even as our heavenly Father has given to us.

As we prepare for the celebrations of Thanksgiving, may we all give thanks continually for all that we are and all that we have because of God's providential care. And may we be all the more diligent in bringing everything that we have received from God to Him, so that He may bless it and employ it for the good of all – even for us. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article / November 2020



Daylight Savings Time ends on  
**Sunday, November 1.**  
Don't forget to turn your clocks back  
one hour!

A graphic for a Thanksgiving worship service. It features a central cross surrounded by autumn leaves and a heart. The text "THANKSGIVING" is written in large, bold, brown letters, and "Worship Service" is written in a smaller, cursive font below it.

**COME JOIN US**  
in a  
**WORSHIP SERVICE**  
of  
**THANKSGIVING & PRAISE**  
on  
**THANKSGIVING DAY**  
Thursday, 26  
at 9:00 AM

### COVID-19 -- WORSHIP CHANGES



Due to the rising numbers of COVID-19, Pastor Solum and the Elders have decided on the following changes to our worship service schedule:

We are adding a Wednesday night "Evening Prayer" worship service at 7 p.m. We will continue this service through the end of November. We will have our Advent Services and Sunday School Christmas Service like normal on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. in December. If you are uncomfortable with large gatherings, please consider attending this smaller worship option. Masks are STRONGLY ENCOURAGED.

### COVID-19 STATEMENT

*"All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.*

- 1 Corinthians 10:23-24

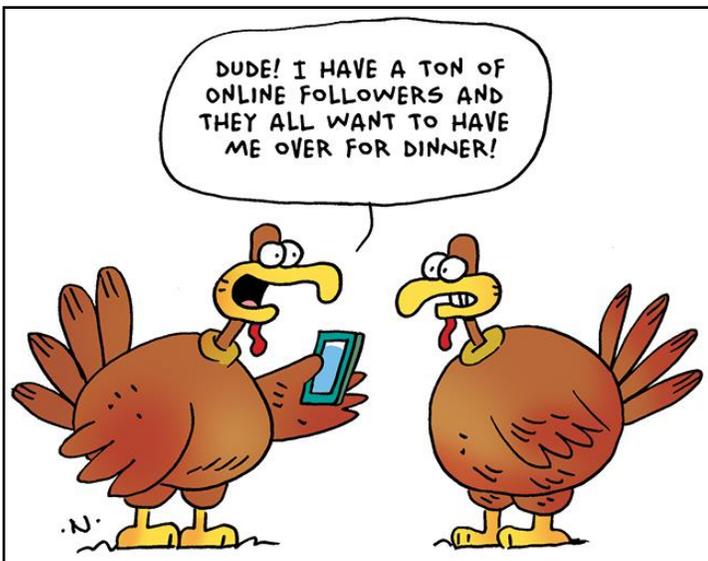
#### 10/22/2020 UPDATE:

Pastor Solum and the Elders will be re-establishing the sanitizing procedures that we were previously doing. Pews and common areas will be wiped down after the Saturday evening service in preparation of Sunday service. If you have any questions, please speak with an Elder. As cases of the coronavirus rise in our country, it is important for us to continue to do our due diligence for the sake of our neighbor. If you can, please social distance within the sanctuary and wear facemasks. Remember, masks are not for your own safety, but that someone who is contagious would not spread it to others. I urge even those who question the effectiveness of masks or who simply don't like wearing one to wear them. Like covering your mouth when you sneeze, it's a common courtesy for the well-being of others. Consider also that it will make those who are sensitive to wearing masks and social distancing, or who might be at risk of serious complications if infected, more at ease attending our services. In general, I think we've been pretty good at this, but more recently we've let down our guard a little, which is easy to do when with our family at Immanuel. Let us not complain about such inconveniences, but be glad we can still worship together and receive God's gifts.



You have the opportunity to sign up to begin receiving or continue receiving *The Lutheran Witness* magazine. A sample copy is on the magazine rack if you would like to preview the most recent copy.

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THE LUTHERAN WITNESS IN 2021**, please use the sign-up form on the bulletin board or call the office at (219) 872-4419. The cost will be \$19 per subscription. We will accept sign-ups through November 29<sup>th</sup>. Please use the "Lutheran Witness" envelope that will be in your box of Giving Envelopes for 2021.



### FALL GROUND MAINTENANCE

We will be holding the next *Trustees Workday* on **November 14th beginning at 9 a.m.** We will be gathering up the leaves, cleaning out gutters, and doing a general Fall Clean-up of the grounds. Please bring your own leaf blowers, gloves, rakes, ladders, or whatever you like to use. We will need some younger people to come help too! Please see Trustee Bob Solum for more information.



**Come and Join Us!**



## Shepherds & Lambs The Sunday School Newsletter November 2020

**We are excited to announce we have chosen a children's Christmas service...**

**Miracle in a Manger.** Our service will be **Wednesday, December 16 at 7 pm.**

We are now starting to practice the songs and the group recitations. Individual speaking parts will be assigned the beginning of November. We pray that the Covid-19 issues will have dissipated enough so that it will be safe to present the service. We are thinking positively, but we'll have to see if any changes need to be made closer to the date. We'll keep you updated.



**My Mother used to say, "Thanksgiving is**



**Thanksgiving."** Do we live a life that shows we are thankful for what we have? Do you show your children that you are thankful for all

of God's gifts, not just at Thanksgiving time, but year-round? Do you often point out times in their lives the things for which we should be thankful? We all take these gifts for granted. We will distribute a sheet of paper that our Sunday School children and their families can daily write down something for which they are thankful. It could be something that happened that day, some gift received, our daily food, etc. On Sunday, November 22, have the children return these lists and we will display them on Thanksgiving Day and through the last day of November. This just gives us a daily reminder what our good God has shared with US!!

**AND, speaking of being thankful and showing it,** our Sunday School

will sponsor the *Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child*-pack a shoebox project. This is how it works. Pick a boy or girl to shop for—2-4 yrs., 5-9 yrs., and 10-14 yrs. Take a box from our display in the Gathering Place. There will be a list of suggested items to fill this box. Items could include toys, non-liquid hygiene items, school supplies, accessories and a "WOW" item which is a larger item. Suggestions will be on a list provided. Return the boxes to church by Nov. 16 and we will get them to the necessary collection point. These boxes will be sent to children all over the world. For



some children, this will be the only Christmas gift they receive. Since they will need to be shipped, a donation of \$9 per box is critical to cover shipping and other project costs. So, we are asking for you to get involved with us. If you want to fill a whole box on your own, GREAT! If you would like to just bring some of the suggested items, GREAT too. In that case, we will need to know what you will be purchasing so we can complete the box with additional items. OR, you may want to donate the shipping cost! When we think of all the things our children in the USA get at Christmas time, this can be the time to make a needy child's Christmas a happy one! These gift-filled boxes become tools for local churches to share God's love and the Gospel of Jesus Christ with these children and their families. Sign your name on the DONATION sheet in the Gathering Place, take a box and information sheet and start your shopping now! Thanks for working with us!



**The two final Curbing Bad Kid Behaviors segments** that we have presented the last few months will return in January and February! Stay tuned!



HAPPY THANKSGIVING AND THANKSLIVING,

--Lynette Johnston-Martin,  
SUPERINTENDENT





At the time this is printed, there are no plans to have a Congregation Thanksgiving Dinner for this year. Current COVID-19 status changes continue to affect what activities we can safely offer. Please continue to watch the weekly bulletin and Immanuel's website and Facebook page for updates on plans for the coming holiday season.

**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 2.**



**PLEASE HELP US RESTOCK THE PANTRY!**

Over the last few weeks we have been handing out a bit more from our food pantry.

**We need the following:**

- Spaghetti Sauce
- Cereal
- Soup
- \$25 gift cards to Meijer
- Crackers
- Jelly
- Rice
- Laundry detergent

**We have plenty of:**

- Corn
- Beans (Garbanzo, Kidney, chili, etc.)
- Dried beans
- Noodles (spaghetti, elbow, etc.)

*We also help a family who is having a baby soon, therefore, we could use some baby items. It's going to be a boy...*

- Diapers/wipes
- Winter clothing items
- Burp rags
- NO formula

**Thank you for your faithfulness to the food pantry!**



**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.**

*-1 Chronicles 16:34*