

GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

NOVEMBER 2021



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

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Peace in the Gifts of God

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving. (Luther's Small Catechism, The Lord's Prayer, The Fourth Petition)

We are entering one of the most spend-crazy times of the year. I have already in October been asked about Christmas presents for my kids. Call me a scrooge, but I think this is too early! Not that this early shopping isn't done with the best intentions and an excitement to give joy to others, but the temptation is that we end up spending more time frantically shopping than in contemplation on what God has given us and prayerfully giving thanks. Instead of contentment and happiness in the gifts of God, we are often restless. And while it is good to give gifts as tokens of our love, it is not good to forget the Giver of all things.

The good and the evil are alike in receiving daily bread from God. The heathen and the Christian both give gifts to one another, but only the Christian knows the actual Giver. The heathen and the Christian both celebrate Thanksgiving, yet only one is thankful. We know that God has given us our daily bread "only out of fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me" (Small Catechism, The Creed, The First Article).

This distinguishes the way that we give and receive. We do not give in order to gain favor or to make ourselves look good. We do not give out of obligation or begrudgingly. Giving is never a competition, as though we have to find the best gift (God has already given that).

Giving should *never* detract from what we've already received. Giving is done freely and generously, in love and worship of God. When we receive gifts, we should be content with them and give praise to the Lord. We should not receive gifts as though we deserved them or earned them. Whether we receive much or little, whether we can give much or little, we are to be content and glorify God.

Let this be a season of peace for your hearts and not anxiety. Consider the following advice:

- Come to the Divine Service regularly to receive the highest gifts our Father gives us. Only God's Word and Sacraments have the power to keep our hearts content and happy in the midst of a greedy world. The Word of God crushes the idols in our hearts and gives us new hearts which are at peace in the forgiveness of sins. The Sacrament of the Altar feeds us with what is heavenly so that we are not consumed by what is earthly.
- Pray and reflect daily upon the Creed and Lord's Prayer in the Small Catechism, that your hearts may always be reminded of what God has given you and that you may learn to entrust all your needs and cares to Him who reigns at the right hand of God and intercedes for you.
- Think simple. Remember that most of the people to whom you give gifts don't actually need anything. That's why you have so much trouble buying for them! Small tokens and expressions of love are sufficient to show you care.
- Give more to those who actually need your gifts. It is not hard to think of what to give the hungry and poor, the lonely, the grieving, or those in need

(continued on pg.2)

Peace in the Gifts of God

(continued from pg.1)

of the light of the Gospel. You don't need to fight crowds on Black Friday or stay up late for internet deals for charitable giving. And there is much more reward in it. You have the honor and privilege to serve Christ, who says, "As you did it to the least of these my brothers, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40).

- Don't buy so much for yourself. This only increases greed.
- The greatest gift one can give is the Gospel. Teaching your children and grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and neighbors of Jesus Christ is far more valuable than all the riches of the world.

Let us not celebrate this season like the heathen, but with peace, contentment, and joy in our God, who sent His Son to die for us to free us from being consumed by the death of covetousness and bring us into the peace of His kingdom, where He lavishes grace upon grace until we receive eternal riches.

Pastor



Confirmed in Christ

This year, we have four confirmands to be confirmed. In October, Pastor Solum met with each confirmand and their family for their examination in preparation for their Confirmation. Then, on Sunday, October 31st at 8:45 a.m., the congregation is invited to join them in the sanctuary to pray for them and listen to them recite selections from the Small Catechism. They will be confirmed at the 10:00 a.m. Divine Service the same day.

You are invited to be there on Oct. 31st to witness the confession of faith given by these young people, renew your own confession of faith with them, and give them the benefit of your blessing and prayers that our Loving Lord will always keep them strong in the Faith they will profess! Encourage them as they continue to grow in this Faith and live out God's plan for their lives!



Daylight Savings Time ends on **Sunday, November 7.** Don't forget to turn your clocks back one hour!



You are invited to
**Immanuel Lutheran Church's
Congregational Thanksgiving Dinner**
Sunday, November 21st, at noon.

**Please RSVP to the church office
no later than October 31st**

at (219) 872-4419

or immanuelutheran1237@gmail.com.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, too.
Carry outs are available by calling the church office,
for those unable to attend in person.



COME JOIN US
in a
WORSHIP SERVICE
of
THANKSGIVING & PRAISE
on
THANKSGIVING DAY
Thursday, 25
at 9:00 AM

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .

Sometimes people don't like it when pastors talk about stewardship. For some, it hits too close to home. It is easier to talk about bad people in

Washington, in history, or wherever than it is to think about what our daily life in Christ is supposed to look like and how we are supposed to love our neighbor.

The fact that we don't like it certainly means we ought to face it. So, here are a few simple and practical realities.

God calls us to first-fruits, sacrificial giving. That means that we should give off the top. We should set a percentage of our income as a deliberate gift for the work of the Church and then give that first. We write the check to the Lord's work in the Church before we pay the mortgage or pay for our medicine or pay for anything else. We don't pay for all the stuff we need – and stuff we think we need – and then give from what is left over. That is the first-fruits idea. It is hard because we think we need all sorts of other things first. But that is the point of "sacrificial."

Next, how could the starting point for Christian generosity and sacrifice really be anything less than a tithe – 10%? The ceremonial law of the Old Testament was never arbitrary. In the Old Testament, the Levites received this tithe so that they could be full-time ministers.

Does the New Testament have a ministry that is larger or smaller? It is far larger: "Make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). And we are still to have a full-time ministry: "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:14). So if 10% is what it took in the Old Testament, and we have a bigger mission need in the New Testament, how can we expect the Lord's work to be done on less than a tithe?

By first-fruits, sacrificial, and generous giving – that's how. We shouldn't fool ourselves into thinking that we've outgiven God's goodness or that we've given plenty. We might be tempted to think that way, but consider that no one in the Church has given plenty because no one has given all. No one has died for his sins. Only the sinless Son of God did that.

St. Paul brought the Good News of Jesus into the discussion of our giving to support the Lord's work in the Church when he wrote: "I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. 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 by his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:8-9).

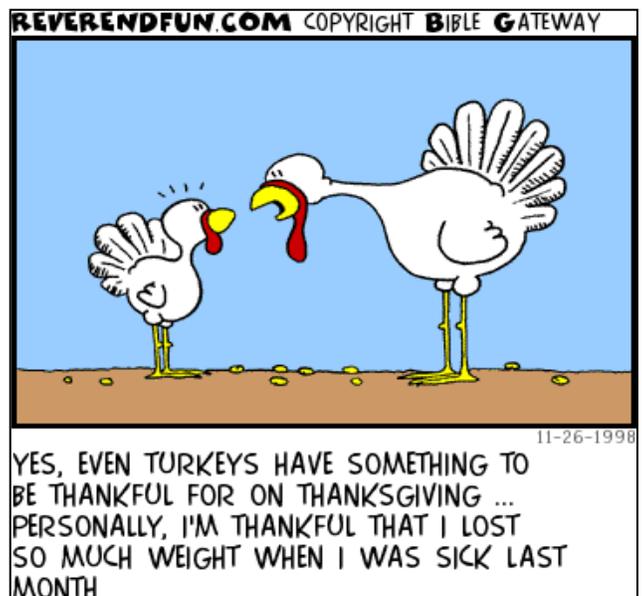
As you can see, what the Bible commands about our stewardship can sting. It's Law, and the Law shows our sins. It calls us to repentance. The Law is meant to expose and accuse for the sake of showing us Christ and His fulfillment of the Law. So if first-fruits, sacrificial giving has you squirming, that's the point.

In Mark's account of the feeding of the 4,000, Jesus took the disciples' seven loaves and blessed them. It was nothing among so many, but, of course, it was plenty. Jesus makes something from nothing. Mark doesn't say that all the disciples gave Jesus all the bread they had. It is quite possible that some of them held something back. But even if they did, that didn't stop Jesus from blessing them. Jesus makes something out of nothing. He, who fed His people in the desert with Manna every morning, doesn't need their bread.

But they need to give it. And what they give – however little it might be and however grudgingly they do so – He blesses. He not only blesses those whom He feeds with it, but He blesses them – the givers. He blesses the givers not just in that they wind up with a basketful for each loaf, but they are blessed by learning to trust and rejoice in Him.

The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. The Lord gives abundantly, or He asks us to fast. We do not know what will happen. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. He does all things well, and He works all things together for good. The disciples don't give their bread to Jesus because it is a good investment. They give it because He is good, because they love Him, and because they trust Him. Let us go and do likewise.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article / November 2021





Shepherds & Lambs

The Sunday School

Newsletter

November 2021

THANKSGIVING, THANKSGIVING!!

We have so much to be thankful for. I thank God for sending Jesus for my salvation. Thankfulness for my family also comes to mind. I recently listened to a study of wise things from Proverbs by Dr. Robert Jeffress. He gave 7 keys to being a successful parent. Some of these keys in mentoring and training up the next generation came from Proverbs 22.



SUCCESSFUL PARENTING

S See your children as a gift from God. They are an inheritance from Him. We will be held accountable for these children that have been entrusted to us. God has given us the responsibility to give our children and grandchildren keys to live in this life and hereafter.

U Understand, accept and develop your child's natural bent. We know that each child is unique. One child develops differently, don't try to mold one child into the person of another.

C Commit to lead your children to Christ. This is our most important job. We can do that by:

1. Praying for their salvation.
2. Being open to your child's salvation at an early age. Jesus said, "Let the little ones come to me."
3. Scheduling a time to discuss the Gospel with them.

C Communicate spiritual values to your child. Do it diligently! Deuteronomy 6: 7 says, "Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." Make it a part of your everyday life in natural conversation showing spiritual truths. Look for teachable moments.

E Example, show a Godly character in your own life. Our children are listening and also watching. "Some truths are better caught than taught".

S Seek to discipline your children consistently. Begin early in life. Proverbs 19:18 says, "Discipline your children, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to their death." We may need to adapt our correction for different children. Different corrections work for different children. Punishment isn't something we do to the child, but for the child. At discipline time, you may want to tell them, "I love you too much to let you behave like that."

S Spend time with your children. It takes time, devoted time, to develop a spiritual and a regular relationship with them.

When you leave this life, your likeness appears again and again in the children and grandchildren that you leave behind. Make that a positive likeness!

Thanks be to God for this wonderful gift he loaned to us!

A special thank you to

Sophie Palmer who designed our SS children's baptismal memento to be used this year! Thanks, Sophie, for sharing your talent with us!



--Lynette Johnston-Martin
SUPERINTENDENT

THANKSGIVING WORD SEARCH



DINNER LOVE
FAMILY THANKS
FRIENDS TURKEY

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



Chicken Scratch NY



Thank You, LORD!



Thank you, Immanuel family! I truly appreciate all the prayers and cards and help I received from my many Immanuel

friends as I was recuperating from surgery. It has been a long haul but things are gradually getting better. Thank you for your loving support!

--Janet Solum

New Memorial Bricks



The courtyard has 17 new memorial bricks. Thank you, Jeff Johnston, for installing them for us! One of these days we will be saying, "Our courtyard is full!" There are still a number of blank bricks available, which we will take orders for at a future date. Thank you all for your support, and enjoy our special garden space! *Speaking of gardens, watch the Sunday bulletin announcements for a "Fall Cleanup" date.* Once the leaves have fallen, we will need all hands on deck who can help with that!



CHRISTMAS TRIVIA NIGHT FRIDAY, DEC. 3RD



in Fellowship Hall

Doors Open @ 6PM

Trivia Starts @ 7PM

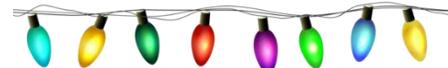
Cost - \$10/Player ~ Bring a team!

Pizza & Drinks Provided

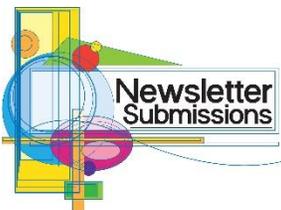
**** Bring Your Own Snacks ****

Proceeds to Benefit One or More of the
Church's Christmas Projects.

COME JOIN US !!!



**ADVENT BEGINS
NOVEMBER 28TH**



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 1.**