

St. John's Lutheran Church & School

Monthly Newsletter - July 2019

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article

Whenever the topic of stewardship and giving comes up, the conversation inevitably turns to the question: "How much should I give?" Answers will vary because the motive behind such questions also vary.

Sometimes the motive behind asking this question is for self-justification. Even though, as Lutherans, we know we are not saved by our works but by grace through faith because of Jesus' substitutionary atonement, the natural religion of fallen man is to earn God's favor by what we do.

Take, for example, the response of our Lord to the rich young ruler who asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus first tells him to keep the commandments. The rich young ruler responds by indicating that all this he has kept from his youth. But Jesus tells him that he lacks one thing: He must sell all he has and give it to the poor and then follow Him.

This rich young ruler went away sad because he was quite wealthy and could not part with his possessions. Here we see that those who seek to justify themselves by their giving will hear a response that intensifies the duty that God places upon them. Indeed, they will hear a response that makes it impossible to win God's favor by their works.

But to those who genuinely desire to know their duty as Christians in the arena of giving, we look to the Bible for our answer. We believe the Bible is the Word of God. And we know that the Word of God has been "breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

So, we begin to answer the question, "What should I give?" with the question, "What does the Bible say about how much we should give and to whom?"

The Old Testament is explicit. The expectation is that the people of God would give a tithe – 10 percent – of the first fruits of their labor to support the full-time ministry of the Levites. This is what the Lord gave Moses to teach the people:

"You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always.

"And if the way is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, when the Lord your God

blesses you, because the place is too far from you, which the Lord your God chooses, to set his name there, then you shall turn it into money and bind up the money in your hand and go to the place that the Lord your God chooses and spend the money for whatever you desire – oxen or sheep or wine or strong drink, whatever your appetite craves.

"And you shall eat there before the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household. And you shall not neglect the Levite who is within your towns, for he has no portion or inheritance with you.

"At the end of every three years you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in the same year and lay it up within your towns. And the Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance with you, and the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, who are within your towns, shall come and eat and be filled, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands that you do." (Deut. 14:22-29)

This principle of tithing is carried over into the New Testament, though not explicitly by calling it a tithe. St. Paul teaches the Church at Corinth the following:

We are to give to the church regularly (1 Cor. 16:1-2), proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:12), and generously (2 Cor. 8:20) of our first fruits (1 Cor. 16:1-2; Gen. 4:4; Prov. 3:9; Lev. 27:30) with a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23). And all of this is because the "Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living by the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14), just as the Levites did.

This is our New Testament standard. Since Christ became poor for us in order to make us rich in Him – blessing us with the riches of heaven – so we have also been so blessed to follow the example of our Lord and Savior and give of ourselves and the work of our hands to bless others with the same.

If we have been lax in this, let us, like our Lord, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross and scorned its shame, likewise begin to work toward this goal of regular giving of a generous proportion of the first fruits of God's giving to us.

And let us do so not begrudgingly, but for the joy set before us – with a spirit of eagerness, cheerfulness, and love – to share the blessings of God with those placed into our care.

Birthdays:

- 2- Stephanie Rieck, Heather Wohltman
- 3- Alan Severson
- 4- Calvin Montgomery, Ellen Lane, Heidi Lucier
- 5- Scott Uphoff
- 6- Jason Lee
- 8- Wes Blume, Josie Orris, Tina Smith, Erik VanHovel
- 9- Grace Niemeyer
- 10- Dylan Smith, Jaxon Fox
- 11- Verne Adkins, Andrew Polston
- 12- Barbara Kirts
- 13- Rhett Farmer
- 14- Brian Hoenes, John Mauck, Raygen Smith
- 15- Lynn Lee
- 16- Aiden Cook
- 18- Joey Allee
- 20- Kevin McReynolds, Rebecca Wetzel
- 21- Hannah Hudson, Clara Woelber, Todd Thoman
- 22- Lorene Reinhart, Howard Diepholz
- 23- Mary Bowman, Eugene Schultz
- 24- Jacob McQueen
- 25- Peggy Seaman, Dylan Rhoads, Tyler Shepard
- 26- Charles Miller, Marley VanHovel
- 27- Anna Jacobsen
- 28- Doreen Nelms, Brendan Prince, Kevin Blume
- 29- Melissa Por, Brad Orris, Sarah White, Alex Shepard
- 30- Corbin Richey, Nicole Shepard
- 31- Austin Stortzum, Benjamin Hocking

Anniversaries:

Brandon & Michelle Saunders	July 1, 2000	Mark & Vallori Degler	July 18, 1993
Alvin & Judy Schaagemann	July 1, 1962	Stephen & Kim Janssen	July 18, 1981
Kris & Jodi Maleske	July 2, 1995	Brian & Joan Hoenes	July 19, 1980
Blake & Mina Fairchild	July 2, 2011	William & Erin Lawler	July 20, 2002
Alvin & Helen Alwardt	July 3, 1965	Frederick & Maryann Uphoff	July 20, 1951
Howard & Brenda Diepholz	July 5, 1992	Collin & Kacie Richey	July 21, 2001
Brad & Rachel Orris	July 5, 1997	Herman & Vivian Taylor	July 21, 1970
Kyle & Chantel Thompson	July 11, 2009	Roger & Barbara Haberer	July 22, 1967
Dennis & Connie Czerwonka	July 14, 1990	Myron & Peggy Salmon	July 27, 1985
Ron & Nina Curry	July 16, 1977	Larry & Susan Miller	July 30, 1967
Rick & Kimberly Shepard	July 17, 1982		

Serving this July:

- Elders:** Michael Stortzum & Tim Rincker
- Ushers:** 8:00 am: *Need Volunteers* 10:30 am: Todd Thoman
- Altar Guild:** Susie Miller & Teresa Lane
- Acolytes:** ***Please see the 3-month acolyte listing on the ledge*

Prayer Requests:

Those In Need of Comfort, Health, & Recovery (Recently Added):

Sara Gass
Tara Stortzum
Imogene Tilford
Adeline Riojas – Niece of Pastor & Sarah Jacobsen

Paul Morrison – Barb Kirts Dad
Jules Martin - Brother of Michael Martin
Linda Spencer – Friend of the DuFrain's

Those Who Need Our Ongoing Prayers:

Herman Taylor
Roberta Dosien
Alan Phelps
Richard Grice
Ava Gass
Ken Rufener
Shirley Kolbus
Howard Diepholz
John Kendall

Bob Zschau
Chuck Cookson
Kevin Shaffer –2nd Grade Teacher's Husband
Bob Pierce – Father of Tina Smith
Jerry Rardin – Brother of Carol Welton
Jim Kull – Father of Kim Fanelli
Alydia Brylowski – Friend of Carol & Joel DuFrain
Karen Morris – Friend of Joel & Carol DuFrain

News, Events, and Announcements:

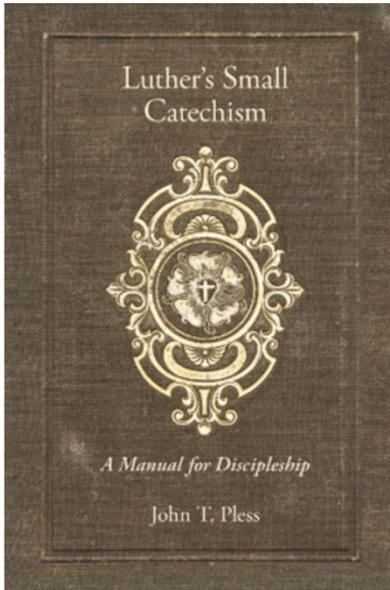
NYG Informational Meeting: There will be an informational meeting for parents and youth who are going to The NYG in Minneapolis on Sunday, July 7th at 6:00 pm.

St. John's Wall of Giving: Located in the Fellowship Hall you will find our Wall of Giving. Pick a card from our wall with the donation amount you would like to give. Simply return your donation with the card to the church or school office. Your name will then be listed on our Donor Wall located at the school! ALL FUNDS RAISED GO DIRECTLY TO RETIRE THE DEBT!

Ladies Aid Bake Sale at Lytle Park Farmer's Market: Come see us at Lytle Park to get your baked goods. We welcome items from all bakers, but if you have questions about what public health will allow, call Carol DuFrain at 234-8329. If we get rained out items will be available after and between services. We hope to see you there!

Summer Scrip Schedule: The summer dates will be: July 1, 15, 29, and August 12. Weekly ordering will begin after the August date.

Book of the Month:



Who are disciples? What is a life of discipleship?

This book answers those important questions by looking at Luther's Small Catechism as a field manual for how to live in faith and serve in love according to God's commandments.

Lutherans have a unique view of discipleship. Disciples of Jesus Christ continue in His Word, living by faith in the promises of God and serving the neighbor with love according to God's commandments. This is the essential aspect of a Christian's vocation.

Author John Pless capitalizes on the Lutheran view of discipleship to equip pastors and laity to better utilize Luther's Small Catechism as a guide for a life of discipleship.

About the Author

John T. Pless is assistant professor of pastoral ministry and missions at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He is the author of *Praying Luther's Small Catechism*.