

IMMANUEL MONTHLY

December 1, 2013



Christian Stewardship

...LEADS A GIVER'S HEART TO JESUS

From Pastor's Desk Stewardship

By Rev. Jason M. Braaten

“Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift” (2 Cor 9:15)! This is St. Paul’s exclamation upon hearing the Corinthian church’s response to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his request for support of the Church in Jerusalem. The Christians in Corinth heard and received God’s mercy in Christ, and they responded to St. Paul’s call to support Christians in Jerusalem with a collection. The Corinthian’s joy filled Jerusalem’s need.

The reality of stewardship is that because of God’s generosity in the giving of His Son to die on the cross for us, we should also be generous with all that we receive from Him. What do we receive? Everything. All that we are and all that we have is the Lord’s. He is the creator and the giver. We are His creatures and those who receive what He gives.

It sounds easy. And it is. But then again it isn’t. Stewardship is easy because it God’s work.

Through what God gives, we give to others. Through what God gives, we support the work of the church for the life of the world. He gives; we receive. And like our generous Father in Heaven, we, as His children, use what He gives to us to love and serve others.

But stewardship is also difficult. That is because it goes against our natural inclination to think that what I have is mine to do what I want with. This is our sinful nature. It is our selfishness and our greed. And it convicts us. How can we who have been given everything—life, food, clothing, house, home, forgiveness, divine sonship, an eternal inheritance—be so stingy with what we give to the church, the place where we hear about and receive all that God gives us and does for us? We are all guilty of this kind of thinking. And the only godly response is to repent and trust in the Gospel.

For if God has given you His own Son, will He not give you all things? Yes. He will. This is His sure

and certain promise. God provides for His people. He provides everything we need for this body and life and for the life that is to come.

The church is a mercy place. It's a place where God's mercy in the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, is given and received. It means for us who believe forgiveness, life, and salvation in the face of sin, death, and the power of the devil. There we inhale God's mercy in Word and Sacrament, and exhale this same mercy in love and service to our neighbor, in giving what we have received from Him. And that is an enduringly joyful thing to do. Our joy fills our neighbor's need because His joy filled ours (Heb 12:2). Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!

From the President Works of God

By Rev. Matthew C. Harrison

I'll never forget my first visit to Bethesda Lutheran Communities in Watertown, Wis. As we walked along, we had the opportunity to greet and observe a number of individuals with profound disabilities. One man, I recall, used an electronic device with a keyboard to communicate with us. He was busy about his job stripping copper wire from an unusable electrical motor. He had his vocation. Slowly and methodically, he produced a large pile of copper to be recycled. I was fascinated to learn that many such individuals actually bid for various jobs and enjoyed compensation for their work. While Bethesda housed provided group care for a number of people with disabilities, its goal was and is to have those with disabilities do for themselves and to become active, integral members of the body of Christ--the Church on earth.

As biblical Christians, we treasure all life--in whatever way God chooses to provide it. There is a continuity in our views regarding drugs that kill life in the womb; government programs that force us to pay for such drugs; the value of children, no matter their context or genetic makeup; and the value of every life from conception to grave and in a resurrected eternity. There is simply no other option for those who believe what Jesus told Nicodemus, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."

Today, the wonderful thing about work with those with disabilities is that these people are more and more respected for their particular gifts and are encouraged to find and flourish in their particular vocations as they serve in and among us as the Church. While those who are

hearing impaired or unable to see face specific challenges in life, these individuals--often knowing no other state of existence--don't view their disability as a disability at all. In fact, their challenge in life has helped to give them, and all of us, a unique perspective on living life that is rich in our Lord's grace.



Some years ago, while traveling in the Baltics, I first became aware of the worldwide challenges many who have disabilities face. At that time in Latvia, as in the former Soviet Union and in virtually the whole developing world, those with disabilities (mental or physical) were most often shunted out of sight. People with disabilities bore the burden that a larger society imposed upon them because very often society associated disability with divine retribution. When seeing a man blind from birth, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Who sinned? This man or his parents?" Jesus responded, "Neither this one sinner nor his parents, [This happened] that the works of God might be manifest in him" (John 9:1ff). In our congregations today, there are still a myriad of opportunities for us to behold the "works of God" made manifest among us in and with people who have disabilities.

There are great ministries of mercy and outreach happening right now by individuals who themselves are challenged. Unfortunately, disabled populations are hugely unchurched. Opportunities abound for a

vibrant ministry of mercy and life together with families and parents who care for profoundly impaired children. I'm delighted this issue of The Lutheran Witness is highlighting these opportunities.

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The Book of the Month
5 Things You Can Do
to Have a Stronger
Family

There are no perfect families, and we all want to have stronger, faithful families. Even while the pressures of real-life issues press on every side, there are opportunities to support your spouse, your children, even you extended family. God has mercifully surrounded us with the means to support as we strive to have a stronger family and Christian household.

This volume will equip you to:

- Develop the skills and motivation to strengthen your family
- Recognize and accept the variety and differences found in individual family members
- Establish the family as a safe place for repentance and forgiveness
- Understand vocation and use it to give your family purpose and direction
- Create times of rest as a family and as individuals

Facts and Figures; Dates and Times

Greeters List

1 Dec Harold Wattjes (West)
Jim Dyer (East)
8 Dec Joan Vukelich (West)
Laverl Byers (East)
15 Dec Ruth Sims (West)
Tim & Teri Pollock (East)
22 Dec Donna Campbell (West)
Harold Wattjes (East)
29 Dec Jim Dyer (West)
Joan Vukelich (East)
5 Jan Laverl Byers (West)
Ruth Sims (East)
12 Jan Tim & Teri Pollock (West)
Donna Campbell (East)
19 Jan Harold & Irene Wattjes (West)
Jim Dyer (East)
26 Jan Joan Vukelich (West)
Laverl Byers (East)

Coffee Committee

Dec Laverl Byers
Jan Janice Stumeier

Funeral Committee

Dec Scott Dallas & Sharon Allen
Jan Sue Danielson

Altar Committee

1 Dec Tonia Timlin
8 Dec Tonia Timlin
15 Dec Ann Hilgendorf
22 Dec Ann Hilgendorf
24 Dec Ann Hilgendorf
25 Dec Ann Carroll
29 Dec Ann Carroll
31 Dec Ann Carroll
5 Jan Carol Munson
12 Jan Carol Munson
19 Jan Carol Munson
26 Jan Judy Legg

Elder On Duty – Communion

1 Dec Steve Hilgendorf
8 Dec Josh Whitson
15 Dec Steve Hilgendorf
22 Dec Jack Appleby
24 Dec Jack Appleby
25 Dec Steve Hilgendorf
29 Dec Josh Whitson
31 Dec Jack Appleby

Altar Flowers

15 Dec Josh & Jaimee Whitson
22 Dec Tim & Sherrie Hoel
24 Dec Geof & Sue Danielson
29 Dec Ray & Norma Uthe

ATTENDANCE				OFFERINGS		
Date	Saturday	Sunday	Special	General	Missions	Building
11/3	20	94	0	\$2,545.01	\$20.00	\$0.00
11/10	18	82	0	\$2,179.50	\$5.00	\$0.00
11/17	27	87	0	\$2,646.05	\$5.00	\$30.00
11/24	25	90	47	\$2,945.00	\$0.00	\$330.00
Subtotal	90	353	47	\$10,315.56	\$30.00	\$360.00
Total	490			\$10,315.56	\$30.00	\$360.00

December 2013 Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>8:00 Monthly Women's Angel Tree 8:00 AM Drive Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School Carol Danvers Dawn Stokes Virginia Osborne</p> <p>Carols/Reclinator Day</p>	<p>2</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Elders Meeting Rachel Ertz</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Cori Johnson Janet Pollock</p>	<p>4</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 11:30 AM T.A.M.A. 7:00 PM Advent Service</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Williams Braaten</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Person's Day Off</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8:30 PM Drive Service/Communion Christine Davidson John Moore Tim & LuAnn Holey</p>
<p>8</p> <p>9:00 AM Drive Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 2:30 PM Christmas Caroling 10:30 AM Greeting of the Church</p> <p>Children's Service Day</p>	<p>9</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Missions & Evangelism Meeting George Crawford Rogann Doolen</p>	<p>10</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 11:00 AM Circuit Pastors' Meeting Patricia Hummel</p>	<p>11</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 7:00 PM Advent Service Nicolas Carr</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM Ladies Aid Christmas Party/Potluck Oliver Braaten</p>	<p>13</p> <p>David Stamer Justin Norman Tucker Bowers</p> <p>Person's Day Off</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8:30 PM Drive Service/Communion Emily Cornwaka Jacob Wright</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:00 AM Drive Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 7:00 PM Sunday School Christmas Program Carols/Reclinator Day</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Board of Education Meeting 7:30 PM Voters Gerald Alexander</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting William Brough Arneigh Jones Mark & Leigh Ann Whitson</p>	<p>18</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 7:00 PM Advent Service Ava Johnson Kelli Holey Tiffany Crouch Travis Pollock</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Alyssa Ertz Kyle Britt Nichole Poo</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Jarvis Arthur</p> <p>Person's Day Off</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8:30 PM Drive Service/Communion Laurel Ebers</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:00 AM Drive Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting James & Carolyn Dyer</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service/Communion</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:00 AM Christmas Day Service/Communion Sabrina Fox Church Officers Closed</p>	<p>26</p> <p>William Koss</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Person's Day Off</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8:30 PM Drive Service/Communion Guy Stevens</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:00 AM Drive Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Take-down Christmas Decorations 7:00 PM Youth Group Ray & Norma Ulte Ray Ulte</p>	<p>30</p> <p>7:30 AM Mattins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Holly Weiselt Lisa Ponder</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7:00 PM New Year's Eve Service/Communion Andy & Teresa Rahn Church Officers Closed</p>				

January 2014 Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>5</p> <p>8:00 AM Divine Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 2:30 PM Nursing Home 11:30 AM Pastor/Pewet Catechism Big Team Meeting Jack Appert Jonathan Braaten Joseph Studer Catechism Recitation Day</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Elders Meeting 7:30 PM Men's Club Justin Stastoff Mike & Tomas Terlin</p>	<p>7</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Andrew Crawford Tim & Alyssa Bell</p>	<p>1</p> <p>New Year's Eve Church Offices Closed</p>	<p>2</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Jacob Dyer Eric Brewer Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>4</p> <p>8:30 PM Divine Service/Communion Miranda Faulke</p>
<p>12</p> <p>9:00 AM Divine Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Catechism Class 11:15 AM Church Council Children's Semester Day</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Missions & Evangelism Meeting</p>	<p>14</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 11:00 AM Circuit Pastors' Meeting Amanda Boretz</p>	<p>15</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins Aileen & Mark Probst</p>	<p>16</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Leona Hall Norma Libo</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>18</p> <p>8:30 PM Divine Service/Communion Emily Rubin</p>
<p>19</p> <p>8:00 AM Divine Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Catechism Class Laura Van Ocken Mack Terlin Catechism Recitation Day</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting 8:00 PM Board of Education Meeting 7:30 PM Women Christopher Landry</p>	<p>21</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 11:30 AM T.A.M.A. Meeting</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Janet Schaefer Lucas Stokjer</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Brian Casanova Pastor's Day Off</p>	<p>25</p> <p>8:30 PM Divine Service/Communion</p>
<p>26</p> <p>8:00 AM Divine Service/Communion 10:30 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Catechism Class 7:00 PM Youth Group</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting Eric Crawford</p>	<p>28</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p>29</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins Alex Wood</p>	<p>30</p> <p>7:30 AM Matins 8:00 AM Staff Meeting</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Pastor's Day Off</p>	

In This Issue . . .

From the Pastor	1
Facts & Figures	5
Calendars	6



Immanuel's stained glass window in the Narthex.

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