
Good News of St. Paul

St. Paul Lutheran Web Site: www.stpaulcastlerock.org

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December 2021

Spread the Love and Message of Christ

Generous Gifts



It is the season of giving. There is nothing better than to give a gift and see a child light up with joy. God lights up when we do what is just and right; when we act in faith and love. I'm not one to promote an "if-then" God. For example, "if we do this then God will do that." That said there are definitely things we do that are beneficial and those that are not (1Cor10:23).

THOUGHTS
FROM THE
HEART

We are told not to "test" God in multiple places of scripture. However, there is one place God does invite us to test him. In Malachi 3:10 we read, "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing." In short, God has challenged us in giving.

It makes no mathematical sense that giving our resources away will multiply them? But this is exactly what has happened when people choose to give ten percent to God. When Pr. Denise and I committed to tithing, we found we had more than before. Perhaps this is why Jesus says in Luke 6:38 "give and it will be given to you, a full measure pressed down, shaken, and running over." We also read in Proverbs 11:24-25 "Some give freely, yet grow all the richer; others withhold what is due, and only suffer want.

A generous person will be enriched, and one who gives water will get water."

Giving also addresses the attitude of one's heart and is a principle that is taught throughout the Bible. God provides guidance for our benefit, and God wants to get our hearts right so that we might be blessed to be a blessing (Genesis 12:2).

When we give through our tithes and offerings, we are worshiping God in a tangible way. We are acting in faith and prioritizing God's will in our life. We acknowledge God's existence as Creator (Genesis 1 and 2) and that everything is God's (Haggai 2:8, Job 41:11). We are lining-up our financial lives with God's direction for abundant life (Matthew 6:33). We are following the example established by our adopted father Abraham (Galatians 3:7) when he gave a tenth of everything he had to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20). We are being faithful because tithing is an act of faith. (Leviticus 27:30-33, Deuteronomy 14:22).

Thank you for being a part of God's ministry here at St. Paul and having generous giving hearts this Christmas and throughout the year with your tithes and offerings! I am confident God's heart swells with joy!

-Pastor Norm



Give the Gift of Caring

As we approach the Christmas season and celebrating the joyful birth of Jesus Christ we can give a gift of caring.

Caring for others is one of the great joys we have in life. It helps others and also makes us feel good too. And it's good for your health. It's something we should do more in our lives.

As Nelson Mandela quoted, "There is no greater gift than that of giving ones time and energy to help others without expecting anything in return". And Colossians 3:12, "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved. Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience." Have a joyous Christmas season

To your health, K.C. Babcock, RN

ELCA Good Gifts Program

Thank you to all who have participated in this years Good Gifts program for world hunger. The Church office is aware of gifts by members including \$500 that were matched on November 30. (10 chicks, 2 goats, and 11 hygiene kits).

Offering Envelopes

The 2022 offering envelopes for 2022 are available and in your mailbox for you to pick up.

Coffee Hour Starting Again!

Barring any unforeseen obstacles, coffee hour after services will begin again in January.

Thank You To:

- The Funeral committee for serving at the recent memorial for Bill White. **Also to** members of the congregation for providing food, Erika Agren for the flower centerpieces on each table;



Patsy Grizzle for washing/ironing tablecloths; and Jon Davidson for arranging/setting up and taking down tables.

- To coordinators Paul and Jackie Schwinn, and Earl and Corlan Small for the beautiful seasonal decorating done in the sanctuary and fireside room. Many hours go into making this happen and we appreciate you doing for all of us to enjoy.
- Paul Schwinn for constructing the mural in the fellowship which will be used as a backdrop for various seasons of the year.
- Paul Schwinn, Earl Small, and Richard Skreen for loading the 3 pews which were removed to another location. Their intended use is to seat handicapped persons.
- Jon and Julie Davidson and Nancy Vandehey for providing meals for Family Promise this fall.
- Jocelyn Pecher and Ron Blankenship for their diligence in working with the sound and projection for Sunday morning. Also, to Sandy Catt who has stepped into the A/V broadcasting for St. Paul and for her efforts in keeping our web page current.
- Those who added to the communal candy stash (namely Glen Agren and Jacki Whittaker).

Joyful Giving

It has been a long time since I have written an article for a church newsletter but the opportunity came up at the last church council meeting and I felt nudged to do it.

I have served and participated in a number of programs and activities involving stewardship and giving at a number of Lutheran churches I have attended during my adult life. However these are much different times today than in the past years of my life. Church attendance has been greatly diminished by the pandemic and many members find themselves attending through online viewing. There are more challenges to maintaining the cohesiveness of all the pieces of ministry provided through St. Paul, which has temporarily been disrupted by the impact and severity of the virus.

Notwithstanding the challenges and obstacles that have been presented these past two years for our church and its ministries, St. Paul continues to provide God's abundant love to those around us and gives hope and love to those who so desperately need it in these difficult times. The October 2021 income statement for St Paul reflects that church giving year to date is positive at \$805.10, but monthly giving has continued to decline over the past months creating reason for concern.

It always amazes me as I walk in the church doors on Sunday and into the sanctuary how much work our volunteers do to make our church a wonderful place to worship. I walk into the fellowship hall and kitchen area and see all of the many uses and meals this area has provided to our community over the years in meeting the basic needs of those who are less fortunate.

The reality is the needs of our brothers and sisters will continue and we will be given the opportunity to say yes to meeting those needs wherever that leads us. The fact is that it takes money, time and resources to meet those basic needs of others. The truth is we must all continue to pray for guidance about how we are expected to give of our own money and time to make God's priorities our priorities.

It is through this act of selfless giving of our time and joyful giving of our money that we can see glimpses of God's presence and feel the touch of the Holy Spirit in our lives. On behalf of the church council please remember to give abundantly to God's work at St. Paul so our ministries can continue to meet the basic needs of our brothers and sisters and to share the good news with those who so desperately need to hear it.

Thank You,
Kevin Rahn, Acting Council President

Christmas Eve Service

A candlelight service will be held Friday, December 24th at 9 p.m. (Only one service) Traditional hymns, special music, and communion will be a part of the evening.

Christmas Caroling

Saturday, December 18 - We will meet at the church at 3:30 p.m. The plan is to carol for a few hours and return to the church for the God's Abundant Plate meal. Please contact the church if you plan on participating, or if you would like us to come and sing for you. **Everyone is welcome!**





December

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Pr. Denise Arnold | 20 Kim Grizzle |
| 2 Bill Clayton | 21 Alyssa Gallow |
| 4 Shirley Johnson | 23 Linda Diepenbrock |
| 6 Ed Berndt | 26 Katie Smith |
| 7 Linda Solberg | 28 Maggie Ashby |
| Hannah Lyon | 29 Granville Oswalt |
| 10 Emily Foster | Justin Sicklovan |
| Brigitte Bontoft | 30 Andy Kotera |
| 11 Nicki Highlander | Luke Rahn |
| 12 Glen Agren | Allen Black |
| Janet Eiden | |
| 17 Amy Whitten | |
| Linsey Sturgill | |
| Sonny Smith | |



Bill White died on November 9, 2021.

A graveside service was held prior to a *Celebration of Life* service at St. Paul's on November 20. Pastor Norm Arnold officiated at both.

Blessed Be His Memory



Remembering Members & Friends

Please remember these people with your prayers, phone calls, or cards:

All God's people including: Linda Heritage, Sandy Catt, Bob Nolden, Jess Johnston, Emma Cooley, Donna Rodgers, Emma Agren, Amy Agren, Tom Stanley, Nathan Victor, Brad Foster, Sherry Schwinn, Michelle Oswalt, Vineta Thomsen, Mary Brown, Bruce Schumacher, Kelsey Buchanan, Stephanie Petkovich, Don Miller, Darlene Jackson, Eric Smith, Jean Jones, Angie Manfreddi, Angie Boudier, Crystal Hummel, Beth Hinesley, Al Black; **All Caregivers and Care receivers:** Joyce LeMonds, Vi Benham, Granville Oswalt; **Those serving in the Armed Forces:** Sam Gallow, Matthew Cogburn, Eddie Oswalt

Anniversary Wishes



December

- 23 David & Vicki Masten
- 26 Lowell & Jan Bamford - 57 years
- 28 Richard & Geri Skreen - 30 years
- 28 Prs. Norm & Denise Arnold - 30 years

Dear St. Paul Family:

Your prayers, calls, cards, and other acts of kindness have meant so much to me lately! Thank you so much for your love and support in my breast cancer journey. While there's a bit more work to do, I remain very optimistic of positive outcomes. -Sandy Catt

Monthly Financial Report

October: \$13,728.00

November: \$13,252.00

Thank you for your continued support through your tithes.