

THE ST. JOHN NEWS

November 2023

Giving Thanks for Thanksgiving Theology of Generosity and Giving

It would be hard, as Americans, to know the month of November without the celebration of Thanksgiving. We have all grown up with the holiday occurring on the fourth Thursday of the eleventh month, and some may remember the time when it was always honored on the last Thursday of November. That prior date was set by President Abraham Lincoln following the Civil War and the current tradition of the fourth Thursday was put into effect under President Roosevelt in 1942.

Regardless of the celebration date, the event of Thanksgiving follows the pattern of the first settlers of the United States, who offered thanksgiving to God for safe travel across the Atlantic and a successful harvest completed in the New World. Giving thanks to God for his many blessings has always been a standard part of the life of Christians. And most world religions have a similar practice of offering gratitude to their god or gods.

It is one of the earliest skills taught to young children: giving thanks. When someone gives you something, say “thank you.” When someone does something nice for you, say “thank you.” On the national day of Thanksgiving, many people will give thanks or be thankful for what they have. It is always our hope that all will give thanks to the one true God who is the giver of all good gifts. Sadly, many will simply be thankful, if that, and not think at all about the God who has created them and given them all that they have.

God has truly done so much for each and every one of us. He has given us, as Luther explains in the First Article of the Creed, “my body and soul; my eyes, ears, and all my members; my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.” On top of that, our wonderful God has done the work of our salvation from sin and death. He has sent his only-begotten Son into this world to be our Savior. Jesus Christ, true God and true man, has redeemed us, “lost and condemned creatures” that we are. He has done so through “his holy precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.” By faith in Jesus Christ, worked within us by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, you have forgiveness, life, and salvation. Your eternity is secured with Christ and you will dwell with him in his perfect kingdom forever.

How can a Christian even begin to give thanks to God for this most important gift, among all the other gifts he so freely bestows upon us? Cain and Abel are the first recorded people to offer gifts to God. Cain’s gift was rejected because he lacked faith and trust in God, as is explained in Hebrews 11. Abel’s gift was accepted because he believed in God, and more specifically, because he believed the promise of the coming Savior from sin. They both gave portions back to God from the wealth that he had given to them. That is the basic principle of giving to God, “We give thee but thine own,” as the hymn says. All that we give to God is his already, so what we give back to him is a demonstration of our faith and trust in him. Can God be trusted to keep on giving us what we need when we give so much back to him in our offerings? That is the test of faith in giving.

Here's some of what the Bible says regarding giving and God’s promises through giving:

Psalms 24:1 The earth is the LORD’s, and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein...

Deuteronomy 8:17–18 Beware lest you say in your hearth, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.’ You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth.

Hebrews 13:5 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Luke 16:10–13 [Jesus said,] “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”

Matthew 6:19–21 [Jesus said,] “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your hearth will be also.”

Malachi 3:8–10 “Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.”

Galatians 6:6 Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.

Mark 12:41–44 And [Jesus] sat down opposite the treasury and watched the people putting money into the offering box. Many rich people put in large sums. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which make a penny. And he called his disciples to him and said to them, “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the offering box. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

2 Corinthians 9:6–15 The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, “He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.” He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

1 Corinthians 16:2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper.

2 Corinthians 8:7 But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

The Lord has taught us much about giving and how we as Christians are to show thanks and praise to God for his wonderful works of grace and faith for us. Giving for us as Christians is not to be taken as a law, for God does not need our money, our time, our talents, or our energy. But, we do recognize that our neighbor does need these things. We are inclined, then, not to give offerings or gratitude or praise out of obligation, but in humble response for all that God has given to us from his bounty.

We are set free from sin by the blood of Christ. We have been forgiven much and are called to forgive much. God teaches us the same about our giving. We are blessed at St. John to have a very generous and supportive congregation. We can have humble pride in this truth and strive to remain so generous and increase such generosity as the Lord guides us. The passages above are worthy of study by us all as they are gifts from God to us, what he wants us to know and how he wants us to be. And we remember what Paul states as Jesus’ word in Acts 20:35, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

We give thanks to God for this celebration of Thanksgiving on Wednesday evening, November 22 at 7:15pm, a fine opportunity to worship our Lord for his many blessings and to share those gifts with others. And “it is good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God.” And I give thanks to God for each and every one of you and your faithfulness to the Lord and your support of his church. The Lord continue to bless you abundantly and grant you the faith to give so abundantly in return.

In Christ’s love and service,

Pastor Caithamer

Let Us Pray

For Healing and Recovery: John, Melvin -father of Greg , Steve, Rod , Jim -brother of Karla , Kaylianna -great granddaughter of Bob & Joan, Robin, Karla, Charlene, Brian, Teresa -godchild of Bob & Joan, Barbara-family friend of Bob & Joan, John, Hendricks -grandson of Dan & Joanie, Maria, Merv , Rebecca -daughter of Marvin & Esther, Roy- father of Anne, Todd-grandson of Harold, Brett -cousin of the Kindts’

For Successful Treatments: Susan, Dan, Nancy, Barb, Luke, Earl, Linda, Joan, Jeanette, Nancy

For our Military: Nick D, Nick F, Andy, Brandon, Zachary, David

For our Missionaries: Pastor Randrianasolo Dembiniana Havanjanakary and the Madagascar Lutheran Seminary, Pastor Magnus Bengston and Lielsalaca Lutheran Church in Latvia, Pastor Obot Ite and the Lutheran Mission in Kingston, Jamaica



Family Advent Night— All St. John Families are invited to begin their Christmas preparations by joining us for Family Advent Night on Friday, December 1st, from 5:30-7:30pm. We will have a pizza dinner, crafts for kids, devotions, singing of Christmas carols and cookie decorating. Please sign up on the bulletin board outside the Fellowship Hall.

Decorating the Church for Christmas
Please join us on Saturday, December 2nd, at 9:00am to help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. We welcome any and all volunteers!



November Music Notes



HYMNS

The word hymn derives from Greek ὕμνος, which means "a song of praise". In both Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, Paul commands gathered believers to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, thereby "singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart" (Eph. 5:19).

Martin Luther brought congregational hymns to the forefront of corporate worship, and ever since Lutherans have been wholeheartedly devoted to singing hymns. Composers throughout the centuries have been inspired to write and arrange hymn tunes in innumerable ways.

We at St. John's are definitely a singing congregation! It is a joy and privilege week by week to explore the treasury of Hymnody that we have inherited from generations past, and to add to our repertoire with hymns that have been recently composed. Our **Lutheran Service Book** is a great resource, and I also encourage you to explore the **LSB - Companion to the Hymns**. This exhaustive two-volume compendium has comprehensive information about hymn tunes and texts and offers a wonderful panoply of information. We have a copy in the church balcony and I would be happy to show it to you.

On **Sunday, November 19 at 4:00 pm** we will have a Hymn Festival here at St. John. Familiar hymns will be sung, rung, and played with many of the talented instrumentalists from our congregation. The Day School choir and Sunday School will be joining in the singing of one of the hymns. Pastor Caithamer will offer some insights on the theology of some of the hymn texts.

Among the hymns on the program will be:

- For all the Saints
- Thy strong word
- Lord, Thee I love with all my heart
- Jesus, Thy boundless love to me
- I am trusting Thee, Lod Jesus
- Go, My children, with My blessing
- Fairest Lord Jesus

We hope you will attend, sing and listen, enjoy, and bring a friend (or 2 or 3!)

Soli Deo Gloria,

Keith

Veterans Day Assembly

Our St. John Lutheran School and Little Lamb students will be honoring veterans in a special program planned for 10:00am on Friday, November 10th in the gymnasium. Church members are invited to attend as we thank every veteran for their service to our country! Light refreshments will be available for all attending veterans.

THANKSGIVING BREAK

School will be closed Wednesday, November 22 to Friday, November 24 in observance of Thanksgiving. The Church Office will be closed Thursday & Friday. We wish you a wonderful time with family and friends giving thanks to God for His many blessings!

Appreciation Cards -

There will be a card shower on Sunday, November 19th in appreciation of our Music Director, Keith Williams. A basket will be in the narthex that morning for cards.

Join us for the PTF Turkey Bowl on Saturday, November 18 at Western Bowl. Gather your 5-person team to bowl from either 12-3p or 3-6p. In addition to an afternoon of bowling, there will be games, prizes, silent auction items and an RTIC cooler stuffed with goodies as a raffle item. Opportunities to sponsor this event are still available. Please contact Donica, for more information.

*To register your team, follow this link: <https://bit.ly/Turkeybowl23>

*To enter the raffle, follow this link: <https://go.eventgroovefundraising.com/stjohnlsturkeybowl>

November E.A.T. Night @ Monical's Monday, November 13th, ALL Day.

Enjoy lunch, dinner or both at Monical's on Mattis Ave! Bring in the flyer or show an electronic copy to make sure that 20% of the proceeds will be donated to St. John Lutheran School. Get a Monical's Gift Card from Ram Rebate from the school office. Flyers are available on the narthex table and on the school website www.stjohnls.com. Thank you for your continued support of these events.

Midweek School—

We hold a Midweek School on Wednesday evenings for Kindergarten through 5th grade. An opening is held in the sanctuary at 5:45p.m and then the children are dismissed to their class. Each week a Bible lesson is taught. The program concludes at 7:00 p.m. Bring a friend. All are welcome!



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Finn | 19 Brian |
| 2 Sam, Byron, Gary, Hannah | 20 Matthew, Mike |
| 3 Dean, Jason, Robert, Jeremy | 21 Kelley, Emma, Kim, Michael, Jim |
| 4 CJ | 22 Brad, Gregory |
| 5 Christian, Jacob | 23 Cheryl, John, Barry, Renae, Lynne |
| 6 Clayton, Sarah | 24 Susie, Nancy |
| 7 Joyce, J.C. | 25 Jordan, Gilbert |
| 8 Tim, Everett | 26 Jennifer, Nicci |
| 9 Sarah, Presley, Lon, Henos | 27 David |
| 10 Larry | 28 Gary, Mark, Crystal |
| 11 Karen, Butch | 29 Addisyn, Hannah |
| 12 Jonathan | 30 Todd, Jeanine, Jacob, Mark, Andrew |
| 13 Mesmer, Ceirra | |
| 14 Tucker, Liesl | |
| 15 Barb, Rita, Fawn | |
| 16 Gabryan, Chuck | |
| 17 Billy | |
| 18 Erica | |

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Ben & Wendy (20) | 25 Bill & Diann (62); Joe & Alicia IV (17) |
| 4 Byron & Lydia (67); Herb & Virginia (67) | 28 Troy & Brandi (25) |
| 5 Alex & Sue (30); Ron & Susan (40) | 30 Mark & Jennifer (38) |
| 13 Darrel & Linda (39) | |
| 18 Mike & Jill (17) | |
| 19 Heath & Sarah (24); Jim & Karen (40) | |

Thank You – Thank you for all of the love and support you have given me at the loss of my dear husband Jim. Losing him was a total shock. You have made a most difficult time, in my life, a bit easier to endure. Thank you also to the ladies who prepared the meal. Sincerely, Jackie



Order forms are available on the narthex table. Return order forms to the school office by Wednesday, November 8. Dough-livery date is Friday, November 17. Proceeds from this fundraiser will go towards the middle school class trip.

LWML Meeting will take place on November 21st at 6:30pm. We will be finalizing plans for the Cookie Walk.


Arts & Crafts Fair and Car Show—
Thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success for another year! There were lots of different vendors to shop from, delicious goodies at the Bake Sale to purchase and several interesting cars to see.

Stewardship Corner— Matthew 22:40 - "On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." We serve God and our neighbor through the various vocations (holy callings) that God has given us. We do not need to go searching for good works or inventing our own: God has given us roles to fill in home, church and society and that will keep us plenty busy! When we seek to fulfill the duties of these vocations in a spirit of faith, God-pleasing works are the result.

NOVEMBER

Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. Malachi 3:10

2023

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<p><i>Church Office</i> 359-1123</p> <p><i>School Office</i> 359-1714</p> <p><i>Pastor Caithamer's</i> <i>day off: Fridays</i></p>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">October 2023</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	October 2023							S	M	T	W	T	F	S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31					<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">December 2023</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1 2</td></tr> <tr><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td></tr> <tr><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td></tr> <tr><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td></tr> <tr><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	December 2023							S	M	T	W	T	F	S							1 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31							<p>1 <i>All Saints' Day</i></p> <p>8:10 Chapel 5:45 Midweek School, Lighthouse 7:15 Holy Communion</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10:00 Lighthouse</p>	<p>3 <i>No School</i></p>	<p>4</p> 
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<p>26 <i>Last Sunday of the Church Year</i></p> <p>8:00 Holy Communion 9:30 Adult Bible Class, Sunday School 10:45 Holy Communion</p>	<p>27</p> <p>6:00 Bylaws Committee</p>	<p>28</p> <p>10:00 Adult Bible Class 6:00 Parish Ed 7:00 Youth Board</p>	<p>29</p> <p>8:10 Chapel 5:45 Midweek School 6:00 Handbells 7:15 Holy Communion</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:00 Adult Choir Practice</p>	<p>Dec. 1</p> <p>5:30 Family Advent Night</p>	<p>Dec. 2</p> <p>8:00 Cookie Walk 9:00 Church Decorating</p>																																																																																																									