

The Shepherd's Voice

Volume 1, Issue 2

November 2009

From the Pastor's Pen: Giving Thanks to God the Father

“If an intelligent Creator made us, it stands to reason that He had a design for the sort of life He meant for us to live.”

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for wholeness and not for evil . . .”

Jeremiah 29: 11a

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” Colossians 3: 15-17



Pastor Clint K. Poppe

As I thought about my message to the family and friends of Good Shepherd this month, one section of Scripture kept coming to mind. Soon we will begin a new Sunday morning Bible study on the Book of Colossians. The three verses above from chapter 3 sum up so well the blessings God has bestowed on us here at Good Shepherd. Thanks be to God!

This is the time of the year when we have the joyous opportunity to reflect on the blessings that God has graciously gifted us and give thanks to God as the Giver of all good gifts. The greatest Gift of all? Christ Jesus; salvation accomplished and delivered full and free!

I firmly believe the Word of Christ dwells richly in this place! There is a true hunger for the Word preached and taught here. People come to worship to hear the Word and respond with their praise and thanksgiving, faith and service. People attend our Bible studies because they truly desire to grow in their faith. People provide for the religious instruction of their children because they want them to grow in their love and knowledge of the Lord. As Jacob said in Genesis 28: 17 “How awesome is this place!”

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VBS Quilts Reach Russia

In 2008 our VBS children made quilt blocks to be put together for quilts to be sent

to orphans in Russia. Each block was designed by the children. The older children shared a message from the

week's lessons. The younger children may have had help

tracing their hands or drawing crosses. Then the quilting ladies took the blocks and

material which was donated to create 2 quilts. We then involved more children and Sunday School teachers in tying these

quilts.



The quilts were then taken to Pastor Reehl who with Orphan Grain Train supports and travels to orphanages in Russia. He said that it would take a while but he would get them to Russia. The photo to the left is of Pastor Reehl presenting these quilts to an orphanage on one of his trips.

The photo will be posted on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. Thank you to all who made this incredible outreach possible.

From the Pastor's Pen:

Last year, with the move to a congregational fiscal year, we were able to focus much more on the theology of management (stewardship) and less on budgets and line items. It was indeed a great blessing. There will be several stewardship mailing this month; prayerfully receive and review them. There are several stewardship items in this newsletter; please give them your full attention. We are quickly approaching a very busy time in personal as well as church schedules. Stewardship Sunday will be November 22. I hope and pray that our special Thanksgiving services (Wednesday, Nov. 25th at 6:30 pm and Thursday, Nov. 26th at 9 am) will be a blessing for many and an opportunity to give thanks to God for His many blessings to us. I especially hope and pray that the busyness of the upcoming weeks will not rob us of the joy of the greatest Gift of all, the life-giving and life-changing gift of God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

May the Word of Christ dwell in us richly, today and always!

Together in Christ,

Rev. Clint K. Poppe

Directory Changes

TRANSFERS IN:

Russell & Ashley Schoenbeck & Benjamin, P. O. Box 254, Hickman, NE 68372 from Holy Cross Lutheran in Kearney, NE

TRANSFERS OUT:

Chad Campbell to Mt. Olive Lutheran, Aurora, CO

Lance Corp. Matthew Fritz to Prince of Peace Lutheran, San Diego, CA

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All Saint's Day and Thanksgiving

On November 1st Christians around the world join in celebrating All Saint's Day. Among the saints in heaven are our loved ones who have died in the faith and now share in the joys of heaven. The recommended Epistle reading for All Saints Day comes from Revelation 7 and includes these words: ***"These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."*** (Revelation 7: 14-17 NIV)

This beautiful picture of the saints before the throne brings us comfort as we remember our loved ones who have passed before us and strengthens our hope in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. On the last Thursday of November we celebrate Thanksgiving Day which provides us with the opportunity to pause and thank our God for his mercy which endures forever and his providing of so many spiritual and physical blessing day after day.

How fitting it is to remember the example, instruction and encouragement of those saints who have been special blessings to us. Many of us learned about the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Savior at the knees of Christian parents. May of us have also learned from them what it is like to live as God's children who receive his gifts with thanksgiving. We thank God for those who have been teachers and examples of good stewardship. It is so true that only the Holy Spirit can change us from selfish, self-centered sinners into faithful stewards of all that God has given to us. But the example of good stewardship that we learned from our parents and other important people in our lives is a great blessing.

One day we will join the saints in heaven but until then God empowers us to be teachers, models and examples of good stewardship for our children and other people who are special to us. ***"Christian stewardship really is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God's family, the church, in managing all of life and life's resources for his purposes."***

One of our common table prayers contains these words: ***"Come, Lord Jesus, be our Guest and let Thy gifts to us be blessed."***

May God bless us as his stewards so that our management of all of life and life's resources (money, time, talents, relationships, etc.) honors him, blesses our neighbors and serves as an example and encouragement to those around us.

Happy Thanksgiving!

From the Ministry of Stewardship

Good Shepherd Mission Festival

On Sunday, November 15 Good Shepherd will be celebrating Mission Festival Sunday with a special guest speaker, Pastor Brent Kuhlman, pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Murdoch, Nebraska.



Pastor Kuhlman is currently involved with the Higher Things Youth Conferences which involve LCMS youth through instruction in Christian doctrine and life and in the mission of the Church to

proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people.

Pastor Kuhlman will also lead the Bible study, "My Neighbor's Faith" on that day and help us learn more about Mormonism.

Directory Changes

BAPTISMS:

Colson Jon McNabb, son of Jon McNabb & Angela Haake, born 9/13/07, baptized 9/20/09

Kadin Christopher McNabb, son of Jon McNabb & Angela Haake, born 2/24/09, baptized 9/20/09

Chloe Grace Voog, daughter of Josh & Tracie Voog, born 8/14/09, baptized 9/13/09

Laney Kathryn Sears, daughter of Kelly & Christine Sears, born 8/7/09, baptized 9/27/09

Abby Lynn Potter, daughter of Greg & Julie Potter, born 7/27/09, baptized 10/4/09

Sam Alan Perrin, son of David & Jerika Perrin, born 9/4/09, baptized 10/18/09

WEDDINGS:

Tammy Kolecka & Aaron Winkelmann on September 18, 2009

Halee Foote & Jonah Jones on October 24, 2009

Ja Nahn Sic & Mark Niven on October 24, 2009

DEATHS:

Lenora Lueders

“God’s Stewards Are God’s Stewards

What does this mean?

God’s stewards are stewards by virtue of creation and their re-creation in Holy Baptism; therefore, they belong to the Lord.

What does God’s Word say about this?

Gen. 1:1 *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*

Is. 43: 1 *“But now, this is what the Lord says— he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: fear not, for I have redeemed you. I have summoned you by name; you are mine.” (cf.43: 1-3a)*

Rom. 6: 4 *“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.” (cf.6: 1-11)*

II Cor. 5: 16-17 *“So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (cf. 5: 14-17)*

Eph. 2: 8-10 *“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”*

How is this done?

As children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Spirit’s help, we will: recognize that we are made stewards by God’s activity; respect Christian stewards for Whose they are; and remind stewards that they are God’s new creation each day.

As children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, and with the Holy Spirit’s help, we will not: use short-cut methods that consider stewards to be merely “donors”, “clients” or “customers” or a means to an end; neglect to name the name of the Lord who is the Source of all stewardship; or, present stewardship as limited to a single area of life, such as money.

Biblical Stewardship Principles:

I. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE GOD'S STEWARDS.

God's stewards are stewards by virtue of creation and their re-creation in Holy Baptism; therefore, they belong to the Lord.

II. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE MANAGERS, NOT OWNERS.

God's stewards have been entrusted by God with life and life's resources and given the privilege of responsibly and joyfully managing them for Him.

III. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE SAINTS AND SINNERS.

God's stewards rejoice in and live out what God has declared them to be through the cross. At the same time His stewards recognize they are sinners who fight sin and its consequences each day.

IV. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE UNIQUELY SINGULAR, YET PROFOUNDLY PLURAL.

God's stewards recognize that their lives are not solo performances but are personal responses to God, lived out within the community of faith to benefit the whole world.

V. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE IN THE WORLD, BUT NOT OF THE WORLD.

God's stewards recognize that the Lord sets them apart from the world and by the transforming power of the Gospel sends them into the world to live out the Gospel.

VI. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE LOVED AND LOVING.

God's stewards recognize that their stewardship flows out of God's act of love for them in Christ which empowers them, in turn, to love others in acts of Christ-like love.

VII. GOD'S STEWARDS ARE SERVED AND SERVING.

God's stewards recognize that their stewardship involves a Gospel-powered style of life which is demonstrated in servanthood within all the arenas of life.

VIII. GOD'S STEWARDS LIVE WITH AN AWARENESS OF THE PRESENT AND FUTURE, OF TIME AND ETERNITY.

God's stewards live intentionally in the light of God's eternal purpose while being firmly committed to His rule in the here and now.



“Christmas and the Cross”

The theme of the Sunday School Christmas Program this year is, “Christmas and the Cross: Unwrapping the True Gift of Christmas”. Students will rehearse during Sunday School on Sundays at 9:20 am and also at the following times:

Sat., Nov. 14th	10 am—noon	grades 1-6 in their classrooms
Sun., Nov. 22	2:30—4:30 pm	grades 1-8 in the sanctuary
Sat., Dec. 5	2:30—4:30 pm	grades 1-8 in the sanctuary (dress rehearsal)
Sat., Dec. 5	4 pm	preschool/kindergarten in the sanctuary (dress rehearsal)



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SEVEN THESES ON LUTHERAN WORSHIP:

Thesis VI: Lutheran Worship Seeks to Edify Christ's Holy People (continued)

Another important way to make sure worship is truly edifying is to be sensitive to the needs of visitors to our worship services. I believe an overreaction to this concern is to say that our services are to be designed for visitors. The person who visits one of our Synod's congregations needs to be impressed with the truth that something awesome is taking place. The visitor may not immediately understand everything going on in the worship service. This will take time and patient instruction.

Let's use an illustration to make the point. Suppose you knew nothing about baseball and were asked to come to a Colorado Rockies baseball game. Do you suppose they would change what was happening down on the field just because you were a visitor who didn't know too much about baseball? No, of course not. They would play the game as it always has been played. But they would perhaps provide a scoreboard that would help you keep up with the game.

Maybe someone would take you to the game, explain it to you, and talk about it with you afterwards to help you understand it even more. There would be books for you to read so you could learn more about baseball. I think you realize the point I am making.

We need to take great care to help our visitors appreciate and understand what is happening without changing things just so that every point is perfectly clear to the visitor. Excellent materials are available to help the visitor understand Lutheran worship. Our Synod's Commission on Worship produces an excellent quarterly insert in our Synod's monthly newspaper, *Reporter*. There is a tremendous book available, which is perhaps the most thorough-going, confessionally Lutheran presentation on worship that has ever appeared in English, titled, *Lutheran Worship: History and Practice*. There is a pocket-sized book titled, *Meaningful Worship: A Guide to the Lutheran Service*, which would be good to use with new members and visitors. These books are available from Concordia Publishing House here in St. Louis.

"The joy and edifying of Christ's holy people" is one of the important goals we must continue to hold high before us as we discuss and work through these important issues. I commend to you the goal of careful catechesis, that is, teaching the people of our congregations what is involved in being a confessional Lutheran in our world today.

(The last thesis is entitled, "Uniformity in Worship Practices Is a Blessing". This article will continue in the next issue of "The Shepherd's VOICE")