

# THE GIFT

A CHRISTIAN PUBLICATION  
BY ST. JOHN LUTHERAN  
[www.stjohnmassbach.org](http://www.stjohnmassbach.org)  
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## **THOU SHALL, THOU SHALL NOT, THOU SHALL...**

The third commandment: keeping the Sabbath and keeping it holy. Of course the Sabbath, properly speaking, is from Sundown on Friday evening to sundown on Saturday evening. Sunday is not the Sabbath. Christians worship on Sunday, not because it is the Sabbath, but because each and every Sunday (even the ones in Lent) is a festival of the resurrection of Jesus the Christ, a mini-Easter if you will. So Christians do not keep the Sabbath.

But then, despite what our fundamentalist (and sometimes our not so fundamentalist) brothers and sisters say to the contrary, Christians are not required to keep the 10 commandments. As Paul pointed out in the first half of his epistle to the Romans and as The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther pointed out in his sermon titled "How Christians Should Regard Moses," the law, including the commandments, was given to the Jewish people and applies to the Jewish people, not to Christians. Of course, neither Paul nor Luther ever thought that Christians, though free from the law, should just go about their lives "willy-nilly," thoughtlessly harming others, either. Luther, at the very least, while stating that the commandments do

not apply to the Christians, also stated that Christians would live in a manner that goes above and beyond the requirements of the commandments. So Christians are not required to keep the commandments, but still find value in them.

So what about Sabbath keeping? Christians are not required to keep the Sabbath, and the vast majority of Christians do not keep the Sabbath, but what might Sabbath keeping look like if Christians were to keep the Sabbath? Many people, when you ask them about Sabbath keeping, think of the Sabbath as a day of rest. There are various churches and denominations that go so far as to prevent their members from spending any money or from doing any work on the Sabbath. Of course, I don't know anyone who actually does that - we mow the lawn, we wash the car, we feed the animals, or do any of a thousand other jobs that need to be done. This idea comes from the creation account found in Genesis, where God spent six days hard at work, and on the seventh, God rested. It's not a bad system, six days of work and one day of rest, but is it just possible that there might be some sort of subtle difference between God and ourselves?

So, is rest faithful Sabbath keeping? I think the answer can be found in two places: a look at the

commandment itself and a look at how Jesus, a Jew, kept the commandment. First, the commandment tells us to remember the Sabbath, and to keep it holy. Is rest what it means to be holy? One way to define what it means for something to be holy is to say that a holy item is something that is set apart for use by God or in the service of God. Under that definition, then, keeping the Sabbath holy would imply that it is a day set apart for the work of the Lord.

Second, looking at what Jesus did on the Sabbath leads us to a similar sort of conclusion. What did Jesus do on the Sabbath? Did he rest on the Sabbath? He healed, He taught, He did the work of the Lord.

It seems that if we are going to observe the Sabbath and keep it holy, instead of resting, we need to redefine what it means to observe the Sabbath, to be actively engaged in the work of the Lord. I think we need to be busy, as the body of Christ, doing what Christ would have us do. That is not to say that rest is not an important part of life, that we do not need rest, or that God does not want us to rest regularly, but considering the state of the world, perhaps we have rested too long?

Yours in Christ,

Pastor

Andersen

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## **SAVE YOUR RECEIPTS!**

Sullivan's Foods would like to show their appreciation to their customers and affiliated churches by giving a 2% rebate check back to the church. You are encouraged to collect all Sullivan's cash register receipts dated November 14<sup>th</sup> – November 30<sup>th</sup> and place them in the bucket marked "Sullivan's Receipts" in the narthex. Please have receipts to church no later than Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, so that they can be totaled and submitted to Sullivan's in a timely manner. The staff at Sullivan's Foods extends a big thank you for your patronage and wishes Happy Holidays to all!

## **LENDING A HAND**

Winter is fast approaching! St. John's Property Committee is looking for volunteers to help shovel snow at the church. If interested, please see Calvin Klopf.

## **LAST CALL!**

If you have not done so already, please help yourself to the old green hymnals located in the narthex, as they will soon be disappearing! If anyone has any information on individuals or organizations who may appreciate receiving these hymnals, please contact Pastor Andersen or one of your council members.

## **ACROSS THE MILES**

On Monday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, a hefty care package was sent off to St. John's own Greg Klopf, who is currently serving in Iraq. The box was filled with well wishes and items to show our support, some of which included the following: movie DVD's, newspapers, car and mechanic magazines, a pictorial directory, batteries, playing cards, and a ton of food! Special thanks to everyone who donated!

## **HOW BAZAAR!**

St. John is again participating in the Hanover All Church Bazaar. There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex for crafts and baked goods. The bazaar will take place on Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup> and people are needed to help man the booth. This year, proceeds will go toward Master Builder Ministry, which is a women's transition house located in Freeport, IL. Thanks in advance to all who help!

## **THE BISHOP IS COMING, THE BISHOP IS COMING!**

Just a reminder that on Sunday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, Bishop Wollersheim will be at St. John to worship with us. Please welcome him and enjoy fellowship following the service.

## **INTRODUCING ST. JOHN'S NEWEST MEMBERS**

On Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, St. John officially welcomed George and

Marilee Henja into the church family! Welcome, George and Marilee! We have enjoyed worshipping with you throughout the years and look forward to many more years of praising God together!

## **CHECK THOSE UPDATES!**

Just a reminder to occasionally visit [www.stjohnmassbach.org](http://www.stjohnmassbach.org)! Pastor Andersen updates the web site regularly and has included photos of recent events, such as the Blessing of the Hounds and Rally Sunday. Spread the word about St. John's cool web site! Special thanks to Pastor Andersen for designing and updating it!

## **IN PRAYER**

Please keep these individuals and their families in your thoughts and prayers: Jack Reel, Marian Endress, Joan Beyer, Bill Duguid, Raymond and Florence Steffes, Kevin Meiners, Kay Gipe, Warren Parker, Jim Krohmer, Donna Wurster, Dennis Ulicny, Bailey McMannus,

Robert and Jeanette Yeager, Joan Bonvillain, Dan Koester, and the men and women serving in the world's armed forces.

## **MORE ELBOW GREASE NEEDED!**

Don't forget about the sign-up sheet in the narthex for those interested in helping clean out the basement storage room! Individuals from various committees/annual functions are encouraged to visit the storage room and determine "what stays and what goes!" A clean-up date or dates will be set once more volunteers are found.

## **AN AUTHOR IN THE MIDST?**

Anyone in the congregation interested in writing a small article about St. John's "150 years of faith"? The popular Country magazine has a regular section titled "Country Churches" and invites submissions. If interested, see Jen Johnson.

## COMMUNITY CHORUS

A community chorus is currently being assembled for the holiday season. Rehearsals will take place from 7:00 to 8:30 PM on the following dates:

Wednesday, November 7th  
Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>  
Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>  
Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

Dress rehearsal will be held on Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 to 11:00 AM with performance at 2:00 PM on Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. See bulletin board for rehearsal and performance locations and further details.

## A NOTE OF THANKS

A heartfelt thank you to Pastor and Sandy Andersen and our church family for all the prayers, cards, phone calls, visits, and food we received during our two month stay in Rochester, MN and since returning home. We truly feel blessed to have such a wonderful church family to come home to.

Gods Blessings to you,

Jim and Carol Krohmer

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

One member of St. John came upon this quotation, found it quite interesting, and wished to share with everyone....

“The church service is not a convention where a family should simply send a delegate.”

## SO, WHY DO MEN HATE GOING TO CHURCH?

Here are some quotations from David Murrow’s book which have sparked discussion throughout the past few meetings and may peak your interest in reading the book and/or attending future sessions:

- “Too often it’s not what the leadership poses but what the laity demands that causes the church to repel men” (8).
- “Men have been absent or anemic for so long that the *spiritual thermostat* in almost every church is set to accommodate the people who actually show up and participate: women, children, and older folks. But men suffocate in this environment, so they leave” (14).
- “Men and young adults tend to be challenge oriented.....women and older adults tend to be security oriented....we must recapture the challenge of following Jesus” (18, 19, 21).
- “Congregations need masculine strength, nobility, and resolve....the answer is *not* the triumph of the masculine spirit over the feminine....a church must have both” (26).

**HAPPY  
THANKSGIVING  
TO ALL!**