

THE GIFT

A CHRISTIAN PUBLICATION BY ST. JOHN LUTHERAN

WWW.STJOHNMASBACH.ORG

NOVEMBER 2008

The seasons are changing - there are as many leaves on the ground as there are on the trees, the corn is being harvested, the ghouls and goblins have done their yearly begging, and Christmas decorations have been in the chain retail stores for 3 months now. This all points to one inescapable fact - the holiday season is upon us.

During the holidays, it is common for the spirit of good will to bring out the best in people. Often, those of us fortunate enough to be surrounded by loved ones, in a warm home, with plenty to eat, find ourselves considering those who are not as comfortable or well fed as we are. Those who, for some reason or another, are not able to care for themselves, do not have a table full of loved ones to share a meal with, or do not even have a meal to share.

Many people express their desire to help those less fortunate by donating food or other gifts to a charity of their choosing. Some people choose to go Christmas caroling at retirement homes, still others might choose to work in a soup kitchen or provide assistance in any number of other ways. These are ALL good things, and I encourage you to be involved in those you find compelling.

The unfortunate part of all of this attention that the needy receive during the holidays is that it is frequently, for many people, the only time of the year that they are involved with the less fortunate at all. It is indeed a blessing that the residents at the various retirement homes get to see children caroling, or that the homeless have little trouble finding a good hot meal

on Thanksgiving. How much more of a blessing would it be if the elderly saw people roaming the halls of the retirement home spreading good cheer all year, or if the homeless children were to receive birthday gifts as well as Christmas gifts from strangers who must obviously love them?

The problem isn't what is in our hearts - we give, and most of us would love to do more. The problem is that after the holidays are past, we return to life as usual, and the light of our memory of our best intentions grows dim, along with our New Year's resolutions.

What we need is a way to kick-start our memories. To that end, I encourage each of you, as you are moved to reach out this holiday season, to indeed reach out, and in fact perhaps do more than you have done in previous years. But in addition, I also encourage you to make a note for yourself, and leave it somewhere where you will find it and be reminded, to reach out again at some point during the coming year. For some of you, that will be in your organizer, for some the calendar on the kitchen wall, while others might stick a note in with the box of summer clothes tucked in the attic. The purpose is to remind ourselves, so that we will carry through with our best intentions of the season and help our brothers and sisters in Christ all year long, not just during the holidays.

Long Live The King!

Pastor Andersen

REFLECTION S ON STEWARDSHI P

Money is a neutral commodity, a means of exchange. It is neither inherently good nor evil. But a wrong view of money can become a problem to us.

In First Timothy 6:9-10, Scripture warns about the dangers of a determination to get rich: "But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil; and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains."

When we have a consuming desire to get rich, when we are obsessed with money so that it becomes the focus of our time and attention, then we have made it the number one priority in our lives. In that spot, it replaces everything, including God. We begin to find

our security in money, not in God and in God alone.

However, when our view of God is right and our view of money is right, we will realize that money cannot buy security; money cannot purchase happiness; money cannot guarantee peace or joy or contentment. God alone can provide these essentials as we " . . . strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

In his book, The Gift of Giving, Wayne Watts said this: "God always lovingly instructs us in the path that is in our best interest and which will bring us the greatest happiness in life. Therefore, for our good, He instructs us to put Him first in all things, and this includes how we use our money."

How do you view money? Is it at the center of your life, thereby perhaps replacing God's rightful role? And equally important, are you using the money God has given to you to advance His kingdom and His righteousness?

TUNE UP YOUR TV!

The 150th celebration videos are in! You can purchase your commemorative DVD for only \$15 and reminisce for approximately two hours! Orders will be taken in the narthex after worship. Any questions? See Pam Staver.

BEEF AND NOODLES, ANYONE?

Take some time away from the kitchen to attend the Annual Bazaar/Beef and Noodle Dinner at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lena on Tuesday, November 4th! Bazaar opens at 8:30 AM with dinner starting at 11 AM. Cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children 6-12 with those 5 and under free. If serum is available, flu shots will also be given from 8:30 AM to noon. See the flyer on the bulletin board in the narthex for additional information.

MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!

The Elizabeth Community Choir is preparing for their annual Christmas Concert. Anyone who enjoys singing and having a good time with fellow Christians is invited. Practice begins on Thursday, November 6th at 7PM and will take place at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Elizabeth. The concert will take place on Sunday, December 7th. See Calvin Klopf with questions.

TIME FOR THANKS

A big thank you to all the St. John quilters for help making quilts and for donations of material!

We made 70 quilts total, including what was sent to the Iowa flood victims. Thirty-one quilts were given to the county and Florence Klopf and Virginia Palmer each received a quilt. In addition, 12 lap robes were given to the nursing home.

God Bless! Bert Mercer The family of John and Imogene Krahenbuehl would like to thank the members of St. John for remembering them on their 70th anniversary. Special thanks to Calvin Klopf for his songs and greetings and to Donald and Myra Krug for the flowers. They really enjoyed the fellowship with cookies and juice following the nursing home service!

PRAYER CONCERNS

Kyle Baltierra, Kelly Nadig, Delma Bartch, Ella Hoffman, Joe Dvorak Sr., Meredith Townsend, Jack Reel, Kevin Meiners, Warren Parker, Dan Koester, and the men and women serving in the armed forces

BAZAAR BUSINESS

The Hanover all-church bazaar is coming up on November 22nd. Please take a moment to sign up to provide baked goods or crafts and/or volunteer to assist at the bazaar. See Kathy Guenzler or Julie

Yuswak for more details.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

- ✓ Copies of council meeting minutes and treasurer reports can be found in a designated folder in the narthex.
- ✓ Adultfirmation is in full swing! Join in on Wednesdays at 7:30 PM. Then, come back to church on Thursdays at 7:30 PM for Pastor Andersen's Book Club!
- ✓ Help keep our church clean, beautiful, and safe! Sign up in the narthex for fall cleaning and/or snow shoveling duties! Everyone's help is needed!
- ✓ Mark your calendar for the last Saturday of each month to serve at a Dubuque area soup kitchen!
- ✓ Sign up for refreshments after worship on the second Sunday of each month.
- ✓ Help adorn our altar with flowers during worship by signing up in the narthex.

✓ Don't forget to check out our updated web site at www.stjohnmassbah.org

ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY!

Morgan Memorial Home in Stockton is looking for volunteers to assist in painting their dining room on Saturday, November 15th. Pizza will be provided! Donate your time and abilities to this worthy cause! If you are interested in more information, see Calvin Klopf.

NOVEMBER VOLUNTEERS

<i>Date</i>	<i>Lector</i>	<i>Acolyte</i>	<i>Greeters</i>	<i>Sacristan</i>
November 2 nd	Laura Albrecht	Paige Paisley	Ernie and Minnie Lieb	Cindy Paisley
November 9 th	Daylon Scheele		Gloria Endress and Donna Albrecht	Connie Carroll
November 16 th	Sandy Andersen	Matthew Carroll	Clyde and LaVonne Eden	
November 23 rd	Allen Scheele		Ken and June Eden	Cindy Paisley
November 27 th	Jess Albrecht		Daylon and Shirley Scheele	
November 30 th	Ernie Lieb	Paige Paisley	George and Marilee Hejna	

Ushers: Steve, Jake, Sam, and Tom Eden

Treasurer's Assistant: Clyde Eden

Sunday School Teachers: Vicki Wurster, Rena Eden, Connie Carroll

HAVE A GREAT MONTH!