



Pastor's Column

Overflowing with Many Thanksgivings to God

The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written, "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." God 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 for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us, for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this

ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that has been given to you. Thanks be to God for this indescribable gift!

I envy the preacher who can proclaim such articulate and poetic words that they last for eternity. Such are the words of the apostle Paul in his second letter to the Christians in Corinth (2 Corinthians 9:6-15). I really wish I'd written these words! But thankfully, these words were given to all of us. Centuries since they were written and in a city thousands of miles from Corinth, we hear the challenge and the call to return thanks to God for the indescribable gifts showered upon us.

I know that in tough economic times, it might be easier to shut our eyes and ears to Paul and focus on the proclamations of fear and scarcity all around us. In sharp contrast to our airwaves, Paul reminds us of the overwhelming generosity and abundance of God. He calls us to live and give boldly, not irresponsibly but confidently.

True stewardship focuses first on gen-

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erosity and trust – that all we need and more will come from God and that our church leaders can be trusted with responsible use of our gifts. The next step of stewardship is enthusiasm, which leads to joyful, cheerful giving. All comes from a zeal for sharing the gospel of Christ, God's greatest gift.

It is during the harvest time that we see the results of sowing generously and reaping abundantly. As we meditate on our own blessings and thankfulness this month, we each are challenged to make commitments to give of ourselves, our time, and our possessions in order to introduce others to a loving, grace-filled God. You will never know the joys of giving generously until you have tried it, but be warned: It will become a way of life – a life that is overflowing with many thanksgivings to God!

Your sister and servant in Christ
~ *Pastor Carol*

Your Worship and Music Committee

...recently developed a mission statement, which reads, "To create uplifting and inspiring worship through Word, sacrament and joyful music, sending God's people forth nourished, forgiven, and equipped to share the Good News of Christ."

Questionnaire from Outreach Committee

Would you like to know your fellow church members better? What interesting and perhaps surprising things might they reveal? For instance, did you know that Pastor Carol didn't plan to be a pastor? Or that we have members who worked for the FBI? Drove a bus? Managed a supermarket?

With your permission, Grace Lutheran's Outreach Committee plans to "showcase" Grace members with displays in the narthex. Enclosed in this edition of *Grace Notes* is a questionnaire they have prepared. If you would like to let us all know a little more about you, please fill out the survey and return it to the Grace Lutheran office. More forms are available in the narthex. Then watch for the "spotlights." Thank you!



Looking Ahead...

Please think and pray about participation in these upcoming activities:

- October 1 - Blessing of the Animals at 10:30 a.m.
 - October 2 & 9 - Food Drive for Talbot House, co-sponsored by Thrivent (non-perishable food items and household items)
 - October 2 & 9 - New member information sessions, 9 a.m. in office
 - October 14-16 - Family Camping at Hillsborough State Park
 - October 15 - "Listening for God" book study at 12 Noon.
 - October 16 - World Hunger Sunday
 - October 19 - NO Confirmation classes
 - October 23 - New Member Sunday, 10 a.m. and Lake Conference Gathering at 3 p.m.
 - October 30 - Stewardship Commitment Sunday, followed by Bratwurst Dinner and Reformation Festival; Reformation Sunday – Wear Red!
 - November 20 - Community Thanksgiving Worship, 4 p.m.
 - November 23 - Thanksgiving Eve Worship at Reformation Lutheran Church, 7 p.m.
 - November 27 - First Sunday in Advent and Decoration of the Church
-

Lake Conference Gathering at Grace on October 23

The Lake Conference of the Florida-Bahamas Synod will be held at 3:00 Sunday afternoon, October 23. This is a meeting of the lay and clergy leaders and members of the six congregations in Polk and Hardee Counties. Synod business is conducted, officers and churchwide delegates elected, and common mission is planned. Light refreshments and good conversation will follow the meeting. Plan to come and get involved in the greater Church.



*“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways, declares the LORD.
As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways
higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* Isaiah 55:8-9

According to Wikipedia, stewardship is an ethic that embodies responsible planning and management of resources. It is used to refer to a responsibility to take care of something belonging to someone else. To be a steward, or to act in steward to something, is known as stewardship.

We know stewardship is a major part of teaching in Christianity. There are many Bible verses about stewardship, money, and possessions. *“Yours, O LORD, is greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the spender, for everything in heaven and earth is Yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom, you are exhalted as head over all.”* 1 Chronicles 29:11 This scripture tells us God is the owner of everything. According to scripture, all possessions belong to God.

“It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.” 1 Corinthians 4:2 There is a responsibility we are to manage all things around us faithfully and wisely. If we are not responsible, it is possible less could be given to us or some of our responsibilities could be taken from us.

One of my favorite passages is from Romans 12:6-8 *“We have different gifts according to the grace given to each of us...”* Each of us is entrusted with a particular set of created gifts and great things. Each of us is responsible for how these gifts are used as someday we will have to give our own account. The idea of stewardship urges each of us to acknowledge what we have received by being ready to return these gifts to God. This is expressed by using our time, talent, and treasure.

As we focus as a church on stewardship this month, let us be mindful that God is the owner of everything and He wants us to manage everything he has entrusted to us His way. We must let God be Lord to our financial matters. God should be a part of this and all areas of our lives. *“Take it to the Lord in Prayer.”*

Resources: Wikipedia and What the Bible Says about Money: Financial Stewardship by Jason Price
Hymn of the month: *Here I Am, Lord* #574 ELW by Daniel Schutte

With a song in my heart,
Linda Moser

Overflowing with Many Thanksgivings!

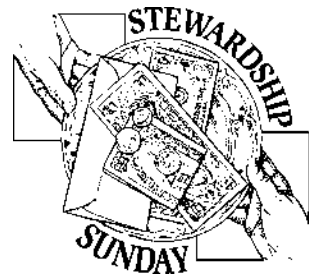
Yes! We are overflowing with many thanksgivings! God has blessed us with the gift of life and the beauty of creation; a place to live, food, and other needs; family, friends, neighbors and community; chocolate, a good book, flowers, a warm shower, the sunset, moon and stars. I could go on and on.

Come with us as we journey through 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 and experience what it means to be a generous giver. During October, we will be focusing on various verses of this scripture during worship. We will discover together what reaping what you sow really means, how to be a cheerful giver, how God multiplies the seed and harvest, and how we are to respond to the overflowing of many thanksgivings that we receive.

You guessed it! This is our stewardship campaign! You will get the usual gifts survey and commitment card to fill out and return by Reformation Sunday. No campaign would be complete without those. We want you to prayerfully reflect over the next month how you will give back to God in response to all that he has given you.

So, do me a favor. Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 before you come to church on October 2. As I said, this is a journey and will be participatory. But most of all, please reflect on God's most indescribable gift ... the gift of His only Son, who died on the cross for our sins.

Be ready to be transformed!



In Christ's Name,
Lynda Mack
On behalf of the Stewardship Team

Office Volunteer Luncheon

Our volunteer luncheon was held on Tuesday, September 12 with 15 people in attendance. Several of our office volunteers were unable to attend this year due to various circumstances. The theme this year was “costume party,” any type of costume. I am always amazed at the tremendous imagination of our volunteers, such creativity. Most everyone dressed up in some type of costume. Some of the more noted were: Jim and Carol Sawyers as “The Paints Go Marching In;” Phil & Marilyn Pape as “Blondie & Dagwood;” Catharine Burdette in a beautiful kimono; Barbara McPeak as a lovely “Elf”; Tara Milliken as an interesting “belly dancer”; and our esteemed Pastor Carol was our “flower child.” What fun! The prize for the best costume went to Phil Pape as Dagwood.

We had contributions of money and gifts to cover all expenses of the luncheon. Each person attending was given a gift bag and also was able to choose a prize from an array of gifts.

We hope that each of our office volunteers know how much they are appreciated and valued. *You are the best!*

Watch the bulletin board in the next few days for pictures of the event. We have chosen a few of the pictures to share with you in this publication.

- Sara Anderson



Carol Sawyers, Marilyn Pape, Phil Pape, Jim Sawyers



Barbara McPeak



Catharine Burdette



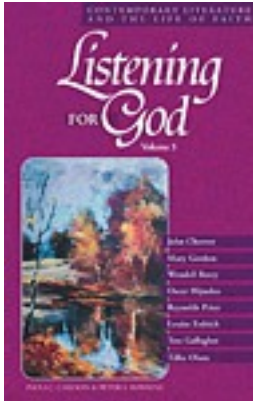
Tara Milliken



The Gang



Saturday Book Study Update



The Saturday Book Study, *Listening for God*, will be swapping October and November sessions. On Saturday, October 15, Jim Sawyers will facilitate session eight, *A Father's Story* by Andre Dubus. On Saturday, November 19, Iris Stackpole will lead session seven, *Seeing* by Kathleen Norris.

Listening for God features selections from a wide range of contemporary authors, exploring where faith intersects with everyday life and experiences. The study meets monthly in the fellowship hall, usually the third Saturday, for lunch and conversation.

All adults and teens are encouraged to attend and bring a friend! If you'd like to participate in the next two sessions, please see Kristen Storms or Pastor Carol to obtain the reading information. Volume Three begins in January 2012. Watch for a sign up sheet in the activity book in the narthex or see Kristen Storms if you'd like to order a book.

Would you like to become more involved in the ministries of Grace Lutheran? There are opportunities to serve in many areas of ministry. We are always in need of ushers, greeters, assisting ministers as well as serving on the different committees of the church. The choir and bell choir are always looking for new members. Contact Pastor Carol if you would like to become involved in any of these areas.

Single Ladies of Grace Dinner

October 4 – 3:30 p.m.
Golden Corral Restaurant
in south Lakeland

Join us for food and fellowship. Always a great time as we enjoy catching up on all the latest news and great food.



Calling All Bakers

German Chocolate Cake Cook Off



Bring your best German chocolate cake to church on Reformation Sunday, October 30 to see who has the best cake. We will have a panel of judges select the best one. THEN – everyone will enjoy cake to complete our Reformation dinner.

Sign up in the activity book so we know how many cakes to expect.

COME HELP US CELEBRATE
REFORMATION SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30
WITH A GREAT MEAL SERVED BY THE YOUTH

Beer brats, German potato salad, sauerkraut, and red cabbage are on the menu. Donations for the meal will go towards helping the youth attend the Youth Convention next summer.

Thrivent for Lutherans will be matching the funds made from the dinner. Make plans now to attend this very special luncheon.



*Serving in the Church
in October*

Assisting Ministers:

10/2 Barbara McPeak
10/9 David W. Kinder
10/16 Lynda Mack
10/23 Barbara White
10/30 Wendy Poffenberger

Ushers:

Blanchette Family
Caroline Low & Rita Buckley

Greeters:

Phil & Marilyn Pape

Altar Guild:

10/2 Betty Leitenberger
Brenda Hornickle
Larry Lawrence
10/9 Sue Stark
Barbara White
10/16 Mary Lou Hansen
Carla McGee
10/23 Mabel Carreira
Phyllis Whidden
10/30 Betty Leitenberger
Brenda Hornickle
Larry Lawrence

Sound Technicians:

Paul Tart, Dick Venable &
David W. Kinder

Women of the ELCA

Morning Circle

Tuesday, October 4
9:30 a.m.

Fellowship Hall
Bible study - Sara Jo Fulmer
Hostesses - Jo Iverson
& Ruth Neidinger



Afternoon Circle

Wednesday, October 12
2:00 p.m.

Fellowship Hall
Bible study - Anna Mae Chinault
Hostess - Mabel Carreira



WELCA General Meeting

October 26 at 10:00 a.m.
Hostess - Afternoon Circle
Thank offering program
Regular and Thank offering

Church Women United

Friday, October 7 - 9:30 a.m.
Coffee at 1st United Methodist
72 Lake Morton Dr.
Program - UNICEF

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 1- Dan Carreira
- 2- Pat Jenkins
- 3- Carol Carlson
- 4- Marion Bergman
- 5- Stephanie Schroeder
- 7- Rusty Bowles
Mabel Chapin
Dick Venable
- 8- Dan Iverson
- 9- Beverly Borden
- 10- Bill Sawyers
- 11- Doug Jarnagin
- 14- Les Rietze
- 15- Michael Ittleman
- 16- Dana Whitaker
- 17- Pat Blanchette
Kaitlyn Dolyak
JoAnn Herrick
Tim Milliken
- 19- Larry Becker
Addison Hafer
- 20- Diane Downey
Kaitlyn King
Riley King
- 21- Donna Crofoot
Mary Flekke
- 22- Jack Mattson
- 23- Nat Bowles
- 25- Vera Hall

- 25- Elizabeth Schultz
- 26- Chuck Lineberger
Kevin Zarnstorff
- 29- Jarrod Dolyak
- 30- Betty Schultz
- 31- Ann Joyce Wennig
Eleanore Wyatt

Happy Anniversary

- 1- Pat & Laura Blanchette
- 11- Jim & Carol Sawyers
- 18- Floyd & Pat Jenkins
- 19- Rich & Barb Buskirk
- 23- Lee & Betty Kvamme

Saints Alive

The Saints Alive luncheon is held the second Monday of each month at Noon for all adults. You are invited to attend and bring a friend. You do not have to be a member of Grace Lutheran Church to attend. Visitors are always welcome. The luncheon is covered dish unless announced otherwise. It is a great time to visit with your fellow members and possibly make new friends. There is always lots of good food to enjoy. Mark the second Monday of each month on your calendar.

Child Development Center News

God...has blessed us...with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

October is here and cooler weather. This month in CDC, we have the following dates for you to remember.

October 8 — we will be having a REACH workshop for our accreditation. There is much to do in a short amount of time so we need everyone who is interested in this process to please come and help us. No job is too small. We will begin at 8 a.m. (donuts & juice provided) and will conclude at 10 a.m. Church family, staff, parents — everyone is welcome.

October 25 — Lifetouch will take our fall pictures. Flyers will be available soon.

October 31 — is our “Trunk & Treat” time. This is a safe way for kids to gather treats and have a good time. Let’s get enough cars to park in a large circle in the field. There will be games and food. Everybody come for a “Hot Diggity Dog” time.

Looking ahead to December, we will be participating in the “Christmas & Cookies” in Munn Park on **December 2**. If you are interested in helping at our booth, please let me know.

I want to thank Victoria Kinder for all her hard work on the fundraisers. If

you have suggestions or ideas, just let us know.

Thanks to the church for inviting CDC to your Rally Day. We all enjoyed being there with you.

Blessings,
Ms Cathy

Pulpit Exchange with Atonement in Sebring

Atonement Lutheran in Sebring has invited Pastor Carol, Dean of the Lake Conference, to preach and lead worship for their “Come Back to Church” Sunday on October 16. In exchange, their Diaconal Minister David Thoresen will do the same at Grace. It happens to be World Hunger Sunday, too, as we all contemplate how we can influence the care and feeding of people around the world.

The Source of Greatness by Rev. Alvin N. Rogness

Greatness is found in the most unsuspecting places. Invariably people who meet the test point beyond themselves. Intuitively we know that they are committed to something or someone greater than they.

They were poor, abjectly poor, and their years were running out. When I first met them they were living in quarters hardly more than a corner of the warehouse where he was working as the night janitor. They had no car, but on a Sunday morning, arm in arm, they trudged their way to church.

The first time I visited them, a lonely tin can on a shelf in the corner arrested my attention. The shelf was obviously a place set apart, like one reserved for a family picture or the image of a saint, and here was a can, perhaps a pork-and-bean can stripped of its label. The wife caught me looking at it, and with a smile she told me that that's where their weekly offering to the Lord was kept. Later I learned that the husband earned \$19 a week, and that the first thing he did upon being paid was to put \$1.90 in the tin can. Never in all these years have I been able to forget the feeling of wonder, admiration and pity – and shame for myself – that overwhelmed me that day.

I learned to love them dearly. Later, scratching together their meager savings, they were able with the help of some carpenters in our church to enclose a small 3-room house on the outskirts of town. They were overjoyed with their little nest.

They had no children, and now in their sixties, they could easily have given way to gloom. I kept asking myself, what power is theirs to make two people pray, “Give us this day our daily bread,” and to believe that God did answer. What inner springs are there to bring gratitude and patience and kindness into lives that could with good reason collapse into bitterness, emptiness, and even despair?

Once I thought to tell them that the church certainly could get along without their \$1.90. I never did. They had learned the Lord's lesson, so hard for us to learn, that it is more blessed to give than to receive. I'm sure that the \$1.90 they emptied from their can each week gave them more joy than the \$17.10 they had left.

There is great gain in godliness with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world; but if we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content. (1 Timothy 6:6-8)

Here I Am, Lord

During the month of October, we have chosen Daniel L. Schutte’s inspiring hymn, *Here I Am, Lord*, as our Stewardship theme. We will sing it during the communion distribution each of the five Sundays. Here is a bit of information about Father Schutte and his music.

Daniel L. Schutte (born 1947, Neenah, WI) is an American composer of **Catholic liturgical** music and a contemporary Christian **songwriter** best known for composing the hymn *Here I Am, Lord* (1981). He graduated from **Marquette University H.S.** before entering the **Jesuits**. He was one of the founding members of the **St. Louis Jesuits** who popularized a contemporary style of **church music** set to sacred texts sung in English. He released nine collections with the **Jesuits** and a 30 year anniversary collection in 2005. He left the Jesuit order in 1986. He has two masters degrees from **The Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley** and studied music under the direction of Fr. Kevin Waters S.J. at **Seattle University**.

His compositions are primarily written for **liturgical** use, particularly in **Catholic** worship. Schutte continues to be one of the most influential composers of **contemporary music** today and continues to have wide-spread influence throughout the English-speaking world. Many Christian artists such as **John Michael Talbot** and **Amy Grant** have recorded his compositions.

Schutte presently is Composer-in-Residence at the **University of San Francisco**.

September Attendance

Date	Total
9/4	98
9/11	125
9/18	112
9/25	110



Counting the days & hours
till your Grace Notes
information is due on
October 16

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Kristen Storms	Stewardship
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