



Epistle



S T . J O H N L U T H E R A N C H U R C H

Every So Often A Question Gets Asked About Stewardship and Tithing

This is a good time to talk about it once again and also apply it to relationships

The Part and the Whole.

It is a bit of a different way of thinking about stewardship. I think it's pretty exciting. It comes through studying the 3rd Commandment "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

In Exodus 20:11 God gives a reason why – because in 6 days He made the heaven and earth and rested on the 7th day. Why did God rest? Was He tired? No, of course not. Instead God rested so that we might have rest. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath

But the reasons go even deeper. By observing the pattern of creation, we are reminded that we are different from the animals. We are created in the image of God, to know God, to walk with Him forever, to have eternity – and this is a part of the pattern of our lives. So the one day is set aside to remind us of our relationship with God, and to be a time for His Word – specifically His word to us in Jesus Christ, for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. In that way we are blessed by the Sabbath.

So now the question:

If one day is set aside for God how many days of the week are devoted to Him?

The answer is not what we would think – "one day." The answer is "all seven." By setting aside the one day we take the pattern from Genesis. All the days are devoted to God: One of them is for rest to the glory of God. Six of them are for work to the glory of God. By setting aside the one all seven are sanctified, and are blessed. And so our whole life is blessed by God.

A Morning Prayer

This is an idea that works with other parts of our Christian life. When you begin the day with a morning prayer; how much of the day is dedicated to God? The same answer comes along –

"all of it!" In the morning prayer in the Small Catechism we pray, "for into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul and all things." We commend ourselves to God with a morning prayer and He blesses the whole day. A moment is set aside and the entire day is dedicated. And it is done in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Money

Stewardship is the same. We talk about "proportionate firstfruits giving." That means to set aside a portion of what God has given to us – and dedicate it to His service. In the Old Testament the word was "tithe" to give to God 1/10 of what you have received.

So if you devote 1/10 to God how much of your goods and property are dedicated to God and blessed? And the same answer comes along again -- "all of it!" Some is devoted to God as offerings. Another portion is dedicated to serve God by providing food and clothing for our families. Another portion is used to serve God by providing an education for our children. And another portion is used to serve God through recreation and joy. All of it is dedicated and set apart for God; just different parts in different ways. So every part of your life, time, and possessions are joined to the kingdom of God to proclaim the name of Jesus and serve to spread the Gospel.

Be Wise

There are many places where God talks to His people. He calls us both to repent and to be wise. He says, "You have planted much, but have harvested little. . . . You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little." (Haggai 1) We can produce and save as much as we are able, but if it is not blessed by God it simply disappears.

But then God gives a promise, "Bring the whole tithe . . . Test me in this and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." (Malachi 3)

This is not an investment opportunity. Instead it's a basic principle of life. God will be the greatest giver – always.

God Gives

He is the one who gives sun and rain; life and breath; and every blessing. Jesus is both giver and gift. He was born for us, died and rose for us, and in Him we have eternal life. God has chosen to bless us completely and totally in Christ Jesus. Paul says, "For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future – all are yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

God joins Himself to us so we may be blessed. Jesus brings blessings into our world. He took our sin to the cross so we might have life. God puts His name on us in Baptism. Jesus gives us His body and blood in the Lord's Supper. As God calls us to the hour of worship He blesses our days. As God calls us to prayer He blesses the thoughts and desires within our souls. As God invites our offerings He blesses all our possessions. That is His way.

How Do I Apply this to My Relationships?

One interesting part was reported in "Better Health: A Quarterly Wellness Letter published by the Worker Benefit Plans of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod" (Spring, 2004). Forgiveness Heals is the title. Among the insights are:

From Everett Worthington, "Chronic unforgiveness causes stress. . . . Every time people think of their transgressor, their body responds." Stress hormones kick in. Over time chronic stress can lead to high blood pressure, heart attacks, etc. Forgiveness reduces stress.

Acknowledge that all forgiveness comes from God (1 John 1:9).

Decide to forgive and accept the hurt without unloading it on the offender. Passing it back only magnifies it.

Leave it to God.

Bottom line – we are stewards. Even our "rights" are given to us by God. They are entrusted to us and we are called to use them for His glory, and for the blessing of our neighbor.

Pastor Mark

Ten Easy Techniques to Encourage

We are bombarded it seems with bad news, with discouragement. We are always hearing about "what's wrong" rarely about "what's right." We need encouragement! Encouragement has power. It can change lives. God calls each one of us to this kind of personal ministry. "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up." It's not a hard thing to do. Here are ten easy ways to encourage others. Don't be surprised if while encouraging others you yourself feel encouraged!

1. **Speak to people.** There is nothing as encouraging as a cheerful word of greeting.
2. **Smile at people.** It takes 72 muscles to frown, but only 14 to smile!
3. **Be generous with praise,** cautious with criticism. Recognition and appreciation are priceless gifts!
4. **Be considerate** of the feelings and opinions of others.
5. **Be alert to give your time and efforts** away. What counts most in life is what we do for others.
6. **Write a note of encouragement** to someone who is hurting. Include Scripture!
7. **Give physical affection.** Let your loved ones know, in ways they can feel, that they are important.
8. **Believe in others.** Look for the good in people – accept and encourage their unique personalities and traits.
9. **Lift up the defeated** through the promise and power of prayer.
10. **Give God's love away.** Through His death, burial, and resurrection, Jess has written the word HOPE in every heart!



CAREERS FOR CHRIST WEEKEND

High School sophomores, juniors, and seniors who are interested in becoming church professionals are invited to Concordia University Chicago Careers for Christ Weekend **November 4-6, 2011**. For more information visit CUChicago.edu/C4C or call 708-209-3100.

THE 50TH CORN FEST AND JAM FEST

The 50th Corn Fest and Jam Fest will be held on **Saturday August 6, 2011** at the Charter Oak 8-sided school. Serving will begin at 4:00 p.m. Country Dinner with Fried Chicken or Pulled Pork, Corn on the Cob, Tomatoes, drink, Indian Pudding and Ice Cream. Adults \$9.00 (11 and over), Ages 4-10 \$5.00, Under 4 is free. There will be a country store, period music and tours. Jammers are welcome. Bring lawn chairs. Fundraiser for the Randolph County Historical Society

RAFFLE ITEMS NEEDED

The auction committee is looking for some really nice items to put on the raffle. Many auctions have gas grills, lawnmowers, flat screen T.V., ½ beef, whole hog, etc. on their raffle. We appreciate any help we can get to make our auction a big success this year. Call Chris Urquhart 615-3078 for pick up.

BACK TO SCHOOL

The first day of school for the 2011-2012 school year will be August 17. School begins at 8:10 and arrival should not be prior to 7:45 unless the bus arrives earlier. We are not sure yet what time school will end since the public school has not decided on the bus schedule yet. (The governor recently signed a law requiring the first and last days of school to be at least 5 hours long). Everyone is invited to join us for opening day with chapel at 8:15 AM.



WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL BLOCK PARTY-PLEASE COME!

You are invited to attend the "Back to School Block Party" the evening of August 17, the first day of school. Come enjoy picnic food, visit classrooms and meet teachers and the new principal. Serving will begin at 5:30 and food will be available until 6:45. Teachers will have short presentations for parents and students during the following times: 6:15-6:30, 6:30-6:45 and 6:45-7:00. This will allow parents and other visitors to see more than one classroom. This event is open to everyone. We will all meet in church for a brief closing devotion at 7:10. You'll be on your way home by 7:45 so students can get a good night's sleep since it's a school night!



NEW RELIGION CURRICULUM

Concordia Publishing House has produced a new religion curriculum for Lutheran schools. We have received our first installment of the new curriculum for grades 1 through 5. Next year the new curriculum will expand to cover sixth and seventh grades and in school year 2013-2014 CPH will release new curriculum for preschool and kindergarten. This new religion curriculum represents a large expense to the school textbook budget since in addition to student books we must purchase new teacher manuals and teaching aids. The cost per grade is approximately \$520. If you would like to help sponsor the new religion curriculum for a class by donating to this purchase, please call the church or school office. The school thanks you in advance for your support and prayers.



SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

The school is interested in revitalizing the volunteer program. If you have some time and would like to spend it helping us at St. John School, we would be most appreciative. Teachers are in the process of determining the activities that would benefit from some extra hands and hearts. There will be both activities that involve student interaction and those that don't. Please call the school office if you have an interest or if you have questions.

SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST REVISION

There have been several changes to the needed school supplies that were included on the lists parents have received previously. The changes are listed below.

- Assignment book—You do not have to purchase an assignment book for any grade. St. John is having customized plan books printed that will be mandatory for all students in kindergarten through 8th grade. These will be sold at school for \$10.00 on the first day of school and at the Back to School Block Party.
- Gym shoes for P.E.—You do not have to purchase separate gym shoes to be used only for P.E. Students should simply wear gym shoes on days when they have P.E. class.
- Belts—You do not have to purchase a belt to keep at school. Students will not be required to wear a belt and will not be required to only wear shirts tucked in.



ST. JOHN LUTHERAN SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2011-2012

August 5	Teachers return to school
August 17	First day of school— <i>dismissal to be announced</i>
August 18	First day of preschool
September 5	No school—Labor Day
September 9	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
September 29/30	SID/CID Teachers' Conference in Springfield
October 6	Parent/Teacher Conferences—early dismissal 1:30 PM
October 7	No school—Parent/Teacher Conferences
October 10	No school—Columbus Day
October 14	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
October 19	End of 1 st quarter
October 28	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
November 11	No school—Veterans' Day
November 18	School improvement day—early dismissal 12:10 PM (Teacher requested parent conferences)
November 23	Thanksgiving break—early dismissal 1:30 PM
November 24/25	No school—Thanksgiving break
December 2	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
December 21	End of 2 nd quarter
December 22-Jan 2	No school—Christmas break
January 3	School resumes (no bus service)
January 13	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
January 16	No school—Martin Luther King's Birthday
February 3	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
February 17	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
February 20	No school—Presidents' Day
March 2	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
March 7	End of 3 rd quarter
March 22	Parent/Teacher Conferences—early dismissal 1:30 PM
March 23	No school—Parent/Teacher Conferences
April 5-9	No school—Easter break
April 10	School in session—pending snow days (no bus service)
April 20	School improvement day—early dismissal 12:10 PM
May 4	School improvement day—early dismissal 1:30 PM
May 16	End of 4 th quarter
May 17	No school—Teacher Institute
May 18	Last day of school— <i>dismissal to be announced</i>



O U R 2 0 1 1 Y E A R - T O - D A T E F I N A N C I A L S T A T U S A S O F
7 / 2 6 / 1 1

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$640,272.12	\$541,300.33	(\$98,971.79)
Expense	\$640,272.12	\$627,673.35	\$12,598.77
2011 (Income - Expense)		(\$86,373.02)	
2010 (Income - Expense)		<u>(\$20,146.34)</u>	
2010/2011 Total (Income - Expense)		(\$106,519.36)	
Debt	\$109,846.49	Mortgage	\$45,720.48

Average 2011 Attendance per Week: 288

Your church needs your help. Please prayerfully consider what you can do to help this situation.

**H I G H L I G H T S F R O M L U T H E R A N W O M E N ' S
M I S S I O N A R Y L E A G U E C O N V E N T I O N**

A great time was had by those who attended The International LWML Convention in Peoria, IL, June 23-26 - "*Being with Jesus - Living on the Edge*" A goal of \$1,825,000 was set for the 2011-2013 Biennium. This is accomplished through "Mites" and various donations. (Only 25% of our local Mites go to International LWML, 75% stays in our Southern Illinois District.) *Mission Projects* were chosen by the Delegates and the *list is posted on the bulletin board* by the stairs to the balcony in our church. Pledges for a "Mission Walk" produced \$52,466.50 towards mission projects.

Dr. Klaus (Lutheran Hour Speaker Emeritus) was preacher for the opening worship, Dr. Reed Lessing led the daily Bible study, Dr. & Mrs. Harrison our Synodical President, Phyllis Wallace of KFUD's "Woman to Woman", plus several missionaries and others were speakers.

Various processionalists are always inspiring such as Pastors from congregations all over Central Illinois, banners from each LWML District, Young Women Representatives carrying banners from all the countries that have received Mission Mites and lastly, all the Central Illinois people who had a part in putting on the convention.

An "In-gathering" of items for local distribution and the Orphan Grain Train (which distributes donated items for relief of human need in America and around the world) resulted in the following. *2,587 quilts, 2,382 towel sets, 2,795 underwear for men, women and children, 5,587 kits for men, women and children* that included things like toothbrushes, razors, socks, deodorant, soap etc., coloring books, crayons and Christian story books for children plus a Christian tract or Bible verse. *13,205 Arch books and 3,875 miscellaneous items. 30,431 total!*

St. John ladies brought 11 towel kits, 10 men kits, 13 women kits and 12 children's kits and 4 quilts.

On Friday evening Kay Stamm, Miss America 2009, shared a beautiful account of her faith and life, and Saturday evening we were entertained by "Sibling Harmony" a Christian Group who are members of Dr. Bultman's family. (Pres. of Central Illinois Dist. LCMS)

Kay Kreklau of the North Dakota District was elected President. Other details can be found on lwml.org, Peoria Convention.

Nine ladies from St. John attended and the remark was heard from several "I just wish I had started attending these years ago" They included: Paula Willig (who was one of the deaf interpreters), Nancy Urquhart, Henrietta Stallman, May Sprengel, Marlene Seymour, Edna Neislein, Barb Fricke, Anne Ebers, and June Campbell. Total Convention registration was 4,668.

NEW FACILITY FUND

St. John Lutheran School draws students of many Christian faiths as well as several unchurched students. This golden opportunity to teach children about Jesus is St. John's most visible evangelism tool. Just think how effective we would be with a new facility!

The New Facility Fund was established in May 2007 with the goal of saving \$2,000,000 before initiating construction. With the contributions of dedicated donors, we are moving forward, our current total is \$384,492.90.



Contributions are tax-deductible and can be given at any time. Set aside a steady amount to give each month or each pay day. Be a part of the future of Christian education in Chester.

ACOLYTES



Sat August 6	6:30 p.m.	Josh Bierman & Autumn Rowold
Sun August 7	7:45 a.m.	Nicholas Rinehart & Katelyn Rader
	10:00 a.m.	Tyler Redeker & Calvin Clendenin
Sat August 13	6:30 p.m.	Taylor Dunning & Anastasia Valleroy
Sun August 14	7:45 a.m.	Sydney Korando & Austin Welge
	10:00 a.m.	Kylie Liefer & Sarah Liefer
Sat August 20	6:30 p.m.	Josh Bierman & Stormie Zweigart
Sun August 21	7:45 a.m.	Katelyn Rader & Lindsay Hammel
	10:00 a.m.	Gwendolyn Sterrett & Megan Brockmeyer
Sat August 27	6:30 p.m.	Autumn Rowold & Kara Mehrer
Sun August 28	7:45 a.m.	Clayton Richelman & Nicholas Rinehart
	10:00 a.m.	Mason Westerman & Mallory Westerman

GREETERS

Sat August 6	6:30 p.m.	Marlene Seymour
Sun August 7	7:45 a.m.	Barb Fricke
	10:00 a.m.	Mildred Young
Sat August 13	6:30 p.m.	Karen Surman
Sun August 14	7:45 a.m.	Elaine Kattenbraker
	10:00 a.m.	Shirley Roth
Sat August 20	6:30 p.m.	Ruby Schirmer
Sun August 21	7:45 a.m.	Brenda Pautler
	10:00 a.m.	June Cash
Sat August 27	6:30 p.m.	Jane Kipp
Sun August 28	7:45 a.m.	Mary Loos
	10:00 a.m.	Paula Willig

USHERS TEAMS

Sat August 6	6:30 p.m.	Volunteer
Sun August 7	7:45 a.m.	Gary Duensing
	10:00 a.m.	Don Stallman
Sat August 13	6:30 a.m.	Volunteer
Sun August 14	7:45 a.m.	Roger Kattenbraker
	10:00 a.m.	Gary Eggemeyer
Sat August 20	6:30 p.m.	Volunteer
Sun August 21	7:45 a.m.	Don Gentsch
	10:00 a.m.	Rick Casten
Sat August 27	6:30 p.m.	Volunteer
Sun August 28	7:45 a.m.	Ron Rathert
	10:00 a.m.	Randy Campbell

ALTAR GUILD

Larry & Sharon Congleton
 Marlene Seymour
 Fred & Barb Fricke
 Stephen & Dian Platt
 Ron & Anne Rather
 Mike & Barb Welge

WEEKEND JANITORS

August 6/7 Chris Urquhart
 August 13/14 Duke Snider
 August 20/21 Ryan Petrowske
 August 27/28 Randy Campbell / Ron Rathert

ALUMINUM CANS

August 1-6 Larry McDonough
 August 8-13 Steve Egge
 August 15-20 Steve Young
 August 22-27 Gary Knop
 August 29- September 3 Fred Fricke



RADIO ANNOUNCER / TECHNICIANS

August 7 Chris Colvis/ Lynn Rickenberg
 August 14 Mardell Granger / Bob Platt
 August 21 Richard Janssen / Tony Young
 August 28 Mike Welge / Charlie Bargman



WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday 6:30 p.m., Sunday 7:45 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
 Sunday School and Bible Class at 9:00 a.m.
 Sunday Worship Broadcast on KBDZ 93.1 FM and KSGM 980 AM

CONTACT INFORMATION

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 Internet Address www.stjohnchester.com

CHURCH E-MAIL

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 Pastor III— pastorill@stjohnchester.com
 Kelly Walls— secretary@stjohnchester.com



B I B L E T R E A S U R E H U N T :



Unscramble the letters in each word to discover the passage.

Answer will be in next months Epistle. EHT RFEA FO EHT ROLD SI EHT NNNIIGGEB FO WONLKGEED: UTB SOOLF SSSIPEED WSOMID NDA UTTSTRONNIIC. YM NOS, RHEA EHT UTTSTRONNIIC FO YTH TRHFEA, NDA SROKFEA TON EHT WLA FO YTH TROMHE: ROF YTHE SLLHA EB NA TRONNMEA FO RGECA UTON YTH HEDA, NDA SNIHCA UTOBA YTH NKEC.

A N S W E R T O L A S T M O N T H S B I B L E T R E A S U R E H U N T :

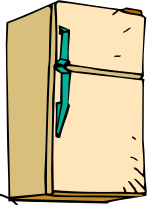
For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words? John 5:46-47

C A P P E R S

CAPPERS (Christian Adults Playing Pinochle Eating Refreshments on Sunday) will meet on Sunday, August 14 at 2:00 p.m. to play cards and have a light meal in the Parish Hall.



H E L P A G O O D C A U S E A N D H E L P Y O U R S E L F T O \$ 5 0



For every residential spare fridge or freezer you recycle through the Act on Energy efficiency program, you'll receive \$50.00 and St. John Lutheran Church will receive a \$10.00 referral bonus. To participate, you must be an Ameren Illinois residential electric customer and your spare fridge or freezer must be full size and still working (cooling). You are eligible to recycle two units per household, per program year. Call 1-866-899-9088 and give them the church's Group ID # RR10-4507. This program ends on May 31, 2012.

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church
302 W. Holmes Street
Chester, Illinois 62233

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JESUS LOVES:



August