



STEWARDSHIP 1
"THE JOY OF RECEIVING GOD'S BLESSINGS"
OCTOBER 8, 2023

SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

4660 West 94th Street, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

(708) 423-1040
Pastor John Moeller

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Director of Music Ruth Sievers

As We Gather

Today we begin our annual stewardship emphasis, *“Experiencing the Joy of Generosity,”* and our theme for today is *“The Joy of Receiving God’s Blessings.”* Billy Graham said, “God has given us two hands, one to give with and the other to receive with.” Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we’re able to appreciate how generously God blesses us and provides for us, both physically and spiritually. God demonstrated His love for us by giving *“His only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life”* (John 3:16). First God loved, then He gave, and He keeps on giving. Forgiveness, salvation, and all that we are and everything we have are gifts from God! May He help you know and experience the joy of receiving His blessings!

Prelude

“Come, Thou Almighty King”

S. Wente

Opening Hymn

“Come, Thou Almighty King”

#905

1 Come, Thou almighty King,
Help us Thy name to sing;
Help us to praise;
Father all-glorious,
O’er all victorious,
Come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days.

3 Come, holy Comforter,
Thy sacred witness bear
In this glad hour!
Thou, who almighty art,
Now rule in ev’ry heart,
And ne’er from us depart,
Spirit of pow’r.

2 Come, Thou incarnate Word,
Gird on Thy mighty sword;
Our prayer attend.
Come and Thy people bless,
And give Thy Word success,
And let Thy righteousness
On us descend.

△4 To Thee, great One in Three,
Eternal praises be
Hence evermore!
Thy sov’reign majesty
May we in glory see,
And to eternity
Love and adore.

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Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Opening Sentences

2 Corinthians 5:17; 9:6–8, 15

P If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

C **The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**

P St Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians said: “The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.”

C **“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”**

P “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.”

C **“Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!”**

Confession and Absolution

P Even as we give thanks for our Creator's merciful gifts, He invites to also remember and confess our sins before Him in heartfelt humility.

We pause to remember our sins and our need for the Savior.

C **Almighty God, who judges all people with equity and truth, we admit and confess that we are sinful by nature, and to that sin we daily add transgressions of thought, word, and deed. We have not lived as responsible stewards of all that you've entrusted to us. We have been careless with Your creation and have not expressed our thankfulness for Your generous gifts. Imploring Your mercy, we repent of our sin. On account of Christ's suffering and death, have mercy on us, O Lord. Forgive all in our lives that is evil and wrong and with the power of the Holy Spirit, move us to serve You faithfully.**

P The eternal and gracious God has promised forgiveness of sins to those who repent and turn to Him. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit. May our gracious God keep you in His care and lead you to greater faith through our Lord Jesus Christ.

C **Amen.**

✝ WORD ✝

Introit

Psalm 24:1–6; antiphon: Psalm 3:8

P Salvation belongs to the Lord; Your blessing be on Your people!

C **The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein,**

P for He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

C **Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in His holy place?**

P He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

C **He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.**

P Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Salvation belongs to the Lord; Your blessing be on Your people!

Prayer of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray together,

C **Almighty God, all that we have is from Your loving hand. Give us grace, that we may honor You with all that You have given us, and keep us mindful of the account we must one day give to Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us. In His holy name, Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

✝ David Prays in the Assembly ✝

1 Chronicles 29:10-14

...David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.

“But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn of Praise Anthem Solo

“Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee”

H. Van Dyke

Epistle

✠ The Ministry of Apostles ✠

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another. For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Holy Gospel

✠ Jesus and Zacchaeus ✠

Luke 19:1-10

P The holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the nineteenth Chapter

C **Glory to You, O Lord**

[Jesus] entered Jericho and was passing through. And there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small of stature. So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.” And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord

C **Praise to You, O Christ**

Apostles’ Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,**

**suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and sits at the
right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living
and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.

Sermon Hymn

“Sing to the Lord of Harvest”

#893

- 1 Sing to the Lord of harvest,
Sing songs of love and praise;
With joyful hearts and voices
Your alleluias raise.
By Him the rolling seasons
In fruitful order move;
Sing to the Lord of harvest
A joyous song of love.
- 2 God makes the clouds rain goodness,
The deserts bloom and spring,
The hills leap up in gladness,
The valleys laugh and sing.

- God fills them with His fullness,
All things with large increase;
He crowns the year with blessing,
With plenty and with peace.
- 3 Bring to this sacred altar
The gifts His goodness gave,
The golden sheaves of harvest,
The souls Christ died to save.
Your hearts lay down before Him
When at His feet you fall,
And with your lives adore Him
Who gave His life for all.

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Sermon

Prayer of the Church

Offering—*may be left in the offering plates near the doors as you leave. Those worshipping at home may continue to mail or drop off offerings at the church office, and on-line giving is available to everyone on our website at www.stpauloaklawn.org. For information about regular electronic giving, please contact the church office.*

Faith Journey Speaker

Curtis Simonson

Offertory Meditation

† Service of the Sacrament †

Preface

- P** The Lord be with you.
C And also with you.
P Lift up your hearts.
C We lift them to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Proper Preface

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lord's Prayer

C Our Father who art in heaven...

The Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

✠ Distribution of the Sacrament ✠

Hymn

“What Is This Bread”

#629

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| 1 What is this bread?
Christ's body risen from the dead:
This bread we break,
This life we take,
Was crushed to pay for our release.
O taste and see—the Lord is peace. | 2 What is this wine?
The blood of Jesus shed for mine;
The cup of grace
Brings His embrace
Of life and love until I sing!
O taste and see—the Lord is King. | 3 So who am I,
That I should live and He should die
Under the rod?
My God, my God, | 4 Yet is God here?
Oh, yes! By Word and promise clear,
In mouth and soul
He makes us whole—
Christ, truly present in this meal.
O taste and see—the Lord is real. | 5 Is this for me?
I am forgiven and set free!
I do believe
That I receive
His very body and His blood.
O taste and see—the Lord is good. |
|--|--|---|--|---|
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Hymn

“Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing”

#528 sts. 1-5

- | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| 1 Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise,
The glories of my God and King,
The triumphs of His grace! | 2 My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread through all the earth abroad,
The honors of Thy name. | 3 Jesus! The name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease; | 'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life and health and peace. | 4 He breaks the pow'r of canceled sin;
He sets the pris'ner free.
His blood can make the foulest clean;
His blood avails for me. | 5 Look unto Him, ye nations; own
Your God, ye fallen race.
Look and be saved through faith alone,
Be justified by grace. |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|

Text: Public domain

Hymn

“For the Fruits of His Creation”

#894

- 1 For the fruits of His creation,
Thanks be to God.
For His gifts to ev'ry nation,
Thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping,
Silent growth while we are sleeping,
Future needs in earth's safekeeping,
Thanks be to God.
- 2 In the just reward of labor,
God's will is done.
In the help we give our neighbor,
God's will is done.
- 3 For the harvests of the Spirit,
Thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit,
Thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
For the truths that still confound us,
Most of all, that love has found us,
Thanks be to God.

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Communion Blessing

- P** The true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart † in peace.

Closing Prayer

- P** Let us pray together,
- C** **O Lord, grant that the lips that have sung Your praise in the sanctuary may glorify You in the world, that the ears that have heard the voice of Your songs may be closed to the voices of clamor and dispute, that the eyes that have seen Your great love may also behold Your blessed hope, that the tongues that have confessed Your name may ever speak the truth, and that the bodies of all who have tasted of Your Son's living body and blood may be restored to newness of life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.**

Benediction

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.
- C** **Amen.**

Closing Hymn

“Beautiful Savior”

#537

- 1 Beautiful Savior,
King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love Thee,
Truly I'd serve Thee,
Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.
2. Fair are the meadows,
Fair are the woodlands,
Robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer,
Jesus is purer,
He makes our sorr'wing spirit sing.

3 Fair is the sunshine,
Fair is the moonlight,
Bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter,
Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels in the sky.

4 Beautiful Savior,
Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor,
Praise, adoration
Now and forevermore be Thine!

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Postlude

“Beautiful Savior”

T. Stelzer

Announcements & Notes:

We have begun our Annual Stewardship Emphasis – thanks to our Stewardship Board for all their hard work and to our “Faith Journey Speakers” for sharing with us. Remember that two weeks from today, the last day of this year’s stewardship series, we’ll have a special guest with us, Pastor Chuck Tessaro, who is with Lutheran Bible Translators. He’ll be sharing the Word and telling us about their work.

On that day, October 22, join us in the Timothy Room after the service for a fellowship brunch prepared by our Stewardship Board. It’s for everyone to enjoy and also an opportunity for you to meet Pastor Tessaro.

Also, as you leave today, please pick up a copy of the Daily Devotions that accompany today’s message. There will be one for each of these three weeks of our program.

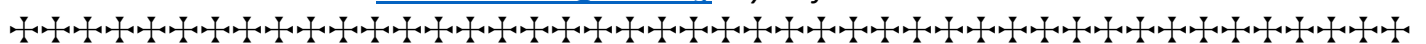
Faith in Action’s Food Pantry reminds us that Thanksgiving is almost here! If you’d like to help with donations to the pantry, there’s a flyer on the table in the narthex and on the counters that details what they need to prepare for Thanksgiving bags for families in need.

Bible Classes continue each Sunday Morning in the Timothy Room after our worship service. Grab a cup of coffee and something to eat and join us!

Thursday Evening Bible Study is held at 6:30pm in the Timothy Room led by Curtis Simonson. You can join any time and everyone is invited!

Wednesday Evening Communion Services are held in the Sanctuary beginning at 6pm.

Advocate Christ Medical Center and Advocate South Suburban Hospital will host the 18th Annual “Paint the Town Pink” for prevention and early detection of breast cancer on Saturday, October 28th from 8am-2pm. For those interested, go to www.aadvocatehealth.com/classes-events and type in “Paint the Town Pink” or email susan.latocha@aah.org. Flyers for this event are on the table in the narthex.



Remembering our homebound friends is a caring ministry of St. Paul meant to help us stay in touch with our members who aren’t able to be with us for worship. Please remember them in your prayers. You may also like to send a note or a card. This week our homebound friend is Kathy Hice, 4140 West 89th Place, Hometown, IL 60456.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND THANKS

Organist: Ruth Sievers

Vocalist: Mandy Signorelli

Lector: Sunday: Betty Shamasko

Altar Care: Sunday: Sue Lilja; Wednesday: Sandy Barry

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Q&A

WITH
Missionary Joyce Erber

BY MEGAN K. MERTZ

Joyce Erber and her husband, the Rev. Dr. David Erber, have spent the last 37 years living and serving as LCMS missionaries in West Africa — first in Nigeria and now in Ghana. David is a theological educator, and Joyce serves as regional business manager, a position that allows her to use her accounting skills while providing vital support to the Synod's people and projects throughout the African continent.

1 **Tell me about how you became a missionary.**

My interest in serving overseas began when I was studying accounting at Valparaiso University. The LCMS missionary recruiter, who spoke in chapel, shared that there is work for every college major. Being intrigued, I met with him ... and it planted a seed. After college, I worked for a CPA firm in Colorado, passed the CPA exam and then married David. During

his seminary years, I worked in CPA firms in Indiana and Minnesota. After seminary, David received a foreign call to Nigeria.

2 **How did you get involved in the business side of missionary service?**

We spent our first 14 years in Nigeria in one of the Boki-speaking villages. Until our youngest child graduated from high school, I was involved in homeschooling, language and

culture learning, and developing relationships to tell others of salvation in Jesus Christ. My most enjoyable times were going out in the evenings with our children to visit and pray with people.

Then, in 2012, the LCMS asked us to serve in Ghana. We were empty nesters, and the LCMS needed a regional business manager for Africa. I had the same intrigue that I felt when I heard the recruiter speak in college.

3 **How have things changed over the years?**

Accounting is still the same. However, technology has changed a great deal. We started with short-wave radio, kerosene refrigerator, wringer washer and solar panels. We now have cell phones, internet, an automatic washer and even air conditioning!

The internet connects missionaries in ways that we would not have dreamed possible in our early years. I now lead a team of other Africa missionaries and national staff, who manage cash, grants and missionary logistics throughout the African continent. I meet regularly by Zoom with our Africa leadership team; staff in St. Louis; and the regional business managers in Asia, Latin America and Eurasia.

4 **How does your work support the proclamation of the Gospel?**

The work I do enables the LCMS Africa missionaries to do their jobs. I assist with anything that has to do with finances and logistics, such as moving to the new country, finding housing, purchasing a car, immigration, taxes, education for their children, and managing grants and projects.

5 **What are some of the joys of the job?**

Most enjoyable is the privilege of being involved in LCMS work throughout Africa. What I first experienced as a missionary wife in a little village in Nigeria, I'm getting to witness all over Africa. Our LCMS missionaries are working with partner churches to train pastors to reach out to the many African people who still don't confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Bringing people into a right relationship with God through His Son continues to motivate and excite me every day. The LCMS needs more missionaries with training and experience in accounting and business as the Body of Christ works together to reach out to more people.

Megan K. Mertz is managing editor of *Lutherans Engage the World* and chief copy editor for LCMS Communications.



LEARN MORE:
lcms.org/erber

Want to use your accounting acumen in a cross-cultural context to steward resources for the proclamation of the Gospel? Contact Ariana Gomez, recruiter for the LCMS Office of International Mission, at ariana.gomez@lcms.org to learn more.

Please pray for these members of our St. Paul family

Stan Wirtschoreck
Rev. George Mrochen
Rich & Jan Przybycien
Rev. Paul and Judy Anderson
Sue & Bill Volk
Arthur Gerth
Ingrid Lesko
Jan Briede
Roy Hodgeman
Katherine Hice
Kurt Seehofer
Flora Jones
Graham Jackson
Kevin Hickey
Gloria Meyer
Mary Ann Colander
Elaine Lebron
Melva Smith
Delores Stegemann
Carol Small
Mike Degidio
Norma Silinski
Beverly Sellers
Betty Beegle
Warren Miller
Delphine Cherry
Ron Klingensmith
Louis Frank
Betty Kruckow
Herta Iversen
Loretta Frank
George Dodaro, Sr.
Barbara Prendergast
Nancy Bundley

Rosa Richardson
Carl Hoppe

Please pray for these friends and family of our members:

Roberta & Carlos Owens
Roy Strassner
Dee DeLaurentis
Dorothy Kroll
Emily Feehan
LeRoy Bitner
Bob Hessert
Georgiana Easton
Jackie Plichta
Patricia Paulsen
Ken Kruckow
Janet Trierweiler
Vicki Warren
Rhonda Scott
Michelle Mitchell
Al Silinski
Pam Palhegyi
Carol Milazzo
Rich Huscher
The Lamberth Family
Jerry Gross
Louise Hrynkow
Gloria Folsom
Mary Beth Pasqua
Shirley Fairchild
Simeon Hoppe
Ron Lunt
Christopher Kosary
Sandy Plath
Iris McCoy
Shirley Demyres

Raquel Rameriz
Nick & Bridget DeAngelo
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Allyson Seehofer
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Debra Kleeman
Nora Beth Will DeMottes
Sarah Skelton
Barbara Apt
Bob & Gloria Freeman
Carrie Aspan
Lisa Anglin
Devon Apt
Tristan Ferry
Naomi Mauler
LaNell Mauler Koenig
Todd, Sofia & Grace Lynum
Hillary Pittelko
Marge Schmidt
Sue Berg
The Kruski Family

We pray...

- For missionaries David & Joyce Erber, who we help to support through our mission offerings, and for all who serve in our Lord's Church throughout the world.
- For our leaders and the people of our nation, that God would restore a sense of unity and cooperation among us in ways pleasing to Him.

Please let the church office know when your need for our congregational prayers is over.
(708) 423-1040