



FAITH ALIVE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMC

From Pastor's Heart Concerning Christian Giving

The Finance Committee, a few months back, asked if I would say something regarding Christian Giving. At the time I was thinking that they were asking me to do a Stewardship sermon series or Stewardship program but that wasn't the case. The Finance Committee decided and has sent out your giving statements as of the end of September and I was asked to write a letter to go with it, which I did. In that letter I asked that you please read this article on Christian Giving because as your Senior Pastor, I am very concerned about the financial aspects of our church. Therefore, I would like to point out some things about giving.

Our time on earth, our abilities as human beings, the income that comes to us through using our time and abilities well, the spiritual gifts the Spirit gives us, all are gifts from God and all are to be used to His glory when we really want to have God be our God. Jesus says interest follows investment; the heart's involvement is stimulated by serious investment in the kingdom of God.

A practical expression of this is our Christian Giving. Offerings given in worship were part of the Covenant of Grace and Blessing from the beginning – a regular acknowledgment of God as God. As the history of the patriarchs unfolds in Genesis, the phrase “he built an altar to the Lord” described the development of regular worship practice – with sacrificial offerings being an integral part of it.

At Sinai, the Lord codified the Covenant for his people in the

Ceremonial Law. It prescribed many kinds of offerings to be brought by the people, including the tithe of field and flock. Through them the Lord mediated his grace to them.

In the New Testament, generous giving of some of our money to the Lord and to the needy is prescribed as a means of worshiping God, an antidote to the temptations of materialism, which we find in Matthew 6:19-33 and 1 Timothy 6:17-19. Therefore, interest follows investment; the heart follows the serious gift.

Christian Giving serves two purposes: 1. Allows Christians who want God to be their God to worship him in willing love by bringing offerings with grateful hearts. It is an expression of willing and dedicated agape-love. This purpose says that it is not God who needs our offering; it is we who need to give it – and want to give it. 2. Our giving contributes to the support of the mission and ministry of the church.

Effective Christian Giving also requires two steps: 1. A conscious, willing decision to honor Jesus and contribute to the church's work with offerings that are appropriate to one's income. The Old Testament people were guided by the Law of the Tithe. The first tenth of the produce of field and flock, the first and best, belonged to the Lord and was to be brought as offerings.

The Law of the tithe was imposed on God's people during a time of spiritual immaturity. The Old Testament people still had to look ahead to the

fulfillment of the covenant. Paul speaks to God's New Testament people. People who trust and follow the Fulfiller of the Covenant. He tells us we are freed from laws and now have personal responsibility to make a willing, mature, and appropriate decision regarding our Christian Giving.

The tithe is no longer a law for Christians. Many considerations enter into a decision as to what is appropriate for individuals or families in their situations. The standard of living imposed by our society may make 10% unrealistic for the income level and family circumstances of some. But neither is the tithe a ceiling for Christians. Affluent Christians may need to consider going beyond the tithe – some well beyond the tithe – properly to place God first in their finances. New Testament giving is to be “in proportion to our means,” as 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 talks about.

2. Planning a pattern of giving that will implement the decision to honor Jesus with appropriate offerings – and faithfully carrying out that plan. Paul gave practical guidance to Gentile Christians who wanted to contribute to a fund to help their needy Jewish brothers and sisters during a drought and famine in Palestine. His words from 1 Corinthians 16:2 still offer us guidance today. Paul's words encourage giving that is: Systematic – “on the first day of the week” – or as you receive your income. Personal – “each one of you” – all are equipped by God to bring some gift to honor him. First-fruits – “set aside a sum of money” – the offering to

God is to be set aside as a first consideration in a Christian's management of money. This is faith-motivated and empowered giving. It deals in first-fruits, not leftovers. Proportionate – "in keeping with his income" – family income and family circumstances are significant factors in determining what is an appropriate offering. The worth of an offering may best be measured by what is left for one's own use and enjoyment, as we see from Luke 12:48b.

If our offerings are to be appropriate, we must think not only of the amount of money that we have but also about the lifestyle that we are pursuing. Our Lord's "You cannot serve both God and Money" applies also to a lifestyle that may be prompting us to serve Money, as Luke 12:13-21 states.

Therefore, I would like to challenge the congregation to tithe or at least to increase our giving. Giving is an important part of our worship of Christ. As I have stated above and in the letter that was sent out. Our giving gives our Lord honor and gratitude for who he is and what he has done.

For some of us, tithing is already a reality and, through God's grace, he may be setting a higher standard for us to achieve. For many others, the tithe will be a big leap forward and will be a big test of faith. Ephesians 3:20 promises us that our faith in God to enable our giving is well-placed, for he is able to do more than we can ask or imagine.

You see, it is faith that empowers us to give generously. What we do with our pocket

books is a reflection of the condition of our hearts. Our willingness to give is an indicator of where the priorities in our lives are. Tithing is a statement of faith. If our hearts are filled with the love of Christ, his love will be visible in what we do and give. As Christians today we are motivated for stewardship by the gift of God's grace through his Son. Our giving can have no greater foundation than the Gospel of forgiveness. I would like to stress that you please pray about what I have wrote here and let God lead you where he would like you to be when it comes to Christian Giving. May God be with us as we go about His Kingdom work with God's blessings.

Pastor Alsen

Dear Friend,
I'm deeply grateful for your incredible dedication and generosity. We received your very generous gift of \$1,229.56 in September. As you share God's Word with men, women, and children worldwide, you are impacting lives – both now and for eternity.
American Bible Society



Submit your newsletter articles and upcoming events for December by November 15!

faithlutheran.gtf@gmail.com or drop them off at the front desk.

Dear Members of Faith Lutheran,
On behalf of the faithful here at Joy, Pastor Dave and I send a hearty THANK YOU for your donation to our building fund.
Please know that we will do everything possible to discern God's will for our future home. And we know your gift will help – over a thousand dollars, thanks again! – in what we hope is a revival of faith in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, right here in Billings, Montana and across the country and into the whole wide world.
Thanks and God Bless you all, each and every one,
Joe Olson, President
Dave Hall, Pastor
Joy Lutheran Church in Billings



FISH
Christian Food Program

CAN YOU BE OUR GROUP ORGANIZER?
WE NEED YOU SO WE CAN CONTINUE THIS MINISTRY!

FISH Team Leader Responsibilities

Attending board meetings – The FISH board meets on the third Thursday of every month at 10:00 am at FISH. Meetings last about 30 minutes. There are no meetings in June, July and August.
Schedule volunteers – Churches work on a rotating schedule which turns out to be about 4 times a year for 1 week, 2 hours a day, 9:00-11:00am. It's hard to gauge how busy we're going to be so we try to have 4 people work each day. We stock shelves, bag groceries, and fill orders. If the team is not busy there is time to become well acquainted!
Working the counter – which fills one of the 4 volunteer positions and doing the paper work. It's nothing hard, you just tell the workers whether it's a single or a family and recording weight of the items. The volunteers gather groceries and weigh them.
Faith Lutheran has a great group of volunteers, and it runs like a well oiled machine.

Faith Lutheran Office

is looking to further update our database with emergency contact information.
Information would include name, relationship, and phone number.
Call the church office, 406-454-1309 with information or if you have questions.

Visit our website:
www.FaithLutheranGF.com
for our up-to-date Church Calendar.

THANK YOU FOR SAYING YES!

Thank you to Rhonda Wiggers who will coordinate the Care Team and help volunteer. Care Team brings meals to some of our members who are homebound; to those who have lost a loved one or recently had surgery and might appreciate a meal delivered to their door. Some volunteers like to cook the meal themselves, but we do have funds to also purchase pre-cooked meals.
Thank you to Cindy Requim who is now the coordinator for the Homebound Communion group. If you'd like to help with that ministry or if you'd like to receive the service, contact the church office and Cindy Fowell will pass along the information to Cindy Requim.

Study Book of Daniel with Pastor Alsen
Wednesdays at 10 am in the Library.
We hope to see you there.
Everyone welcome!

NOVEMBER SPECIAL OFFERINGS
FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
ST. DISMAS PRISON MINISTRY
THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH
TUNNELS TO TOWERS

Men of Faith
MONTHLY MEETING ON NOVEMBER 5 AT 6 PM

MEN OF FAITH BIBLE STUDY + BREAKFAST
Thursday mornings at 6:30am

'PREACH THE WORD' – Part 2

The sermon is the Gospel of Christ in present tense.

Part 1 of this article was featured in the October issue of Faith Alive.

PINNACLE OF THE SERVICE OF THE WORD

The sermon, for Lutherans, must be vitally linked to the Word and to the creed. That is, the sermon is the proper exposition of the Gospel, and the Gospel is directly connected to the stated belief of the church through the ages. So normally, the sermon is placed either after the Gospel and the creed or between the Gospel and the creed. This placement is critical. The sermon is the pinnacle of the Service of the Word. It is the Word studied, explained and expounded through the vessel of the one called by the congregation to preach. The sermon is the Gospel in the present tense. It is, in that most proper sense, by the Spirit's power, a means of grace.

The sermon prepares and opens the hearer for the celebration of Holy Communion, the meal of forgiveness and fellowship that follows. Divine worship, then, becomes grace upon grace.

DIVINE TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS

Through the local congregation, the Church entrusts the public administration of the Office of the Keys to the pastor. That power or authority is always rooted and grounded in the cross of Christ. The preacher, in fact, is a triple-threat servant:

1. They are a servant of God and an ambassador of Jesus Christ. The message of the cross applies to the one who proclaims it, as a baptized child of God who is both sinner and saint at the same time.

2. They are a servant of God's Word. The sermon is an exposition of the Biblical text. The one who proclaims the Word must inhabit it, understand it, delve into it word by word to fathom "the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God" (Rom. 11:33).

3. They are a servant of God's people. Their call is to and from a local assembly of believers, in all the diversity of their lives of faith. The specifics of the lives and times of God's people form the ground of experience around which, to which and over which the cross of Christ will be suspended.

THE GOSPEL IN PRESENT TENSE

The distinction of Lutheran preaching lies in the radical claim that it is a "means of grace," that the power of the Gospel itself is available and is received through the Word of God proclaimed by the preacher. In the sermon the hearer is engaged in a living and personal encounter with the living God. Through Biblical texts, the sermon may contain humor and insight. It may be a call for moral courage; reveal penetrating direction for daily life, and speak to the most diverse and elevating issues of the day. The Lutheran difference is that all those levels of discourse on the Word are placed in the service of the cross of Christ. As Luther said, "All sermons in Christendom must refer and point to the one and only Christ." The cross of Christ is the central point of the history of the world. The preaching of the cross brings the very life of God to the hearts of hearers. By faith, that life of God in Christ is received now and forever. That is the Gospel in present tense. That is the power of the sermon in a Lutheran worship service!

Pastor Alsen

IN NEED OF PRAYER?

If you're in need of prayer, please contact the church office. We can add you or your family members to our prayer chain and/or weekly prayer list.



Women's Crafting Group

Sunday, November 16th at 4 pm

December 6th at 2 pm

Bring your a craft or supplies available.

Devotions, Prayer, Snacks, Fellowship

November News from Education Team/Youth & Family

Trunk or Treat Event – A huge thank you and God bless to all who helped in any way with this event by either donating candy, and/or volunteering your time at the event. It could not have happened without your support. A big thank you to Karen Schaefer of Sign Gypsies for her wonderful and creative signs at the church announcing our event. As I drafted this article for the November newsletter, the Trunk or Treat Event has not actually happened, so be on the lookout for a recap and photos of the event in the December newsletter.

Volunteer Opportunities Available to be Faith Friends for our confirmands. We are looking for volunteers who are willing to be secret support friends (Faith Friend) to each of the youth currently in confirmation. If you are interested in helping or would like more information regarding how this works, please contact me or Pastor Alsen.

The Children's Christmas Program will be held on December 14th, taking place as part of the church service. We will be introducing this year's program at the end of November to these children in Sunday School and Confirmation. It is also open to those youth that are not attending those programs. If your child(ren) would like to participate in this program, please let me know. However, chances are that I will be reaching out to those families with youth to encourage their participation. ☺ Memorization for any section of the program will not be required. Practice sessions will take place on Saturday, December 6th from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm (with lunch included), and again on Sunday, December 7th during Sunday School. Dress Rehearsal will be on Saturday, December 13th from 10:00 am to noon. While it's not required, youth are strongly encouraged to attend every practice.

The Family Movie Night for November is currently in the works.

Volunteers are always welcome to help with any of our family activities and programs. To volunteer, contact me at (406) 590-1061 or reach out to the church office. We would love to have your help.

November Education Team meeting will be Tuesday, November 11th, at 7:00 pm. All are welcome to attend.

God bless,

Annette Hocker, Youth and Family Coordinator



FREE!

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

Join us for a movie, fun and fellowship. We'll be serving snacks & soda.

NOVEMBER 15

2:00-4:00 PM

1300 FERGUSON DRIVE
GREAT FALLS, MT 59404
FaithLutheranGF.com (406) 454-1309

BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER

The Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes

and info sheets are set up in the narthex for you to pick up.

Pray for the child who will receive your box as you fill it full of toys, school supplies and perhaps a photo of you/your family and a note of encouragement.

Please include in your box, a check for \$10.00 for S&H made out to "Samaritan's Purse" with "Operation Christmas Child" on the memo line.

These gifts are an expression of God's love and are shipped to countries around the world. YOU can help spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth!

Can we top last years total # of 71 completed boxes? Please return your filled boxes ON or BEFORE Sunday, November 23. WooHoo!



Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Project

RETURN YOUR BOXES ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 23!

SHINING THE LIGHT ON JESUS

November 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship Offering: Prison Ministry 10:45 am Kids SS 11 am Confirmation	3 6 pm Praise Team A	4 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional 5:30 pm Music/Worship	5 10 am Bible Study 5:30 pm Bells Practice 6 pm Men of Faith 6:30 pm Choir Practice	6 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 9 am Love Day Quilters 1 pm Grief Share	7 Noon Evangelism Team Meeting	8 2 pm Family Movie Event
9 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS 11 am Confirmation	10 6 pm Praise Team A	11 Veteran's Day 10 am Staff Meeting 11:30 am Soulo Sisters 1:30 pm Constitutional 5:30 pm Executive 6 pm Personnel 7 pm Youth Ed Team	12 9 am Finance Meeting 11 am Bible Study 4 pm Property Team 5:30 pm Bells Practice 6:30 pm Choir Practice	13 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 10 am LCMC Pastors 1 pm Grief Share	14	15
16 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship Offering: Tunnels to Towers 10:45 am Kids SS 11 am Confirmation 4 pm Women's Crafting	17 6 pm Praise Team A	18 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional 5:30 pm Council Meeting	19 10 am Bible Study 5:30 pm Bells Practice 6:30 pm Choir Practice	20 6:30 am Men's Bible Study 1 pm Grief Share	21	22
23 8:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am Worship 10:45 am Kids SS 11 am Confirmation	24 6 pm Praise Team A	25 10 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm Constitutional	26 10 am Bible Study 7 pm Thanksgiving Service	27 Thanksgiving Day Office Closed	28 Office Closed	29
30						

Women of Faith Fall Fiesta Highlights

On Saturday, October 11, the Women of Faith Fall Fiesta took place with 46 women in attendance. Karyl Viste opened the event with devotions and prayer. A taco salad bar funded by the Thrivent Action Team and cookies donated by Great Harvest Bread were enjoyed along with conversations around the tables.

Guest speaker, April Hall, shared the tragic story of her granddaughter October's murder. Following October's death and the death of other children in Great Falls, Toby's House was started. Toby's House is a crisis nursery in Great Falls committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The ladies attending the fiesta brought diapers, wipes, etc. to help Toby's House.

Susan Wenzel led the group in making bright colored tissue paper flowers.

The group was asked to share ideas for upcoming events and activities. The Women of Faith team will review the ideas at the next planning meeting.

Julie Waag, Karyl Viste, Pat Strand, Amy Dorr, Susan Wenzel, and Cindy Fowell



SOULO SISTERS

November 11th at 11:30
At Bar S - 5100 North Star Blvd

Who Are the Soulo Sisters?

If you are widowed or single please join us for Soulo Sisters. We meet for lunch the second Tuesday of the month at various eateries. PLEASE JOIN US!

Love Day Quilters News

Hopefully we're still being blessed by the beautiful weather we enjoyed in early October. But if not, we will still be working hard this month to complete more quilts to display and give away in December. Thanks to Jeanie Thomas for the delicious Peach Crisp and other treats last month and Deb Schwandt for helping her set up. We would love to have newcomers join us in tying and pinning quilts for our stitchers. - Augie Records

Love Day Quilters

Thursday, November 6th,
at 9am

November Anniversaries

- 3: Bill and Diana Holliday
- 12: Pastor Alsen & Susan Wenzel
- 20: Fay & Judy Stokes
- 27: Lon & Barb Holden
- 29: Dale & Jeanie Thomas
- Pastor Ken & Julie Waag

November Birthdays

- 1: Tom Stevens
- 2: Barbara Clark
- 6: Pearl Miller
- 7: Dale Schaeffer
- Matthew Hampton
- 13: Jamie Darko
- 15: Alsen Wenzel
- 16: Jan Abbott
- 18: Don Suck
- 19: Edie Tarum
- 20: Fay Stokes
- 21: Brad Franklin
- Kevin Schmid
- 22: Carolyn Richards
- 23: Sandy Clapshaw
- Roy Dittler
- Rudy Robinson
- Gary Somerfeld
- Rosalie Tarum
- 25: Lenora Graham
- Brittney Webb
- 26: Karen Nebel
- 29: Donna Herdina
- 30: John Gass
- Michael Hocker

A Word from Our Choir Director

Hey FLC! I have absolutely loved working with the choir so far and am so excited for the upcoming return of the bell choir and praise teams! As we approach this Christmas season, the musicians of Faith Lutheran Church are soon to be hard at work on the music of the Christmas Eve service. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any interest in serving on a praise team, singing in the choir, playing bells, or any other musical platform that you would like to offer to the Lord in worship. Worship is an act of surrender, offering to God what is already His. I'm also convinced that worship is not limited to music, but is instead the simple effort of glorifying God and bringing our focus back to Him. Recently, God has been challenging me to surrender areas of my life where I so desperately want to remain in control. It's times like these where I have to remember that worship is more than just singing in church on Sunday mornings, but sitting quietly in my living room surrendering my fears, anxieties, and cares on a mundane Tuesday night. As I continue to surrender these aspects of my own life, I want to also challenge you all to identify areas in your own lives where you haven't quite fully let God have control, because in the end, complete surrender is true worship.

In Faith,
Jay Henry Gregg



Note: If you're not listed on the birthday list, please call the office at 406-454-1309 or email us: FaithLutheran.gtf@gmail.com. We love wishing all our congregational members a very happy day! So, please, make sure your name and correct date are on the list!

Outreach News

MAJOR OUTREACH PLANS IN DISCUSSION

In our Evangelism Team meeting in October we began the discussion of the possibility of Faith Lutheran becoming a "Mother Church" for smaller congregations in Montana. Because it's becoming more difficult to find a pastor, we're hoping that we can help bridge the gap. Smaller churches could livestream our Sunday services. We could also invite those from other LCMC congregations in Montana to join in Bible studies or classes like GriefShare and Life Happens by using Zoom or Google groups. Pastor Alsen already has invited all the LCMC pastors in Montana to his monthly pastor meeting. If they aren't close enough to drive they can join through Zoom.

GRIEFSHARE CLASSES BEGIN

Pastor Alsen has started the GriefShare classes. It's a 13-session, Christ-centered grief support group program for adults. The classes began on October 16. If you're interested in taking the class or being a part of the GriefShare team contact the church office to find out more. The classes are open to the community, there is a \$20 workbook fee. You can register online for the next session <https://www.griefshare.org/groups/277365>

THANK YOU FOR THE LOVE YOU PRAY INTO THESE SHAWLS!

Last month I delivered four prayer shawls to the Great Falls Clinic Cancer Center and another four to the Benefis Sletten Cancer Institute for cancer patients. We have prayer shawls that church members have made to be given to anyone who is experiencing an illness, surgery, or grief. If you or someone you know would like to be blessed with one of these shawls please contact the church office.

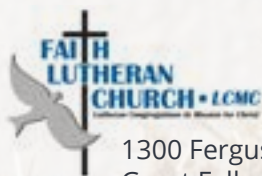
Thank you for Loving God, Loving Others and Serving the World.
Colleen Palmer, Outreach Coordinator



NOVEMBER SERVICE GROUP

As a way of serving each other, Faith Lutheran is refreshing our monthly Service Groups. The following are being asked to be available in the month of November. If a need arises for a funeral or wedding we will call you from the church office. We are also asking the Service Groups to help with set up and clean up for Sunday Fellowships. The treats are provided by the church. You are welcome to bring in treats to share as well. Thank you to each of you for giving your time and talents to help at Faith Lutheran.

- Dave Cunningham
- Carol Dawson
- Sue DeBortoli
- Elaine Tews
- Steve and Brenda Tilleraas
- John and Kali Tuckerman
- Pastor Ken and Julie Waag
- Pastor Alsen and Susan Wenzel



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Great Falls, MT 59404
Telephone: (406) 454-1309
Web: www.faithlutheranGF.com

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CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor:	Pastor Alsen Wenzel
Secretary/Office Manager:	Cindy Fowell
Bookkeeper:	
Facilities Manager:	Bob Palmer
Outreach Coordinator:	Colleen Palmer
Youth and Family Coordinator:	Annette Hocker
Music/Choir Director:	Jay Gregg
IT Manager:	John Plank

OFFICE HOURS:

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday

Our monthly calendar is on our website!

Phone: (406) 454-1309

Faithlutheran.gtf@gmail.com

www.faithlutherangf.com

CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS

President - Fred Burow	
Vice President - Julie Waag	
Secretary - Mellissa Severson-Hampton	
Jim Brown	Christy Sem
Rex Derr	Tammie Klinker-Mayes
Bob Palmer	Bamma Taylor
Sean Hoven	Deb Schwandt
John Gass	Colleen Palmer



THIS IS THE JOURNEY OF FAITH.

