



November 2023

Giving: An Obligation or Opportunity

Faith has determined we need a Stewardship Campaign. Thus, over the last three Sundays of November, our worship theme will be "Excel in the Grace of Giving." I hope you will make every effort to be present each of these Sundays. During the second Sunday service, we will introduce a giving challenge titled "Give Plus One."

As your vacancy pastor, I hope and pray that the messages offered will help you in your journey as a faithful and generous steward. By the power of the Holy Spirit through Word and Sacrament, we are molded and transformed into stewards who follow God's ways and become more Christ-like in our giving.

With this in mind I would like to share that as the Apostle Paul traveled to churches, he collected offerings for the Christians in Jerusalem who were experiencing hard economic times. When Paul was speaking to the Corinthians, he used the Macedonian believers as an example of people who, in spite of their own economic troubles, gave joyfully to the people in Jerusalem. The Macedonians' love for Christ and their concern for their fellow believers moved them to give beyond their ability. Their giving level was, in many ways, painful. That's because they excelled in the grace of giving. The Macedonians gave themselves first to the Lord, then, Paul said, they "urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints" (2 Corinthians 8:4). In Christ, they saw their giving as an opportunity to help other believers in need.

Does someone who views giving as an obligation plead for the opportunity to give? Probably not. Anytime giving is an obligation, as a command of the Law, we will give, but giving as an obligation will not give us the joy or the attitude of pleading for the privilege to give as the Macedonians had. As God's people, we have both an obligation and an opportunity. Scripture is clear that we are called to give. Paul said, "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made" (1 Corinthians 16:2).

Although giving is indeed an obligation, yet, just as God changed the hearts and minds of the Macedonian people, He also changes us so we view our giving as more of an opportunity than that of an obligation. As renewed and transformed people, our attitudes toward giving change from a "got to" to a "get to" attitude. We stop giving grudgingly, and we start to excel in the grace of giving by giving willingly and cheerfully. We want to give, since giving is now a clear expression of our love and gratitude to God for Who He is and what He does for each one of us; for "me." The more we give of ourselves and our gifts the closer our relationship with Christ becomes and the more we want to give, and the more God blesses us, enabling our continued giving. "You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God" (2 Corinthians 9:11). We thank God that He fills us daily with His love so that we, as members of His Body here at Faith, see giving as a privilege and an opportunity to praise, to glorify, and to thank Him.

To Him be the glory: Pastor Thiel

Board and Committee Updates

Pastor Call Committee

The Call Committee heard back from Pastor Pinion October 7th, and after a week of prayer he decided to decline our call. He was very impressed by Faith and our ministry, but it was what he felt was right for him, his family, and his ministry which is we want. We know this may seem disheartening, but please remember that we are wanting God's will to be done, not our own desires to be met in our timing. As we look at this from a high-level we can see God working on our congregation just as much as the pastors we call and He is challenging us to actively live out our mission statement: "Reach In, Reach Out, Reach All".

The first call God asked us to be selfless and REACH OUT. The call we made to Pastor Morris, without doubt, had a profound impact on his ministry and the focus of his call. He was and still is so grateful for our congregation and has checked in with us to see how he could pray for us from time to time.

The call to Pastor Pinion brought us together as a congregation challenging us to REACH IN. We were together over those two days as he visited recounting all the exciting things happening here at Faith. His visit felt wonderful and everyone who came to the meet and greet left hopeful, and uplifted. In hindsight, we see that it wasn't because he was visiting. Rather this brought us together as a congregation, showing us the ministry and fellowship that is already among us. All of which is not rooted in a pastor, but in God and a congregation serving him.

In light of this, the Call Committee met and has requested a new call list. We ask that you please continue to pray. Pray for God's will to be done and for us to be good and faithful servants.

Elders

The Elders have been approached by several families who are interested in becoming members of Faith Lutheran. To welcome these families in becoming members, Rev. Steve Thiel will be holding Adult Instruction classes beginning the week of November 5 with the classes being offered on Monday evening at 5:30 pm, Tuesday evening at 6:00 pm or Saturday morning at 10:00 am (or time all agree to that day). The same lesson will be taught that week on each day so that a family could attend any of the nights to complete that week's lesson. If you have an interest in being a part of these classes please contact Deb Smith in the church office to notify her of your intentions based on this timeframe.

Member Facts

Transfers In/Reinstatement

Amanda Mrozinski from Immanuel, Bay City
Jessica Rossow from WELS congregation

Deaths

Scott Bender
Sue Porter



Parish Service Guild

ATTENTION ALL LADIES OF FAITH - Next Ladies Guild/LWML get together will be Tuesday, Nov. 14 at 6:30. We will be coloring bookmarks for you to take home or give to a shut-in or a friend. We will also have a mite box devotion and collection of mites. Would love to see new and young folks there so we can keep this organization going for many years ahead. Come and learn about everything this great organization does.

CELEBRATE LWML SUNDAY with us on November 12/13. This year's LWML theme is "The King is Coming" based on Psalm 24: 7 - 10. Christ is the King of Glory! The Gospel is our only hope, as the King of glory comes in, with and through the Gospel. The power of God is evident in the dimes, quarters, and dollars you put in your Mite box and we celebrate this on LWML Sunday. Thank You! Our LWML Mission Statement reads "As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, equip women to honor God by serving others." The Holy Spirit has been doing this for 80 years through LWML. There will be a Mitey Muffin gathering in between services in the Beyer Gathering room where you can enjoy coffee, muffins and find out more about LWML from any of the members. The big Mite Box will be available to put your mites in that you have been collecting or an added donation. Please come and enjoy some muffins and Christian fellowship.

MISSION GRANT FEATURED FOR THE MONTH: ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN SERVENT CENTER - \$100,000. Orphan Grain Train Servant Center in Norfolk, Nebraska, is a Christian volunteer network that ships donated food, clothing, medical supplies, and other needed items to the U.S. and 70 other countries. The Gospel is shared as gifts are distributed. The grant will help fund the update and expansion of the warehouse facility in Norfolk. Thank you for helping make this possible with your mite donations!

SMART CARD UPDATE – The Ladies Parish Service Guild will again be selling Smart Cards, but the cards won't be distributed to organizations until sometime in June 2024. At that time, they can be utilized for use immediately. They will also be good thru December 2025. The price will remain the same of \$25 per book/packet. Watch for upcoming arrival/sales announcements next year as we get closer to June 2024. If you have questions, please call Marylee @989-397-5730.

Board of Trustees

The garage is FINISHED. Thanks to everyone who helped getting this project finished. The old garage will be torn down and new landscaping will be done in the near future.

A big thank you to the 30 students from Valley Lutheran High School who came to complete their community work projects. They helped empty the storage unit, moved mulch, washed pews, windows and the bleachers in the gym. We very much the work the students accomplish. We were very fortunate to work with such wonderful and courteous you adults. They are a great representation of Valley Lutheran High School.

Janitor update: Scott is still out on medical leave. We want to thank all of the wonderful people who volunteered to help the Trustees keep our building clean. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU! For the near future, three parents, Claire Katenhuis and Ethan Gettel will be paid and working nightly every week. We appreciate everyone for helping.

We are looking for people to serve on next year's Trustees. We need to fill 3 positions. If you are interested in serving, please contact Bob Rau or the office.



Faith Craft Show

Come and enjoy arts and crafts from vendors within our community! Doors will open on **Saturday, November 11th** at **10:00am** and close at **3:00pm**. Registration fees, baked-goods and drink purchases benefit our 7th and 8th graders' end-of-the-year trip. If you'd like to register as a vendor, please click the link below and complete the Google form. Fees and space availability are stated within the registration, as well. [2023 Registration](#) If you have any questions, please email craftshow@faithbaycity.org

2nd Annual Advent Christmas Get-Together

Save the Date ** Save the Date ** Please join us for "The Splendor of CHRISTmas", Faith's 2nd Annual Advent Christmas Get-Together. It will be Tuesday, December 12th from 6-8pm. This evening of community and music is being hosted by the Parish Service Guild. There is a seat for ALL Women of Faith and their invitees 8th grade and older. There is no cost for this special Advent evening, although an optional gift box will be at the door if you want to donate to the Bay County Women's Shelter. A Light Dinner and Special Desserts will elegantly be served. Please join us! Please sign up in the Gathering Room and note if you would like to host a table or co-host a table. Hosting a table would involve bringing china or Christmas decorations and decorating the table, or co-hosting with someone.

Faith Community Outreach

Noisy Coin Offering - Small change adds up! Our collection in October of \$225.05 for Coats for Kids is so generous! Thank you!

Our November coin offering and doorway donation will go to the Bay-Arenac Diaper Pantry. Please bring in diapers (most requested sizes: 4, 5 & 6 for local families in need. The coin collection will be on November 19 & 20.

Valley Lutheran High School News

Fruit Sale

The annual Valley Lutheran Fruit Sale is just around the corner. Place your order with any Valley student or by calling the VL Office at 989-790-1676. The sale runs October 9-November 8 and will be available for pickup December 9 from 7:30am-2:30pm. A 20lb box of Florida Indian River Navel Oranges, Pink Grapefruit or Mixed box is \$39.00. A 40 lb box of Navel Oranges, Pink Grapefruit or Mixed box is \$51.00. A 10lb box of Mandarin Oranges is \$35.00 and a Citrus Delight box of oranges, grapefruit & mandarin oranges (6 pieces of each) is \$39.00. Thank you for your support!

Fall Bazaar and Lunch

The annual Valley Lutheran Fall Bazaar will be held Saturday, November 12 from 9-3. We have a full lineup of vendors this year throughout the building (78 spaces)!! A lunch will be available from 11-1 in the cafeteria. Enjoy a day of shopping as well as supporting the Parent Organization!

Community Info

Wellspring— Gift cards for Bay County Foster Children serviced by the Bay City Wellspring Office, to help purchase Christmas gifts, will be collected again this year. We are collecting \$30 Walmart gift cards and/or \$30 checks made out to Wellspring Lutheran Child and Family Services. These gift cards and/or checks may be dropped off at the office here at Faith, The Economy Center @ 408 Columbus Ave., in Bay City or given to Kathie Colone by Nov. 15th. Any questions call Kathie @989-671-9650.

Please join with members and friends of **Immanuel Lutheran Church, Bay City**, as they honor Rev. Kevin Jones on his retirement after 35 years in the ministry on Sunday, December 17 at 10:00am with a reception and meal to follow at The Grand Banquet Center. If you are planning on attending the lunch, please RSVP by November 22 at 989-893-4088. Cost is \$10 per person.

Surviving the Holidays – Sunday, November 12 at Grace Lutheran, Auburn. Are you dreading the approaching holidays because of the death of a loved one? You're not alone. Come to Grace Lutheran Church (303 Ruth Street, Auburn) on Sunday, November 12 at 2 p.m. to be comforted and encouraged. We'll meet in Grace's library. We'll be going through Surviving the Holidays, a resource from GriefShare, which will help guide you through this season. The materials are free. All are welcome to attend, no registration necessary. Please contact the church office if you have any questions (989-662-6161).

Calendar

Sundays

8:00am Worship

9:15am Bible Study

10:30am Worship & Kids' Connection

Mondays - 7:00pm Worship

Wednesdays - 9:00am Zoom Bible Study (contact the office to join)

Thursdays - 10:00am Women's Bible Study

Sunday - November 12 - LWML Sunday

6:00pm - Church Council

Tuesday - November 14 - 6:30pm - Parish Service Guild

Wednesday - November 15 - 1-4pm - Sewing Group

Wednesday - November 22 - 6:30pm - Thanksgiving Eve Worship

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If you would rather receive this newsletter by email, please send a request to bgettel@faithbaycity.org



Faith Lutheran Church

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