

# 1010

for

Week One

## OPEN HEARTS

*Firstfruits Giving*



# ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH | *Wisconsin Rapids, WI*

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*September 22, 2019*

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome. It's encouraging to see parents bring their families to worship the Lord. If your child is restless, you can use the Family Room to calm your child. Restrooms are located in the hallways along either side of the Worship Center. For those with special needs, large print copies of the service and listening devices are available from the ushers. One of our ushers or greeters can help you find the restrooms, family room or answer your other questions.

## **SERVICE NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY**

The word stewardship is often seen as a dirty word-a gimmick to get people to dig deeper and "give 'til it hurts." Nothing could be further from the truth! Instead, stewardship is a precious word that encourages us to be who we truly are in Christ: Precious people who have been richly blessed by a Father who knows how to give good gifts to his children!

The Lord speaks about worldly wealth and possessions in over 2,300+ passages of Scripture. In other words, God speaks to us about worldly wealth roughly three times more often than he does about faith! Why? So that God can get to the "heart of the matter." Money and possessions are God's gifts to us. His greatest gift is his Son, Jesus. As we consider Christ's sacrifice for us, we are motivated and inspired to give our lives back to God. May he open the hearts of his people to offer him our first and our best!

The liturgical color\* for this Sunday is green, which signifies not money, but our growth in trusting God as we give back to him our firstfruits.

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Almighty Father, Heaven and Earth: Text by Edward Dayman; Tune by Nikolaus Herman; public domain

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\* The liturgical color is found on the pastor's stole and the piece of cloth hanging from the pulpit.

# Order of Service

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## WELCOME

## OPENING SONG

*All Depends on Our Possessing* | CW 421 (1-4)

*Please stand.*

## INVOCATION

Minister (M): In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Congregation (C): Amen.**

## DIALOGUE

M: The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

**C: Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom.**

M: The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

**C: One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts.**

M: The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

**C: Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.**

*Psalm 24:1; 145:3,4,13*

## CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

M: Lord God, heavenly Father, we humbly come before you today knowing that we have failed to speak lovingly, think purely, or act rightly. We have sinned you and against others...

...in wasting the precious time you give us.

**C: ...in our slowness and hesitancy to spread your Gospel.**

M: ...in the faithful care of our relationships.

**C: ...in our restless and relentless preoccupation with worldly wealth.**

M: ...in caring for the bodies and minds you have given us.

**C: ...in our refusal to make you our first priority.**

*Silence for personal reflection*

M: Hear our confession, for we have sinned and are in need of your mercy and forgiveness.

**C: Lord, have mercy upon us.  
Christ, have mercy upon us.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

**C: Amen.**

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord!

| CW 480 (1-2)

1 Al - might - y Fa - ther, heav'n and earth  
2 The wealth of earth, of sky, of sea,  
With lav - ish wealth be - fore you bow;  
The gold, the sil - ver, spark - ling gem,  
Those trea - sures owe to you their birth,  
The wav - ing corn, the bend - ing tree  
So rich - ly fur - nished for us now.  
Are yours; you are but lend - ing them.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: O Lord, giver of life and source of all love, we know that all we have received comes from your gracious hand. Help us to always use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. Send your Holy Spirit to work through us, that many more might come to know the saving riches of your Son. May our faithful stewardship bear witness to the love of your Son in our hearts, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

*Be seated.*

# *The Word*

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## **FIRST LESSON**

*Haggai 1:1-11*

*Give careful thought to the relationship between finances and faith.*

*After the reading, the announcement is made:*

**M:** The Word of the Lord.

**C:** **Thanks be to God!**

**8:00 - GRADES 3-8 SING**

*Where Your Treasure Is*

**10:30 & 6:30 - PSALM OF THE DAY**

*Psalm 65 | CW p.89*

*Please stand.*

## **GOSPEL LESSON**

*Luke 12:13-21*

*It's the epitome of foolishness to live for this life and forget about the life to come.*

*After the Gospel, the announcement is made:*

**M:** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C:** **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

## **CONFESSION OF FAITH**

*The Apostles' Creed*

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

**I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.**

*Be seated.*

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

*The children are invited to come forward for an object lesson.*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*What Is the World to Me | CW 477*  
*8:00- Grades 3-8 sing verse 3.*

## SERMON - GIVING TO GOD DOESN'T MAKE A BIT OF SENSE!

### OFFERING

*St. Paul's members offer their first and their best to their Savior in order to support the sharing of the Gospel through our church and our worldwide church body, the WELS. Our guests do not need to feel obligated to participate. We ask that everyone, guests and members, sign the Friendship Register, which will be passed out during the offering. If the gospel message has moved you to give and you would like an electronic option, you can scan this QR code with your mobile phone. It will connect you with our website's giving page.*



### MUSICAL OFFERING

*Please stand.*

### OFFERING PRAYER

*Lord of All Good | CW 483 (1)*

### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- M: Lord God, you created the heavens and the earth.
- C: Every animal of the forest is yours as well as the cattle on a thousand hills.**
- M: Lord, from your hand comes boundless riches.
- C: We thank you, Lord, for making us your stewards. We pray that you will grant us faith so we can please you in our stewardship.**
- M: Lord, help us to see the time, the talents, and the financial resources we have are a sacred trust from you.
- C: We ask for your help, Lord, to use all our resources in worthwhile activities that will give you honor and praise.**
- M: Lord, help us to spend time in your Word and in prayer that you might nourish the faith you give us.
- C: Please change us, Lord, from fear and selfishness to trust and generosity.**
- Special prayers and petitions may be offered here.*

M: Help us, Lord, to be wise and fruitful stewards of the opportunities that you give us to use our gifts.

C: Amen.

### LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread; forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

*Be seated.*

## BIBLE STUDY: Firstfruits Giving

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### I. INTRODUCTION

- ? What comes to mind when you hear the word “stewardship”? When you heard that we would be talking about stewardship for three weeks, what was your response?

It is easy to think of “stewardship” as being a discussion about money. Consider the following quote:

*Stewardship isn't a subcategory of the Christian life. Stewardship is the Christian life. After all, what is stewardship except that God has entrusted to us life, time, talents, money, possessions, family, and his grace? In each case, he evaluates how we regard what he has entrusted to us—and what we do with it.*

*(Randy Alcon in Money, Possessions, and Eternity, p. 140)*

**Stewardship = Management of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the  
\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_  
that God gives me**

- ? If “stewardship is the Christian life,” what are two reasons that a modern stewardship study needs to focus on money, perhaps more than ever before in history?

**Psalm 20:7**

*Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.*

- ? Complete: Stewardship does not just give the LORD honor. It demonstrates that we \_\_\_\_\_ him.

**II. FIRSTFRUIT BASICS**

**The focus of firstfruits giving is not the \_\_\_\_\_ but the \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Proverbs 3:9**

*Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.*

- ? When God calls for firstfruits giving in that passage, what is the amount he asks for?

**Deuteronomy 26:8-10**

*So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and now I bring the firstfruits of the soil that you, O LORD, have given me.*



- ? Again, no amount is stipulated for this firstfruits offering. What is stressed is the attitude. How would you characterize the attitude of the Israelite when he brought his firstfruits offerings?

**Mark 10:21-11**

*Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth*

- ? This man had claimed to follow all of God's law. Was God actually *first* in his life? Give the reason for your answer.

**The focus of firstfruits giving is not on \_\_\_\_\_ but on \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Genesis 1:1**

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

**Psalms 24:1**

*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.*

- ? Do you believe the passages above are literally true? If so, how does that have to affect the way you approach stewardship?

**John 1:2**

*He [Jesus] was with God [the Father] in the beginning.*

**John 3:16**

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

### **Romans 5:8**

*While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

? What do these passages teach us about how God gives.

God gave us his \_\_\_\_\_ and gave us his \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Romans 7:18**

*For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.*

### **Galatians 5:24**

*Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

? These passages teach:

- *Through my sinful nature, \_\_\_\_\_ assures that God will always come anywhere but first.*
- *Through the Spirit we are \_\_\_\_\_ to give in a way that glorifies God—Creator, Savior, Spirit. As God’s children, he comes first!*

### **The Challenge**

If you are not in the spiritual habit of giving to the Lord first, it is time to reconsider that habit. The First Commandment dictates that we are to *fear, love and trust in God above all things*. Firstfruits giving helps us do exactly that. It tangibly puts God first.

## **III. NEWS AND NOTES**

- Every member will receive a *10 for 10* commitment card. Keep it in a safe place and begin to pray about it. Do not fill it out yet! Instead, this first week, invest yourself in praying about why you do or do not practice firstfruits giving. If you do, is your attitude correct? If you do not, ask yourself: does God ever command something that isn’t meant to be a blessing for me? *“Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine” (Proverbs 3:9-10)*. That’s God’s promise to you!
- Over the next couple weeks, we will talk about how to respond to God’s love and grace in our stewardship. At the end of this three-week emphasis members will be asked to fill out those cards, which are a ten-week giving plan.
- Additional devotional material has been/will be shared. Read. Ponder. Pray.

*Please stand.*

## **BLESSING**

**M:** Brothers and sisters, go in peace.  
Live in harmony with one another.  
Serve the Lord with gladness.  
The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

**C: Amen.**

## **CLOSING HYMN**

*All Depends on Our Possessing | CW421 (5)*

## **WELS CONNECTION – 2019 Synod Convention**

# 1010

*for*

## **Stewardship Emphasis**



This three-week series will follow this outline:  
September 22: OPEN HEARTS (Firstfruits Giving)  
September 29: OPEN MINDS (Proportionate Giving)  
October 6: OPEN HANDS (Sacrificial Giving)

# NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

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## **THIS SUNDAY'S BIBLE STUDY**

"Why doesn't God answer my prayers?" and "Where is God when I'm hurting?"

Join us in the cafeteria from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.

## **OPEN FORUM NEXT SUNDAY**

*Sept. 29 | 9:15AM*

As part of our 2019-2020 ministry plan, we voted to resume calling a second pastor this fall. At our open forum we will discuss the needs of the congregation and the types of ministry that we want the district president to focus on when he puts together a list of candidates for the call. The open forum will take place during our Sunday morning Bible hour.

## **APPLE PIE MAKING TIME!**

*Sept. 26 | 1:00PM*

Get out your knives and peelers and spend an afternoon or two with others in fellowship as we work together to produce our famous apple pies for the annual Willing Workers Bake and Craft Sale in November. Join us in the cafeteria this Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 1:00 (or anytime you can make it) to help wash, peel, cut, core, and slice apples or with making the pies in the kitchen. Bring your preferred equipment or use what is available here, but don't forget to bring a smile, laughter, and good conversation! Other pie making dates to put on your calendar for October are Thursdays, October 3 and October 17, and Monday, October 21. We are looking forward to seeing you!

## **REACHING OUT TO FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN**

*Sept. 23 | 4:30PM*

Be part of our team that plans outreach events aimed at sharing God's Word with children. The Children's Outreach Ministry Task Force meets this Monday in the Bible Study Room and would love to have you as part of their team. Upcoming events include Trunk-or-Treat, Christmas for Kids, and Easter for Kids.

## **DID YOU MISS THE SUNDAY SCHOOL KICK OFF?**

*9:15-10:15AM*

Your children are welcome to come to Sunday School whenever you are able to bring them. Every time your child is exposed to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit can use it to build their faith. Everyone (4K-6<sup>th</sup> grade) gathers in Room 106 (Mr. Melso's Math Room) at the beginning of the hour. There is free childcare for your younger children as well.

## **VOLUNTEER AT TRUNK-OR-TREAT**

*Oct. 31 | 4:30-6:30PM*

Help provide families in our community with a fun, safe place to trick-or-treat. To attract families, we need lots of people giving out treats from their car trunks (or pickup tailgates). Decorating your vehicle or dressing in costume is optional, but it makes it more fun for the children. Signup at the Ministry Table in the Welcome Center or look for our online signup on our website under the Serve tab.

## **LEARN TO SAVE A LIFE**

*October 5 | 8AM-4PM*

Learn life-saving skills along with ushers and childcare workers. CPR is offered in the morning and First Aid in the afternoon. You can participate in both or just one session. The cost is only \$20 including lunch. Sign up at the ushers cabinet in the back of the sanctuary or contact Al Verjinsky at 715-459-2041.

## **LEARN ABOUT MISSIONS**

*Oct. 12 | 9:00AM – 2:30PM*

At the Fall Mission Rally, you will learn about mission work in East Asia and how to ignite a passion for missions in others. The rally will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church in the town of Berlin (outside of Merrill). The rally is open to everyone. There is a \$3.00 registration fee, and freewill offerings will be taken for lunch and to support missions.

## **APPLES, APPLES, APPLES!**

Do you, a family member, or a neighbor have an apple tree that is ready to harvest? Do you ever drive by an orchard and feel a desire to pull in and buy a few apples to be used to make apple pie? Are you feeling generous as you stop in the produce section at the grocery store and purchase a bag or two of apples? We need those apples now! Please consider donating pie apples to St. Paul's Willing Workers for their annual bake sale. Bring them to the kitchen so we may start making pies this Thursday and/or consider donating apples for us to use at our October work events as well. Thank you!

## **YOU'VE BEEN ON THE SIDELINES LONG ENOUGH**

*Oct. 19 | 8:30AM-4:30PM*

Using life and family issues as bridges, ENGAGE! will help you talk with others confidently and credibly about the Good News of Jesus Christ within the context of life and family issues. ENGAGE! is a one-day event organized by Christian Life Resources and held at Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School in Jackson, WI. For more info, visit [christianliferesources.com](http://christianliferesources.com).

## GRANTS FOR VOLUNTEER PROJECTS

Did you know that if you are a Thrivent Financial member you are eligible to apply twice a year for a Thrivent Action Team Grant? These grants can be used to fund volunteer projects at St. Paul's. Only one Thrivent grant will be issued for each project, so be sure to coordinate with the leadership of that project. For more information, visit [thrivent.com](http://thrivent.com) or talk to your Thrivent representative.

## MAGAZINE DRIVE

If you still enjoy the quiet activity of reading printed materials, Northwestern Publishing House has a couple of great options. The first is *Forward In Christ*, a monthly magazine that has articles on Christian living, today's issues, stories by teens, editorials, WELS news and events, Bible studies, and more. The second is *Meditations*, a personal devotional booklet with a special Scripture reading, devotion, and prayer for each day. You can receive either of these (or both) at discounted prices by ordering them through the church office at 715-421-3634 or [churchoffice@stpaulswr.org](mailto:churchoffice@stpaulswr.org). Examples of these materials can be found in the Welcome Center.

## KOINÉ COMING TO NLHS

Oct. 18 | 7:00PM

As part of their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, Northland Lutheran High School is holding a pig roast and a concert by Koiné. The band is known for their modern arrangements of familiar old hymns. To learn more about the band and hear some of their music, visit [koinemusic.com](http://koinemusic.com). This should be a fun event. Bring your friend who is a music lover!

## ATTENDANCE & OFFERING REPORT

Last Week's Attendance: 229

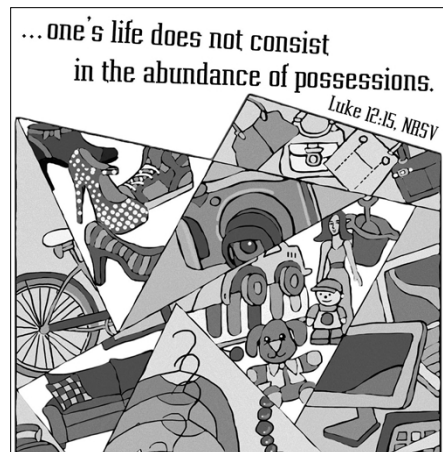
Year-to-date average attendance: 241

From July 1, 2019 to September 13, 2019

Actual ministry income: \$234,753

Actual cost of ministry: \$220,412

Mortgage balance: \$1,469,365



# CALENDAR

September 22-29

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|                  |                |  |
|------------------|----------------|--|
| <b>SUNDAY</b>    | 8:00 AM        | Worship  |
|                  | 9:15 AM        | Bible Study in the Dining Room                                     |
|                  | 9:15 AM        | Sunday School for grades 4K-6 in Room 106                          |
|                  | 10:30 AM       | Worship  |
| <b>MONDAY</b>    | 4:30 PM        | Children's Ministry Outreach Task Force<br>in the Bible Study Room |
|                  | 6:30 PM        | Worship  |
| <b>TUESDAY</b>   | 6:45 AM        | Men's Bible Study at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop                |
|                  | 9:45 AM        | Women Walking in the Word in the Resource Center                   |
| <b>WEDNESDAY</b> | 9:00 AM        | Chapel Service   |
|                  | 5:30 PM        | Handbells in the Balcony   |
|                  | 6:30 PM        | Bible Book Group in the Bible Study Room                           |
|                  | 6:30 PM        | Catechism Class in the Bible Study Room                            |
|                  | 6:30 PM        | Choir in the balcony   |
| <b>THURSDAY</b>  | 7:00 AM        | Men's Small Group at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop                |
|                  | 1:00 PM        | Piemaking in the cafeteria   |
|                  | 6:30 PM        | A People Close to God in the Bible Study Room                      |
| <b>SUNDAY</b>    | 8:00 AM        | Worship  |
|                  | <b>9:15 AM</b> | <b>Open Forum on Call for Associate Pastor</b>                     |
|                  | 9:15 AM        | Sunday School for grades 4K-6                                      |
|                  | 10:30 AM       | Worship  |

## UPCOMING EVENTS

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Sept 29       | Open Forum on Call for Associate Pastor |
| Sept 30-Oct 4 | St. Paul's Serving at the Food Pantry   |
| Oct. 5        | CPR & First Aid Training                |
| Oct. 6        | 10-for-10 Commitment Sunday             |
| Oct. 7 & 8    | Pastors' Conference at St. Paul's       |



[www.stpaulswr.org](http://www.stpaulswr.org)

311 14<sup>th</sup> Ave S | Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495 | 715-421-3634 | [churchoffice@stpaulswr.org](mailto:churchoffice@stpaulswr.org)

Pastor Lucas Proeber | 989-780-3184 | [pastorproeber@stpaulswr.org](mailto:pastorproeber@stpaulswr.org)