

1010 *for* 1010

Week Two

OPEN MINDS

Proportionate Giving



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

September 29, 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

This weekend, the Lord will open our minds to consider the magnitude of his blessings. Each of us has been blessed in different ways and at various levels. What should our thoughtful, prayerful response be to these blessings? That's where the Bible's teaching about proportionate giving is such a help. For some families with fewer resources, the practice of giving 10% of their income might be a significant leap of faith. For other families with more resources, the practice of giving 10% may be a starting point for faith-filled giving.

St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth, "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made" (1 Corinthians 16:2). Christians are blessed as they put God's principles of proportional giving into practice!

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

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

Order of Service

WELCOME

OPENING SONG

We Give Thee but Thine Own | CW 485

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: "Everything under heaven belongs to me," declares LORD.

C: Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.

M: You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me."

C: But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.

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

C: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.

Job 41:11; James 1:17; Psalm 24:1; Deuteronomy 8:17,18; 1 Chronicles 16:34

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 against 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: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

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
4 We, Lord, would lay, at your re - quest,
With lav - ish wealth be - fore on you bow;
The cost - liest of - f'ings on your shrine,
Those trea - sures owe to you their birth,
And when we give and give our best,
So rich - ly fur - nished for us now.
We but re - turn your gifts di - vine.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Let us pray...O merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature. Make us always thankful for your loving care; and grant that we, remembering the richness of your grace, may be faithful stewards of all your good gifts; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Be seated.

The Word

FIRST LESSON

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

Proportionate offerings are given so that God's people might be a blessing to others.

After the reading, the announcement is made:

M: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 100 | CW p.104

Please stand.

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 25:14-30

We are called to manage all that the Master gives us for his glory.

After the Gospel, the announcement is made:

M: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

Be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

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

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesus, Priceless Treasure | CW 349 (1,4,5)

SERMON - WHAT REALLY MATTERS IS KNOWING THE MASTER

Please stand.

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.

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 (2)

**C: ♪ We give our minds to understand your ways;
Hands, eyes, and voice to serve your great design;
Hearts with the flame of your own love ablaze-
Thus for your glory all our pow'rs combine. ♪**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Lord of heaven and earth, you made all things beautiful. You have provided green forests and refreshing streams. You have arranged the orderly procession of day and night for our work and rest.

C: Thank you for the mountains and the prairies, the roaring sea, and the gentle breeze.

M: Thank you for roofs that shelter us, for clothing that protects us, and for food and drink. Thank you for our work and the income it provides.

C: Thank you for our cities and our countrysides, for farms and factories, for streets and highways, and for all of life that flows so swiftly before us.

M: We know that it is from your hand that we have received all we have and are and will be. We understand that you call us to be the stewards of your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us.

C: Help us always to use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. May our faithful stewardship bear witness to the love of Christ in our lives.

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

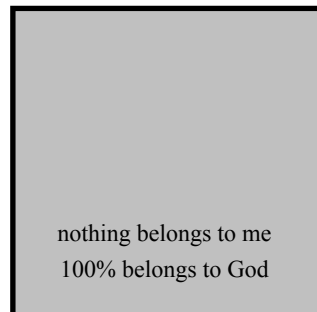
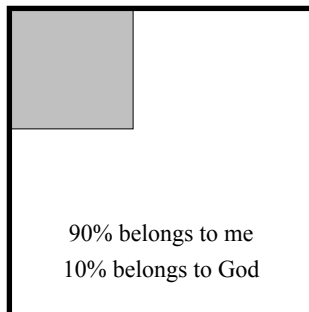
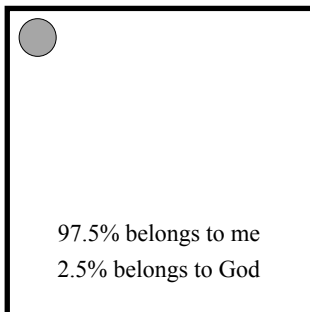
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread; forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us; lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours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

Be seated.

BIBLE STUDY: Proportionate Giving

I. INTRODUCTION

? Which of these diagrams do you think most accurately reflects the Bible's teaching on money, possessions, and our use of them?



**Proportionate giving begins by recognizing
who really is the _____.**

II. GOD OWNS EVERYTHING

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

John 1:3

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Job 33:4

The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Job 41:11

The LORD said, "Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me."

Exodus 19:6

The LORD said, "...the whole earth is mine."

**God _____ everything
and therefore _____ everything**

III. WE, BY NATURE, RESENT GOD'S OWNERSHIP

Think of the way we talk about wealth and possessions. At every step we are forgetful of the fact that God owns everything.

- There are two children who want the same toy. *"Mine!"*
- There is the man talking about his salary. *"Last year I made \$52,000."*
- There is the admiration for the *"self-made millionaire."*

We need to constantly guard our hearts and minds, remembering God created all things, and therefore owns all things. Anything we have—our life, our intellect, our time, our possessions—we have because he generously gave them to us.

James 1:17

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.

Point / Counter-Point

Below are things we tell ourselves. In your own words, explain how God answers.

Man says: *"I put in my time."*

God says: *"Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:13-14).*

Man says: *"It's my brain and talent that are responsible for my success."*

God says: *"I have filled him (Bezalel) with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood" (Exodus 31:3-5).*

Man says: *"I've worked hard for what I've got!"*

God says: *"You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).*

The Takeaway

- a) If I don't recognize God's complete ownership, I need to _____ of my idolatry.
- b) If I do recognize God's complete ownership, as his forgiven child I give to him _____.
- c) If my life's focus is on earthly possessions, every day I live is a day I come closer to losing _____.
- d) If my life's focus is on heaven, then every day I live is a day I come closer to _____ everything.

IV. QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS...

So, our New Man wants to honor Christ through percentage giving. That New Man now wrestles with the following questions.

“What percentage should I give?” Turn the table on legalism!

- Abraham gladly gave _____%, a “tithe” (Genesis 14:20)
- Old Testament law _____ people to give multiple tithes (Numbers 18:21-23; Deuteronomy 14:22-29)
- Zacchaeus freely gave _____% (Luke 19:1-10)
- The widow of Zarephath and the widow at the temple gave _____% (1 Kings 17:7-16; Luke 21:1-4)

The point? Let the percentage of your gifts flow from the Spirit’s work in your heart. *“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”* (2 Corinthians 9:7).

“How much of God’s money do I need to live on?” Turn the table on greed!

- ? Consider these two examples. There is a single mom with two children who made \$30,000 last year. She gave \$2,500 in offerings. There is a two-income family with two children who made \$110,000 last year and gave \$11,000. Who gave more?

The point? God is so generous, he often gives us so much income that we can not only meet our needs but also purchase some things we want, but don’t really need. However, if we better distinguish between wants and needs... if we focus on *earthly* needs and *heavenly* wants... it frees us up to be exceedingly generous with our offerings.

“What will my investments be earning 50,000 years from now?” Turn the table on materialism!

Matthew 6:21

Jesus said, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Martin Luther

I have held many things in my hands and I have lost them all. But whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess.

- ? You gave \$10,000 to support our congregation. Your gift was used to fund efforts to reach the lost. It funded the teaching of God's Word to young and old. A portion of it was sent to WELS to support world-wide mission efforts. How might you enjoy that investment 50,000 years from now?

The point? Even Jesus had a treasurer. Ministry requires funding. An earthly investment can bring joy only in this life. But investing in gospel ministry can reap blessings that we will enjoy for all eternity.

“Do I fully comprehend Jesus’ sacrifice for me?” Turn the table on self-centeredness!

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

- ? Part of “the American Dream” is upward mobility. Americans typically aspire to move up in their socioeconomic status. There is also the possibility of downward mobility. People who were rich can end up dirt poor. There is no greater example of downward mobility than Jesus. Describe a) how big a step down he took and b) why he was willing to take that step.

The point? Giving generously will never be achieved by focusing only on the Scripture passages which talk about generous giving! The gospel—the good news of Christ's sacrifice, resurrection and the glorious eternity that is waiting for us—is what the Spirit uses to empower joyful, generous giving.

V. NEWS AND NOTES

- This week is the time to study the information in your *10 for 10* commitment packet. Please read the letter, use the planning tools included, and prayerfully consider what your response will be.
- Two weeks from today is when commitment cards will be gathered. Important note: your commitment cards will not be opened. They will be placed near the altar for ten weeks and then returned to you unopened for your prayerful reflection.
- Please do not place offerings in your *10 for 10* commitment envelopes. The only thing that goes in that envelope is your 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

Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us | CW 486 (1-2)



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

DURING THIS SUNDAY'S BIBLE STUDY HOUR
Open Forum on Call for Associate Pastor

from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.

THE NEW CHURCH DIRECTORIES ARE HERE!

If you had your picture taken for the church directory, you received a free copy, which was put in your mailslot. If you missed our photo sessions, we will have retakes in about six months.

HELP US REACH OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Oct. 2 | 5:00PM

Our next outreach event is Trunk-or-Treat on Oct. 31. This Wednesday, those interested in helping with the event are invited to a half-hour meeting in the Resource Center. From cars to candy, we will discuss how to make this event a success.

BE A TRUNKER

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

To attract families to our Trunk-or-Treat, 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. You will be providing families in our community with a fun, safe place to trick-or-treat.

CANDY, CANDY, CANDY!

If you cannot volunteer for Trunk-or-Treat, we would love your donations of candy to supplement what our "trunkers" bring. Look for deals at local stores. You can bring your donations to the church at any time.

CPR/FIRST AID TRAINING ON SATURDAY

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.

HOME VOLLEYBALL

Sept. 30 | 4:30PM

St. Paul's Panthers invite you to their last home volleyball game this Monday afternoon. Wear green & white and cheer on our team.

SUBSCRIPTION DUE

If you would like to renew your subscription to *Forward in Christ* or *Meditations*, please submit your payment by this Monday, Sept. 30.

APPLE PIE MAKING TIME!

Oct. 3 | 1:00PM

Get out your knives and peelers and spend an afternoon in fellowship as we work together to produce apple pies for the annual Willing Workers Bake and Craft Sale in November. Join us in the cafeteria this Thursday, Oct 3, beginning at 1:00 to 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. We are looking forward to seeing you!

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 NEEDED

Please consider donating apples to St. Paul's Willing Workers. They will turn them into yummy pies for the annual bake sale. Bring your donations to the kitchen. Thank you!

ATTENDANCE & OFFERING REPORT

Last Week's Attendance: 261

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

NEW EVENTS

Family Fun Night ~ Nov. 7

Christmas for Kids ~ Dec. 7

Easter for Kids ~ April 4

Mark your calendars!

CALENDAR

September 29-October 6

SUNDAY	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Open Forum on Call for Associate Pastor
	9:15 AM	Sunday School for grades 4K-6
	10:30 AM	Worship
MONDAY	4:30 PM	HOME Volleyball Game
	6:30 PM	Worship
TUESDAY	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
	6:30 PM	Board of Lutheran Education in the Bible Study Room
	6:30 PM	Stephen Ministers Peer Group in the Resource Center
WEDNESDAY	9:00 AM	Chapel Service
	5:00 PM	Trunk-or-Treat Meeting in the Resource Center
	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
THURSDAY	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
SATURDAY	8:00 AM	CPR/First Aid Training in the Bible Study Room
SUNDAY	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Bible Study in Dining Room
	9:15 AM	Sunday School for grades 4K-6
	10:30 AM	Worship

UPCOMING EVENTS

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
Oct. 12	Mission Rally at Trinity-Berlin, WI





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