



Giving – A Spiritual Practice

May 2017

On Sunday, April 2, I concluded a 6-week sermon series on faith practices by preaching on the giving of our treasure. While it was nice to be able to teach about this when there was no “ask” involved, worship attendance was really low since it was spring break! Here’s the message in bullet points:

- Giving is a spiritual practice.
- Jesus speaks more about our relationship with money than about prayer in the Gospels. (It’s easy for our relationship with money to become idolatrous.)
- Michael Foss, in Power Surge, says in membership-oriented churches your offering is more like dues or fees-for-services-received.
- But in discipleship-oriented churches your offering represents giving yourself to God by joyfully returning a portion of your income or assets to your church in gratitude for God’s blessings.
- “Membership-churches” tend to ask for money too often to the point where people resent it.
- “Discipleship-churches” remind people life is pure gift and God is the life-giver who sustains and blesses us. People tend to give more generously in these churches.
- Calvary’s been relying on the large gift Calvary received 18 years ago that’s annually been covering the difference between income and expenses for most of those years.
- At the current rate of using that gift, it will be gone in 3-4 years.
- Predictably, such large gifts almost always undermine the understanding and practice of generous giving as a spiritual practice in congregations that receive them.
- Many rely on “the gift” (or the giving of others) and don’t grasp what faith-based giving looks like for their own household.
- In reviewing Calvary’s giving, I noted recent significant steps or leaps forward in some households – one good sign of progress resulting from last fall’s teaching and emphasis.
- But here’s the deal: the spiritual practice of giving has never been about giving to a church budget, whether that budget is a flush or deficit budget.
- The spiritual practice of giving is more about the need of the giver to give than the need of the church to receive.
- The above statement may sound counter-intuitive, or even dishonest.
- It not only takes faith to give generously, it can actually grow your faith.
- The spiritual practice of giving means giving first, “off the top”, not what’s leftover. (When you give what’s leftover, guess what? There’s usually little to nothing leftover.)
- Foss says tithing – giving 10% of income – is a “reasonable, Biblically-based model for giving”.
- Tithing is not a legalistic requirement, but a disciplined faith practice.
- Many of us can grow towards tithing, as crazy or unobtainable as that may sound at first.
- Some of us can’t right now because of very limited financial resources, unemployment, underemployment, financial crisis, etc. You may want to give more, but can’t. That’s okay. **THERE IS NO SHAME OR GUILT MEANT HERE.**
- Ultimately everyone knows what is and isn’t possible for their own household and it is a decision between you and God.
- There are many at Calvary (in my opinion) who can grow towards tithing.
- Don’t surrender the idea and practice of tithing to the “evangelicals” and fundamentalists.
- Living expenses, along with debt, are obstacles to generous giving and even the idea of tithing.

(Continued on page 4)

MAY WORSHIP & MINISTRY LEADERS

Ministry	May 7	May 14	May 21	May 28
Ass't Minister	Jennifer McCarthy	Judie Mattison	Danielle Hill	Emilie Bouvier
Acolytes	Jeri Schultz Irv Elliott	Karen Rudrud Benji Huff		Lydia Huff
Lector	Kristy Rolig	<i>Isaac Wengerd</i>	Felecia Boone	Linda Mundt
Sacristan	Melissa Brooks	Steve McCarthy	Steve McCarthy	Sam Robson
Sound Board	Lydia Huff	Gary Nelson		Kenney Escher Julian Escher
Coffee Hour	Barb Martinsen	Miranda Hong Tom Johnson	Gary Nelson Jeri Schultz Nancy Lee Nelson Michael Weber	
Counters	Joanne Shepherd Kathleen Gohlke	Michael Weber Jeri Schultz	Gary Nelson Ted Fabel	Mary Nelson Marilyn Holm
Food Shelf	(May 13) Judith Glass Michael Weber	(May 20) Gary Nelson Jeri Schultz	(May 27) Marilyn Holm Gary Thorn	(June 3) Carol Rue Pat Olson

May Celebrations

Birthdays

5/4 - Scott Endo
5/5 - Eliot Aust
5/6 - Kathleen Gohlke
5/6 - Antonne Shepherd
5/7 - Lucy Anderson
5/8 - Amber Bendix-Horn
5/9 - Rowan Hill
5/9 - Kendra McCarthy
5/11 - Delaney Frost

5/11 - Kim Zeigler
5/12 - August Wengerd
5/15 - Mohali Endo
5/17 - Stephen Chalman
5/19 - Karen Nelson
5/20 - Elaine Christopher
5/21 - Charles Tripp
5/22 - Mary Nelson
5/27 - Carole Chalman
5/27 - Samantha Robson

5/28 - Benjamin Youngbauer

Anniversaries

5/19 - Steve & Judith Glass
5/21 - George & Chris Robson
5/23 - Jonathan & Holly Holtmeier

THE MISSION OF THE MONTH FOR MAY Global Missions - EPES Chile

EPES was created in 1982 to promote health with dignity for the poor through empowerment, mobilization and collective action. It began as a program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (IELCH) and maintains close ties nationally and internationally with the Lutheran church and is an ELCA Global Mission supported ministry. EPES became an independent, non-profit Chilean foundation in 2002. Calvary Lutheran is one of the congregations that sponsors Karen Anderson in her work at EPES in Chile.



ELCA Delegation (L-R) Rev. Rafael Rodriguez, Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Karen Anderson and Rev. Dr. Rafael Malpica.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



UPDATE FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

At our Monday night Church Council meeting we had a full agenda. In addition to hearing the Pastor's report, committee reports and financial report, we discussed the following items:

- Call Committee update
- Adult Ed. April 30 - Updates from Council, Call Committee and Pastor - (Q&A for congregation)
- Home Gatherings Debrief
- Micah Committee Discussion
- Children Youth & Families position search

We hope you can join us this Sunday, April 30 immediately following worship for an open forum with your Council members, representatives from the Call Committee and Pastor Bruce. We'll give some brief updates and then open it up for questions and discussion. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me or any member of the Church Council with any questions or concerns you may have.

Also please remember that all are welcome for a community meal on All Church nights, the second Monday of the month at 5:30pm, are a chance for community-building, good food and fellowship. Bring \$5 to chip in for supper.

Your brother in Christ,
Lars Negstad, Council President

Stewardship Success Depends on All of Us



Do Your Best!

MEETINGS IN MAY

Monday, May 8:

5:30 p.m. Community Meal

6:30 p.m. Committee Meetings: Social Justice, Education, MICAH, Crossroads & Mission Support

Tuesday, May 9:

6:30 p.m. Call Committee

Monday, May 15:

6:30 p.m. Call Committee

6:30 p.m. Executive Committee

Monday, May 22:

6:30 p.m. Church Council

Tuesday, May 30:

6:30 p.m. Call Committee



(Continued from page 1)

- A young couple at a church I served a few years ago decided they wanted to grow towards tithing. She was the president of the congregation, but not working outside the home at the time with four young children. Her husband was a house painter. With help from a faith-based financial course at church, they gradually began to re-arrange their finances, including some of the spending they'd grown accustomed to. Within a year and a half they grew from giving 2%-3% of their income to 10%. Because they wanted to grow their giving, they found a way to.
- Percentage giving is a kind of equalizer since all our incomes and financial situations differ.
- Start somewhere and grow.
- Mark Allan Powell, Professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, OH, makes the following point which shapes his own giving: There are many good and worthy causes to support in the local community and world. But the only ones who will support the church are those within the church. Many other organizations have the support of many people outside the church.
- Powell's practice, my practice, and my challenge to you: make Calvary your primary thank offering to God.
- Then give above and beyond your main Calvary offerings to other organizations as you're able.
- Consider the challenge to grow to tithing over time (as you are able) – 1st for your own sake (because it's a spiritual practice meant for you and your household); 2nd for Calvary's sake.
- Jesus says, *Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* Letting our money follow our hearts comes naturally. Beyond taking care of life's necessities, we invest our money in opportunities for our children, our love for theater, music, dining out, sports, vacations, etc.
- But Jesus flips this around by challenging us to first invest our treasure according to our faith and values. Let treasure lead...and heart follow. *Put your money where your mouth is and let your heart catch up!*

-Pastor Bruce

Renowned environmental expert Dr. David Rhoads to preach at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church May 20-21



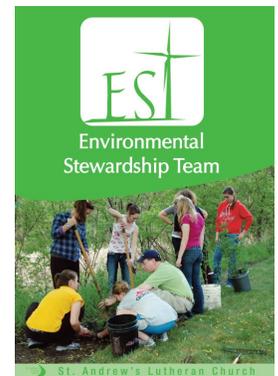
Nationally prominent environmental speaker and author Rev. Dr. David M. Rhoads will be the guest preacher at all worship services at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi, Minnesota, on Saturday, May 20, and Sunday, May 21, 2017.

As Professor Emeritus of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Rhoads is a dedicated environmental expert highly sought after for articulating his environmental concerns in religious, spiritual and social justice forums of all denominations nationwide. Rhoads is a prolific author and lecturer who holds an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Moravian Theological Seminary in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, as an expert on the New Testament.

Rhoads will preach at the 5 p.m. worship service, Saturday, May 20, and the 9, 9:30 and 10:30 worship services Sunday, May 21, as part of Caring for Creation Weekend at St. Andrew's. In addition, he will host an extended forum at 1 p.m. in the Great Hall at St. Andrew's. All events are free and open to people of all faiths. The weekend is an extension of the St. Andrew's Environmental Stewardship Team which has been actively working in the congregation for 10 years.

St. Andrew's Lutheran Church is located at 900 Stillwater Road, Mahtomedi, Minnesota. For more information, contact Joe Holmberg, St. Andrew's Communications Director, at 651-762-9116 or jholmberg@saintandrews.org.

Persons interested in sharing a ride to this event should contact Calvary member Don Rudrud.



BEECHWOOD FUNDRAISER GALA

BeechWood is one of Calvary's building partners, using office space and conference room space for their staff and clients throughout the week. BeechWood, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to helping individuals to live independently by providing supportive services, training, advocacy and supervision.

From their website: "BeechWood, Inc. was founded in 1999 by Kathy Beecher and Linda Woodford. We grew out of a need for supportive services beyond the group home model that would ensure successful independent living that was not sufficiently being met in the community. Within one year, we had 10 clients and 4 staff and today we provide services for over 200 clients and continue to grow each year."

Information about attending the BeechWood Fundraiser is available in the links below or by calling their offices at 612-824-0415 and speaking with Miriam.



BeechWood Inc 1st Annual Fundraiser
Presents

The Wolverines Quintet
— Parkway Theater —

Saturday, May 6th, 2017
Doors Open at 6:00 pm for Silent Auction and Raffle
Wolverines Swing Music 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Raising donations and awareness for BeechWood Inc.,
a 501C3 nonprofit organization dedicated to serving
adults with mental and physical disabilities.

100% of donations go towards client services and support.

General admission tickets: sliding fee scale at \$50 - \$30 - \$15 per person.

Purchase your tickets online at EventbriteBeechwoodbenefitconcert.eventbrite.com

or contact Miriam at 952-240-9519 (cell) or

miriam.colacci@beechwoodinc.org. Free tickets are available by request.

Make checks payable to BeechWood Inc and mail to Attn: Benefit, 3901 Chicago Ave S, Minneapolis MN 55407. Please include your phone number or email address with your check and we will contact you with confirmation.

Street parking is available or you may park in the nearby Wells Fargo parking lot.

<http://www.beechwoodinc.org/events.html>



Calvary Lutheran Church

3901 Chicago Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55407

CONNECT WITH CALVARY ON THE WEB:



www.clchurch.org



<https://www.facebook.com/Inthiscityforgood>



<https://twitter.com/CalvaryMpls>

Calvary Lutheran Church

3901 Chicago Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55407

- 612-827-2504
- 612-827-0176 (fax)
- website: www.clchurch.org

Ministry Staff

Interim Pastor: Bruce Arnevik
pastorbruce@clchurch.org

Music Director: Andrea Sorum
andrea@clchurch.org

Administrator: Kurt Posz
office@clchurch.org

Food Shelf Coordinator:
Henrietta Williams

Church Council Members

Melinda Bendix-Horn

Jennifer Halter

Tom Johnson, Treasurer

Linda Mundt

Kristy Rolig

Chris Van Meter

Interim Pastor Bruce Arnevik

Felecia Boone, Vice President

Laura Huff

Josh Moberg

Lars Negstad, President

Jeri Schultz, Secretary

Michael Weber

Kaia Zeigler

**The deadline for submitting information for the
June issue of the Calvary Newsletter is Tuesday, May 23**