

Good News of Peace

May 2016 A.D.

A Caring Family ✦ Reaching Out ✦ Sharing Christ's Love ✦ Teaching God's Word!

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

On selected Sundays during the months of April, May, and June, we will be taking some time to focus our attention on the theme of "Experiencing the Joy of Generosity." We began this emphasis on Sunday, April 24, by considering the theme of the Joy of Receiving God's Blessings. In coming weeks, we will also be considering the companion themes of the Joy of Managing God's Blessings and the Joy of Sharing God's Blessings.

When we give to God by giving to our church and to those around us, we experience one of the true joys of being Christians. Our Lord Jesus taught, *"It is more blessed to give than to receive"* (Acts 20:35). God doesn't need our gifts, of course, but He does invite us and teach us to give them, nevertheless. In turn, He accepts and uses them and gives us joy in sharing them.

As we respond to God's love for us in Christ by giving back to Him a part of what He's given to us, He responds by giving us even more. Jesus also teaches us, *"Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you"* (Luke 6:38). Although we don't give for the purpose of receiving God's blessings, God's Word nonetheless promises us that, when we give faithfully and willingly, we will receive an abundance of spiritual blessings and, in some cases, material blessings, as well.

Have you ever wondered why you are left with such a joyful feeling when you are able to give a gift to our church or in order to help a person in need? The answer to that question is rooted in the fact that, as Christians, we are being recreated in the image of God. To be made in God's image means that we are made to be like Him, whose nature it is to give ... and give and give!

Giving helps us, in turn, to feel fulfilled as we reflect His nature. Although the image of God was lost as a result of the Fall into sin, as those converted by faith in Jesus, we *"have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator"* (Colossians 3:10). Our Creator empowers us to give joyfully to our church and to others according to His good and gracious will. With this attitude of joyful gratitude, God keeps us

close to Him in faith, and others also see His image reflected in us.

Our pursuit of fulfillment and joy culminates in the discovery that we receive those blessings when, by God's grace, we respond with eagerness to His directive to give. Like King David, we exclaim, *"But who [are we] ... that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from You, and of Your own have we given You"* (1 Chronicles 29:14).

As we focus our attention on this theme in the coming weeks, you are encouraged to make a point of reading the tri-fold brochures which you will find in your mailbox in conjunction with each of the Sundays of this special emphasis. The first of them was placed in your mailbox on Sunday, April 24. Extra copies of the brochure remain available in the narthex.

Please also consider taking advantage of the three weekly devotionals which will be provided.

Copies of the first such devotional, containing five brief daily devotions focusing on the theme of "The Joy of Receiving God's Blessings" will remain available on the table in the narthex throughout the month of May.

The Lord's richest blessings to each of you in Christ Jesus, our risen and living Savior, as you, too, experience the joy of generosity – generosity first freely received from God in Christ and then eagerly shared with those around us!

In Christ's Service,

Pastor Derek Riddle

Confirmation 2016

May is always a busy month, it seems: Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and ramping up for graduations, graduation parties, and other end-of-the-school year and beginning-of-summer activities. Hopefully not lost in the busyness of the month is Confirmation Sunday, which will take place here at Peace on Sunday, May 15.

This year's Jr. High Confirmation class consists of the following seventh and eighth-grade students: Isaac Hein, Clayton Henry, Josh Kamyszek, Jacob Longoria, Abby Muller, Emmalyn Riddle, and Halee Witkowski. As they are preparing for their Elders Examination on Sunday afternoon, May 1, completing their remaining

class requirements, and as Confirmation Sunday is drawing near, please keep each of them and their families in your prayers.

Love Illusions

Over the past several months, I have been continuing to share some of the information Dr. Bryan Salminen shared during the "Keeping Love Alive" Marriage Workshop we hosted here at Peace last October. In the second half of the workshop, Dr. Salminen addressed five "Love Illusions." So far I have shared the first three illusions: "**Love is a feeling.**" "**Relationships should be free of conflict.**" And finally, last month, "**Our relationship can never change because of my partner's personality.**" This month I would like to share the final two illusions.

Illusion #4: "My husband can't communicate!"

This, in fact, is the most common complaint on the part of wives. The fact of the matter is, however, that we can't not communicate. Everything we do is a form of communication.

One of the reasons this complaint is often voiced on the part of wives has to do with the difference in the way women and men derive and experience closeness. Women tend to derive closeness from personal interaction. For men, this is not necessarily the case, however. While for women, rapport is often developed by talking, for men merely reporting (rather than establishing rapport) is generally adequate.

It isn't that husbands fail to communicate. It's that men and women communicate differently. For one thing, for women it is generally much easier to bounce back and forth between right-brain (creativity) and left-brain (logic) functions. For men, this is much more difficult. However, it is possible to change, if there is a willingness to do so. It is important, therefore, for husbands and wives to learn to compromise with each other in recognition of their differing communication styles and needs.

Illusion #5: "My wife is always nagging me!"

Husbands have their share of complaints, too. This is one of the most common, and it is often perceived by husbands as an attempt on the part of their wives to push them away. Actually, the opposite is true! Generally, when a wife nags her husband it is, in fact, an attempt to achieve closeness.

Being "nagged" is often difficult for husbands, because generally men don't want to "be controlled." However, when a wife stops nagging her husband, that is when a husband should be concerned, because that probably means that she has given up. Consequently, husbands should be encouraged to hear their wives' nagging as a request for closeness, rather than as a complaint.

I hope this information, shared over the past several newsletters, has been beneficial in some way. If you wish to re-read any of the insights from the "Keeping Love Alive" Workshop, you can access the December 2015 and February-May 2016 newsletters any time on our web site at www.peacelcms.org.

If you are interested in doing some further reading on the subject of marriage, here are a couple of books to consider:

- *Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage: Unlocking the Secrets to Life, Love, and Marriage* by Mark Gungor
- *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* by Deborah Tannen

BOARD OF ELDERS

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (*Psalms 118:24*) Yesterday is gone, tomorrow is yet to come, and today is today. God made today. Let us rejoice and be glad in it as we serve others through the Holy Spirit. God sent His disciples and now is sending us to go and make disciples of all nations. As we gather together on Sunday mornings with our brothers and sisters in Christ for worship and fellowship, we hear God's Word and receive His Sacraments: Inwardly digesting His Word in our hearts so that we may grow in our faith, praying and praising God with our songs as one family of Christ, and caring and encouraging one another today and everyday as we grow spiritually. Yesterday is gone! Tomorrow is yet to come! Today! Today is the day to serve God because He made it, and we can rejoice and be glad in it as we serve Him.

If you or anyone you know have any questions or concerns or need encouragement, please call a member of your assigned Elder Team (or any Elder). Thanks be to God for all our blessings!

The Lutheran Hour

The Lutheran Hour can be heard locally on Sunday mornings at 7:00 a.m. on 92.5 FM and at 11:00 a.m. on 1450 AM. You can also listen on-line or via podcast at www.lutheranhour.org. Now you can also download the new Lutheran Hour Mobile App to your mobile device. Instructions for doing so can be found at www.lhm.org/apps/.

May 1

"So, Ask Already!"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz
God loves you. He wants to hear from you. Ask Him anything and everything. Go ahead, ask!
(John 16:22-33)

May 8

"Jesus Prayed for You"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz
Prayer begins in the heart of Jesus Christ who intercedes for you, offering prayers on your behalf to God the Father.
(John 17:20-26)

May 15

"Jesus Gives Us the Help We Need"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz

Jesus doesn't want you to be in the dark about how much He loves you.

(John 14:23-31)

May 22

"Here's a New, Lasting Identity"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz

The Bread of Life, Living Water, Good Shepherd:

Jesus' statements leave no doubt as to who He is, for you.

(John 8:48-58)

May 29

"Identity Theft"

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus

Nobody likes to have their identity stolen, and that includes the Lord who said, "You shall have no other gods before Me."

(Galatians 1:5-8)

Stewardship Corner

Do we Christians really have to tithe? Are we really under a compulsion to give? Aren't we free? Don't we have a freedom from the law that was purchased for us by Jesus Christ's death and resurrection?

The problem is that our sinful flesh uses our freedom for selfishness. Christ did not die and rise so that we could give less and do less good work in the world. He died and rose to free us from the compulsion of the Law, to free us from a burden we could not bear.

We are missing the point completely if we use the freedom from the Law that Christ won by His passion, crucifixion, and resurrection to give less, or to do less of any good work. Christ set us free to live in His image of faithfulness, generosity, and kindness. We are free from the Law's condemnation so that we can walk in the good works the Lord has prepared for us.

Our freedom is not given to indulge our sinful and selfish flesh. Our freedom was purchased and won by Christ so that we could serve our neighbors — our family, our society, our church.

As a result, much of your freedom is not a freedom from, but a freedom *to* and *for*. You are not free *from* serving your neighbor. You are free *for* service toward your neighbor—willingly and without compulsion. You are not free *from* giving to your church; you are freed *to* give to your local congregation in joy, willingly, and without compulsion.

The reason you are free to serve, the reason you are free to give, is because of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sin He won for you on the cross, which He delivers to you in the Gospel and the sacraments. That is our motivation. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). And since God loves us in this way, by giving us His only-begotten Son so that we do not perish, we also love one another in this way, by giving what we have so that our neighbor does not perish.

If the God who has provided the sacrifice for your eternal salvation, the God who delivers that salvation to you in Holy Baptism, the God who continues to forgive you and show you His faithfulness, if that same God is the One who also promises to give you daily bread and take care of your earthly life, you can trust in Him, even in giving. After all, Jesus Christ is proof that God loves you and will take care of you.

Taken from www.lcms.org

Keep Our Ministry Growing

Please note the match poster in the narthex; as of April 24 the mortgage is down to \$6,032! Watch for a special envelope in your mailbox around Memorial Day (it will have a flag on it). We live in a country where so many give their lives to fight to keep our freedoms safe. Worshipping in a place of our choice is one of those freedoms. If you are able to help out, please put your donation in the special envelope and place in the offering plate or black lock box. By paying our mortgage off early, we will have the freedom to begin some new ministries. God's command to us is to "go make disciples." How exciting it will be to watch how God will bring that about at Peace! A BIG Thank You to all the brave men and women who fought or are currently fighting to keep us free. May God bless you and keep you safe. "With God, all things are possible."



Visit us on the web at
www.peacelcms.org

Peace Lutheran Church
Rogers City, MI

