



## Immanuel Lutheran Church INSIGHTS FROM IMMANUEL

THE REV. DR. CHAD FOSTER, PASTOR  
NOVEMBER 2009

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### Showing our Gratitude

God gives us His love, goodness, and mercy daily. He has given us victory over sin and death through His Son. Christ has given us the blessings of forgiveness, justification, a new life, and an eternal hope. Because of His bountiful blessings, we should be compelled to show our gratitude. But, do we? Could we, at times, be taking all that we receive for granted?

If Christ were to come into our homes in physical form, certainly we would express our thanks in tangible ways. We would make Him comfortable, run errands for Him, offer our best food, and give Him our time and attention. However, we don't have that opportunity, so we show our gratitude in different ways.

One way that we express our gratitude is to give thanks throughout the day in our prayers and thoughts. When we see life and its blessings as gifts, we are prepared to offer our thanks. Our thanksgiving is expressed when we use the faith God has given us to live in obedience to His Word. God hears and sees our gratitude through the lives we live. When we generously share our time and money with others in Christian love, we show our thanksgiving for our gifts. Our giving reflects Christ's love in us. We extend our thanks to our heavenly Father when we give Him praise and glory in weekly worship and privately throughout each day.

As stewards, we find that our gratitude to God opens our hearts to receive more of God's love which enables us to be more faithful with our time, talents, and treasures. In response to God's love and grace, we give ourselves and our resources. When we acknowledge God as the creator and owner of all, we will serve the Lord faithfully out of gratitude for all His gifts to us. Our gratefulness to God will enable us to give thanks even during bad times because God promises to comfort and sustain us in all things.

Blessings on your Thanksgiving season!

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Chad Foster". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rev. Dr. Chad Foster

# STEWARDSHIP DEVOTION

## “Firstfruits Giving”

### Scripture Readings:

“Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the Lord your God” (Exodus 23:19).

“I give you all the finest olive oil and all the finest new wine and grain they give the Lord as the firstfruits of their harvest. All the land’s firstfruits that they bring to the Lord will be yours” (Numbers 18:12-13).



### Thoughts:

Firstfruits giving means that we give to God first rather than as leftovers after our own needs are met. When we give our firstfruits, no matter what the gift, we acknowledge that God is first in our lives and that He is the giver of all that we have. Firstfruits giving expresses the special relationship that we have with Jesus Christ.

Firstfruits giving had its origin in the Old Testament. Because the culture in the Old Testament was agricultural, the people brought crops and animals for their firstfruits offering.

Acknowledging God as the owner of the harvest, Old Testament believers willingly returned to Him their firstfruits. “On the day of firstfruits, when you present to the Lord an offering of new grain during the Feast of Weeks, hold a sacred assembly and do no regular work” (Numbers 28:26).

The children of Israel were required to bring to the Lord their firstfruits. When the Lord is honored, He promises to bless. “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).

God gave us His first and best when He gave His one and only Son. Jesus took human form and was born of the Virgin Mary for our salvation. As His people, we receive with humility and respond with generosity. We give our firstfruits because God has given us life and all of life’s resources. Firstfruits giving calls on us to set aside our offerings to the Lord first before handling our other obligations. Love for the Lord makes our firstfruits giving possible. When we give off the top as a priority, we confirm our trust in God.

### Discussion Thoughts:

- Why was God pleased with Abel’s gift and not with Cain’s (Genesis 4:2b-7)?
- What does firstfruits giving teach you?
- Where should our firstfruits go?

**Prayer:** Lord, You are the source of all that we have. Give us wisdom to acknowledge You as our creator and provider and hearts that willingly give all that we have to You. Through Jesus we pray. Amen

## **LWML News**

Health kits and quilts have been completed for the 2009 Lutheran World Relief pick-up in November. Thanks to the generous donations of Immanuel's members, we were able to prepare 58 health kits and even had 28 extra bars of soap to pack separately. Eighteen quilts (plus 1 blanket) were also constructed this year, using all recycled materials donated for this purpose. We have learned that the need for these health kits and quilts is reaching a critical point, so your assistance with this yearly project is a special blessing.

The holiday bazaar and bake sale will be held on Saturday, November 7 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. We appreciate all the crafts and baked goods donated for this event. In addition, we will again be featuring the *Favorite Recipes of Kentucky Celebrities* cookbook prepared by Pam Whinnery. If you don't have one of these books yet, they are a real treat. In addition to the very special recipes, the informational paragraphs accompanying each recipe are a Kentucky history lesson all their own. The proceeds of our sale fund our budget for 2010.

The next meeting of the LWML is Thursday, November 12 at 9:30 a.m. Please join us for this meeting. We will be holding election of officers for 2010 and preparing the budget, in addition to general business items.

Our Christmas luncheon this year will be at Miss Scarlett's restaurant in Grand Rivers, KY, on Thursday, December 10. We will have a guest speaker and hope to have a large group in attendance.

## **Golden Agers'**

The next Golden Agers' luncheon is at Holmes Restaurant on highway 641 in Murray at 11:30 a.m. on November 5, 2009. For more information please call Lyle or Nancy Spencer at (270) 395-9642.

## **Become a "Fan" of Immanuel**

You can follow the events of Immanuel and receive updates right on your Facebook Wall by becoming a "fan" of Immanuel. On Facebook, just search *Immanuel Lutheran Church Murray* and click "become a fan." We are up to 20 fans!

## **Volleyball**

The Immanuel Volleyball Team has games the following days in November:

November 3 @ 8:15pm

November 10 @ 6:00pm and 6:45pm (double-header)

November 17 @ 6:00pm

## Counters for November

November 1	Jenstrom, LaRochelle
November 8	Friebel
November 15	Rotterman, Bohleber
November 22	Gupton, Benton
November 29	Krizman, Holsten, Pahlke

### Readers for November

November 1	Donna Holsten
November 8	Kyle Zimmerman
November 15	David Koelsch
November 22	Sam Cooper
November 29	Fred Bless

### Greeters for November

November 1	Larry & Sandy Opperman
November 8	Roger & Linda LaRochelle
November 15	Walter & Pam Whinnery
November 22	Donna Holsten, Claire Benton
November 29	George & Eldora Friebel

## November Scripture Readings

### All Saints' Day – November 1

Psalm.....	Psalm 91: 9-16
First Reading .....	Revelation 7: 9-17
Epistle Reading .....	1 John 3: 1-3
Gospel Reading.....	Matthew 5: 1-12

### Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost – November 8

Psalm.....	Psalm 126
Old Testament Reading .....	1 Kings 17: 8-16
Epistle Reading .....	Hebrews 9: 24-28
Gospel Reading.....	Mark 12: 38-44

### Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost – November 15

Psalm.....	Psalm 119: 121-128
Old Testament Reading .....	Daniel 12: 1-3
Epistle Reading .....	Hebrews 10: 11-25
Gospel Reading.....	Mark 13: 1-13

### Last Sunday of the Church Year – November 22

Psalm.....	Psalm 130
Old Testament Reading .....	Isaiah 51: 4-6
Epistle Reading .....	Jude 20-25
Gospel Reading.....	Mark 13: 24-37

### First Sunday in Advent – November 29

Psalm.....	Psalm 25: 1-9
Old Testament Reading .....	Jeremiah 33: 14-16
Epistle Reading .....	1 Thessalonians 3: 9-13
Gospel Reading.....	Luke 19: 28-40

## November Birthdays

11/2	Nordene Lorson
11/3	Juanita Jones
11/7	Karl Baum
11/12	Peggy Koelsch
11/13	Loren Heithus
11/14	Ruth Todd
11/16	Audrey Kiser
11/17	Joe Keller
11/20	Matthew Hlinka
11/22	Walter Whinnery, Jr
11/22	Linda LaRochelle
11/22	Wendy Tudor
11/23	Richard Buggs
11/23	Mary Bohleber
11/25	Tom Kiser
11/28	Lara Homsey
11/28	Shirley Jenstrom

## November Anniversaries

11/1	Mr. & Mrs. Monte Young
11/4	Mr. & Mrs. John Ely
11/27	Mr. & Mrs. Wilbert Boehmer
11/29	Mr. & Mrs. Walter Baum

# NOVEMBER 2009

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
1 All Saints Day  Sunday School/Bible Class 9 am Worship w/ Holy Communion 10:30 am	2	3 Election Day	4	5	6	7 Holiday Bazaar & Bake Sale 8 am – 1 pm
8 23rd Sunday after Pentecost  Sunday School/Bible Class 9 am Worship 10:30 am  MSU Student Luncheon	9	10 Martin Luther's Birthday, 1483	11 Veterans Day	12 LWML meeting 9:30 am  Council 4:30 pm	13	14
15 24 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost  Sunday School/Bible Class 9 am Worship w/ Holy Communion 10:30 am  Gensmer Benefit	16	17	18	19 Quilting 9:30am	20	21
22 Last Sunday of the Church Year Christ the King  Sunday School/Bible Class 9 am Worship 10:30 am	23	24	25	26 Thanksgiving Day Worship w/ Holy Communion 10 am	27	28
29 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent  Sunday School/Bible Class 9 am Worship 10:30 am	30 St. Andrew, Apostle					