



Volume 2

# TREASURED NEWS



Issue 6

FEBRUARY 2014

## THE GIVING CHRISTIAN # 1

This month we begin a new series of articles dealing with Stewardship. In the months ahead I would like to consider with you how the giving Christian gives faithfully, compassionately, gracefully, proportionately, and globally. We will take one of these thoughts each month over the next five months.

I would like to begin by reminding each of us that giving is at the heart of the Christian's life, at the heart of the Gospel, and at the heart of God. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son."* God is the ultimate, infinite, and perfect giver. And because giving is a natural part of God's nature, when we give, we identify with Him and reflect His likeness in which we were made.

As you know, everything of true value is given by God. He has given us life itself - physical life that we so enjoy, and spiritual life through the sacrifice of His Son on the cross to pay for our sins and make possible our salvation and inheritance of eternal life in heaven. God has set the pattern for giving and there is no worthier goal than to give like He gives. Is that impossible? I would suggest to you it is not, as we will hopefully see over these five months.

Let us consider the first of the ways in which a Christian gives. Faithfulness is the first and most important quality of a Christian steward. St. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 4:2, *It is required that those who have been given a trust must prove*

*faithful.* The "trust" that Paul speaks about includes all the riches and resources given to us by God. His plan is that we manage these resources in a way that is spiritually wise and profitable.

As we think of the Christian giver giving faithfully, there are two thoughts that come to mind. The first is that giving faithfully means that we give by faith in God, mindful that He is the Lord of all. The second is that by giving faithfully, we give in a faithful, dependable manner. In both

thoughts, God provides the power and we follow through with the practice. He gives us the gift of faith: we, in turn, exercise that faith by giving for His glory and His purposes.

Giving faithfully, though, is not just about money. My 29 years as a pastor

have convinced me that one who gives money faithfully is much more likely to faithfully steward his/her time, talents, treasures, tissue, touch, testimony, and trash (as we have discussed before). Money is a major determining factor of much, if not all, that we do in life. Jesus said it like this in Matthew 6:19, *"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* I have counseled with many people whose struggle and crisis can be traced directly to where their "treasure" is. As Jesus said, if our "treasure" is in the wrong place, then our heart is in the wrong place as well. Faithfulness in giving - to the right purposes in the right way - has a powerfully positive effect and keeps all our priorities in the right order.

**FAITHFULNESS  
is the first and most  
important quality of a  
Christian steward.**

Rev. John Heckmann  
LWML Sr. Pastoral Counselor



### MITE REPORT BY DISTRICT — JANUARY 2014

DISTRICT	CURRENT	TOTAL	DISTRICT	CURRENT	TOTAL
ATLANTIC		4,497.40	NEBRASKA NORTH	720.71	7,359.23
CAL-NEV-HAWAII	1,391.63	14,790.68	NEBRASKA SOUTH		7,583.65
CAROLINAS	5,044.51	6,044.50	NEW ENGLAND	658.38	5,568.33
CENTRAL ILLINOIS	1,247.65	14,831.66	NEW JERSEY	414.10	1,721.70
CHESAPEAKE	3,305.27	8,200.48	NORTH DAKOTA	2,017.63	12,019.72
EASTERN	1,534.31	4,962.40	NORTH WISCONSIN	881.00	12,880.00
ENGLISH	184.08	5,268.26	NORTHERN ILLINOIS	1,100.56	14,204.79
FLORIDA-GEORGIA	10,258.65	17,427.13	OHIO	4,547.68	14,613.29
GULF STATES	794.73	4,656.52	OKLAHOMA	5,770.08	15,575.04
INDIANA		10,253.98	OREGON	3,484.01	9,075.86
IOWA EAST	6,328.43	12,222.12	PACIFIC SW	4,426.11	20,749.53
IOWA WEST	11,241.94	19,836.28	ROCKY MOUNTAIN	1,659.31	11,428.21
KANSAS	4,989.98	11,966.18	SELK	426.38	1,250.48
LOUISIANA-MISSISSIPPI		2,882.22	SOUTH DAKOTA	1,527.69	7,745.28
MICHIGAN	1,763.18	23,324.31	SOUTH WISCONSIN	2,648.03	17,199.15
MID-SOUTH		10,454.46	SOUTHERN ILLINOIS	2,724.27	6,248.06
MINNESOTA NORTH		11,977.49	TEXAS	2,586.78	24,910.93
MINNESOTA SOUTH	2,158.28	19,945.26	UTAH-IDAHO	456.76	4,903.37
MISSOURI	3,385.32	26,424.98	WASH-ALASKA	1,689.64	11,841.51
MONTANA	481.65	4,141.80	WYOMING	3,618.50	6,554.92
			TOTAL	95,467.23	447,541.16

### MITES FROM OTHER SOURCES

Mite Donations	1,092.50	27,133.21	Annual Appeal	5,338.00	45,367.56
Mite Donations Restricted	500.00	1,590.00	GoodSearch		1,807.49
Children's Miss Adv	70.15	581.28	Thrivent Simply Giving		345.00
Conv. Offering #1		54,017.32	Thrivent Choice Dollars	377.00	16,766.00
Mission Pledge Walk		73,791.04			
Golf Tournament		7,218.74	<b>OTHER MITE TOTAL</b>	8,407.65	234,155.64
PayPal	1,030.00	5,538.00	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	103,874.88	681,696.80

All totals are unconfirmed pending verification from the accounting office.

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# OUR MITES IN ACTION

## Two Mission Grants Receive Partial Funding

### Lutheran Heritage Foundation Lutheran Children’s Books for Southeast Asia Receives \$8,000



This grant will fund the printing and distribution of approximately 9,000 copies of *Luther’s Small Catechism* and approximately 6,000 copies of *A Child’s Garden of Bible Stories* in languages of Southeast Asia.

### Rebuilding Nord Est Haiti Lutheran School Receives \$25,000



This grant will help to construct the foundation, walls, and roof of a Lutheran primary school in Haiti, to meet current earthquake standards and serve the needs, both physical and spiritual, of Haitian children.

## IRS REQUIREMENT TO ACKNOWLEDGE CONTRIBUTIONS

**A DONOR CANNOT CLAIM A TAX DEDUCTION FOR ANY SINGLE CONTRIBUTION OF \$250 OR MORE UNLESS THE DONOR OBTAINS A CONTEMPORANEOUS, WRITTEN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTION FROM THE RECIPIENT ORGANIZATION.** (Taken from IRS Publication 1771.) You may follow this sample formatted letter for a donation of any size; however, the acknowledgement is necessary for gifts of \$250 or more. The IRS statement at the bottom of the letter is imperative.

Thank you for your gift of \$        dated        , to the (District’s name) of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League. Your gift will enable the District to .....

(Insert a short statement about one of your district grants to help the donor see the impact of the donation.)

Thank you for helping to make a difference in the lives of others with your prayers and by sharing your blessings. This letter serves as a record of your charitable gift. May the Lord guide and keep you in His care.

Your Name and signature

*Include a Bible verse in italics and ending with (Bible reference).*

**FOR TAX PURPOSES: You have received no goods or services from the (District’s name) of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League other than intangible, religious benefits.**

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS?

Someone once said “that if you want to hear God laugh, tell Him your plans.” Isn’t it such a comfort that, as called and chosen children of God, we know He has a plan for our lives? **“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”** (Jeremiah 29:11). Because He sacrificed His only Son to make us heirs of His kingdom, we know that the plan He has for us is a great one!

God is the Owner of all creation but He entrusted it to His human creatures -- you and me -- to manage wisely for His purposes. We were put here on earth to make a contribution – to *Transfer the Blessings*. We were made in His image to share in His work.

Creating a Plan – a Christian Estate Plan – that provides for the people you love and ministries you care about is an important planning step for everyone. Whether it’s blessing your family, finding ways to bless the Lord, or making the best decision to select options that transfer our values and valuables; planning is vital in carrying out our stewardship as managers of God’s creation.

As you consider your plans to direct your passion for giving to family and all ministries for the Lord’s work, we are blessed to have the expertise and availability of our own LWML Gift Planning Counselor, Linda Gage, to help you create and implement your own *Lifetime Plan for Giving*.



Please contact Linda at [lindagage.lwml@gmail.com](mailto:lindagage.lwml@gmail.com) or at (800) 741-4138. She can answer any question you may have and assist you in determining the charitable giving plan for you and your family. You can count on her expert and confidential counsel, provided at no cost to you. Consider inviting Linda to your next rally, retreat, or convention as an Interest Session Leader. More information is available at [www.lwmlgiftplan.org](http://www.lwmlgiftplan.org).

**A SPECIAL GIFT  
FOR  
VALENTINE’S DAY**

Why not give a friend a gift subscription to the *Lutheran Woman’s Quarterly*? She’ll LOVE you for it!

Go to [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) to order her a gift certificate right now!



**THRIVENT MEMBERS  
DIRECT YOUR DOLLARS BEFORE MARCH 31, 2014**

Giving back has always been important to Thrivent members. Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has provided more than \$170 million through the Thrivent Choice Dollars® program to help congregations, educational institutions, and other non-profit organizations since the program launched in 2010. Your Choice Dollars are determined by the amount of your insurance premiums, contract values, and for serving as a Thrivent leader.

- Who? Thrivent members
- What? Direct your Choice Dollars®
- When? Before March 31, 2014
- Where? From the comfort of your own home!
- Why? Support our LWML Mission Grants
- How? Call (800) 847-4836 and say “Thrivent Choice,” or Visit the website at [www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com)

**Choice Dollars® directed to LWML**  
 2011 - 2013 biennium - \$53,764  
 2013 - 2015 biennium - \$16,766 (10 months)  
 Thank you for supporting LWML missions.



## BE THOU MY VISION

### Irish Hymn - 8th Century



*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them  
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).*

Only one missionary, known by his own distinct color of green, has the distinguished honor of a global holiday. Of course, that would be St. Patrick, missionary to Ireland.

Born in A.D. 373 in Scotland, his father was a deacon and his grandfather a priest. When he was 16, raiders invaded his town and burned his home. Pirates found Patrick hiding in the bushes and they seized him and took him aboard their ship. He was taken to Ireland as a slave. He wrote: *“The Lord opened my mind to an awareness of my unbelief, in order that I might remember my transgressions and turn with all my heart to the Lord my God.”*

Patrick eventually escaped and returned to his family in Scotland. Of course, they were very happy to have him home again and hoped he would never leave again. One night he had a dream where an Irishman was pleading with him to come evangelize Ireland. The dream reminded him of St. Paul’s vision, recorded in Acts 16, of a man of Macedonia begging St. Paul to come to preach the Gospel to his people.

Patrick was about 30 years old by now, and after much consideration about the vision, he returned to his former captors with only one book, the Latin Bible, in his hand. The Holy Spirit was with him as he preached the Gospel and multitudes came to listen. However, he did have opposition from the Druids and they wanted to kill him.

The Lord was with Patrick and his words were powerful. He became one of the most fruitful evangelists of all time as he started approximately 200 churches and baptized 100,000 converts.

In Ireland, Patrick’s work endured through time, in fact, several centuries later, the Irish church was

still producing hymns, prayers, sermons, and songs of worship. One prayer, written in the eighth century by an unknown poet, asked God to be his Vision, his Wisdom, and his Best Thought by day or night.

Mary Elizabeth Byrne, a scholar in Dublin, Ireland, translated this ancient Irish poem into English in 1905. Another scholar in Manchester, England, took Byrne’s translation and crafted it into verses with rhyme and meter. Then it was set to a traditional Irish folk song, “Slane,” named for an area of Ireland where Patrick reportedly challenged local Druids with the Gospel.

Here are several verses from one of our oldest and most moving hymns:

*Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart,  
Naught be all else to me save that Thou art.  
Thou my best thought by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.*

*Be Thou my Wisdom, and Thou my true Word;  
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;  
Thou my great Father, and I thy true son,  
Thou in my dwelling, and I with Thee one.*

*High King of heaven, my victory won,  
May I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heaven’s Sun!  
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.*

Taken from Then Sings My Soul  
By Robert J. Morgan 2003  
(Thomas Nelson, Inc.)