



It is no secret that God calls us to be generous with the gifts He has given us. Throughout the Bible, we read that just as God has generously given to us, so are we to give generously one to another. As Jesus said, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35) and “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful” (Luke 6:36).

But God also calls us to give to Him. And He, who does all things well, presses it into service for the benefit of all the people of God. See for example what God spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, after he and the people were safely brought out of Egypt across the Red Sea on dry land:

The Lord said to Moses, “Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, goats' hair, tanned rams' skins, goatskins,[a] acacia wood, oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it. (Ex. 25: 1-9)

Notice in verse two that the Lord instructs Moses to tell the Israelites to “take for me a contribution” and that from everyone motivated from gratitude for what God has just accomplished and given to them, Moses is to gather up “the contribution for me.”

Pay attention, though, why the Lord wants the people of Israel to gather up these contributions for Him. God tells Moses precisely why: “let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst.” The purpose for the contribution of the Israelites was so that He may dwell with them, that He would live among them. Through the tabernacle and the priesthood, through their rites and ceremonies, through their feasts and festivals, as through means, the Lord God, who brought them out of the bondage of Egypt would live and dwell among them and be their God, and lead them into the promised land, which flowed with milk and honey.

God dwells among us still. In the fullness of time, God's son was born of woman, born under the law to redeem those under the law. He brought us out of bondage to sin, death, the devil, and Hell, and He did this by His obedient suffering and death, his resurrection and ascension. But He is not gone. He dwells with us through the means of His Word and His sacraments, through the preaching and the teaching of our pastors, through the rites and ceremonies of our liturgy. He dwells with us in the Church through those means. And He is leading us to the true promised land, to the new heavens and the new earth in the new creation.

In the meantime, as God, even now, continues to call us to give to Him, let us, who have been saved from slavery to sin and death, the devil and hell, be so moved in our hearts as to give generously to Him so that the means of grace, the means of His gracious dwelling among us, would continue now and into the future. For just as He did then so does He do now. He presses the gifts given to Him into service for the benefit of all His people. He puts it to use so that we may have Him with us always, even unto the end of the age.

ST. JAMES CHALLENGE – Getting ready for the next school year is approaching very quickly. Enrollment will begin in mid-January. Word of mouth has proven to be a highly successful marketing tool. Therefore, while seeing many people over the holidays, please participate in a challenge to tell five different families about St. James Lutheran School and the awesome opportunity that lies before them for a strong Christian education along with rigorous academics. Let me know how this goes. If you need further information or just want to talk about it, please contact the school office.
-Principal Landskroener

EXTENDED CARE WORKER NEEDED – St. James is looking to hire an Extended Care worker beginning January 7th. This position will be supervising 1st - 8th grade students, Monday - Friday from 3:00 – 5:30 pm, (Wednesday begin at 2:30 pm). If you are interested or know of someone who might be, please contact the school office. (222-8267)

BOXTOPS AND UPC LABELS – Please continue to save General Mills Box Tops, Hy-Vee UPCs and Tyson A+ labels throughout the school year. They help support our school library! Thank you!

COLLECTING LIDS – We are again in the business of collecting lids to purchase a hallway bench. (The current bench will find its permanent home on the playground.) We will collect lids until we have enough to get the bench (200 pounds). You can bring them into the church or school office. The lids must be clean!!

Acceptable caps include caps from medicine bottles, milk jugs, detergent, hair spray, toothpaste, deodorant, apple sauce pouch, drink bottle (soda, water, juice, sport drinks), flip-top (ketchup), spout (mustard), spray paint, ointment tube, baby food, shampoo or conditioner, cottage cheese container, mayonnaise jar, yogurt, peanut butter jar, ice cream bucket (under 8 inches), Cool Whip container, coffee can, cream cheese container, butter container and Pringles lids. Remember, the lids must be clean! Thank you for helping us purchase another bench!

EAGLE VISION

EVERYONE deserves our respect

ACT with kindness

GOD'S LOVE is our greatest strength

LOVE one another

EVERY DAY live for Jesus

SHOW OTHERS we are Christian

