

# Cross CURRENTS



Issue 14.11

November 2019

Living Water Lutheran Church exists to give the Triune God's pure gospel in Word and Sacrament to thirsty souls in our congregation, our community, and the world.

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## Thanksgiving for Christian Giving

**You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God... Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!**  
—2 Corinthians 9:11,15 (NIV)

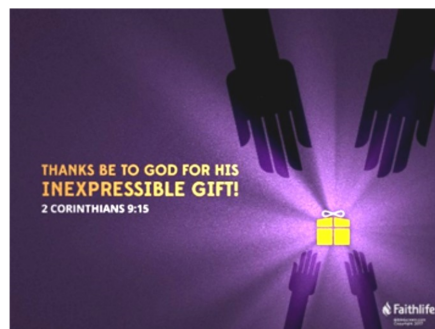
Thanksgiving can be a fascinating time for a pastor to observe. It's fascinating to observe the sorts of things people say they are thankful for. It's fascinating to see how people say their thanks (sometimes with great humility, other times with great self-righteousness). It's fascinating to see to what or to whom people give thanks. Don't you so often hear or read people simply say, "I'm just so thankful for..." but they never go on to say to what or to whom they are thankful? Apparently, their thankfulness is some warm, fuzzy feeling they have inside them, stays inside them, and doesn't go anywhere.

Contrast that with the Apostle Paul's thanksgiving here in 2 Corinthians. What is he

thankful for? He doesn't mention family, food, or football. He's thankful that Christians are able to give to others! Paul is grateful that God supplies us with more than our daily bread so

that we have opportunities to be generous to others. How often will you see that post around Thanksgiving? The one where you friend says, "I'm so thankful that I get to give!"

Not only is Paul's thankfulness list a bit different than your typical American Thanksgiving clichés, so is the recipient of his thanksgiving. Paul clearly directs his thanksgiving to God: "thanks be to God for this indescribable gift!" He doesn't direct it to his followers on the web nor to his family dressed in sweaters and sitting around a table. Paul directs his thanksgiving to God because Paul knows that God has richly and daily provided not only things needed for physical life but also for spiritual life. Even the spiritual gift of giving is a gift that God gives. While Paul acknowledges the Corinthians' part, he points them to the power behind their giving.



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Please allow me, then, to join Paul in thanking God for the spiritual gift of giving witnessed in a congregation of Christians. Not the one in Corinth. (I don't know them, and they have long since entered heaven.) But in our congregation. Living Water has been graciously gifted with the spiritual gift of giving. Your offerings have far exceeded what was anticipated and surpass our budgeted needs. As the 2020 budget is being prepared, we have no reason to suspect that money will be an obstacle to ministry. *You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous...* So, thank you for so eagerly participating in the "incredible gift" of Christian giving!

But not just thanks to you. Even more so, "thanks be to God!" Thanks be to God that he has warmed our cold hearts by his good gifts. Thanks be to God that he has forgiven our sins, including our selfishness, through Jesus Christ. Thanks be to God that he has enabled us by the Holy Spirit to see opportunities to give as they really are: gifts from God because we get to participate in his love. To watch how this takes place in our congregation is almost indescribable. It's certainly a blessing – a gift – from God that I get to serve in this situation.

Perhaps the most fascinating thing for me, as a pastor, to observe around Thanksgiving is to watch so many Americans guilt-ed into muttering thanks but then see Christians gratefully shout thanks. You are not moved by guilt or a desire to get noticed. You are moved by Christ's love for you at the cross, by the Father's open hand which generously provides for you, and by the Spirit's warming of your heart through his gifts. That gospel-centered attitude is truly a gift!

God bless your Thanksgiving celebrations, and may he be praised and thanked for allowing us to participate in Christian giving!

In Jesus Christ's riches,

Pastor Aaron Voss

## Fellowship Hosting

Members of Living Water enjoy Fellowship on Sundays after worship. More than just enjoying coffee and snacks, it is an opportunity to build relationships with each other. Fellowship hosts help this time run smoothly. Detailed instructions on what hosting includes are in the narthex and are posted in the kitchen. Please consider signing up to serve in this way.

## Trunk or Treat Thank You

Thank you to everyone who had a part in our Trunk or Treat—from those who donated items, to those who volunteered, to those who prayed for our efforts.



## Tomorrow's Choice

Tomorrow's Choice Family Resource Center will be hosting their annual banquet and raffle on Sunday, November 10 at 4:00 pm at Trinity Lutheran Church in Waukesha. Donations are needed for the event. Tickets to attend are \$30. Tomorrow's Choice is a local, gospel-centered, and WELS-based organization which serves and counsels women facing an unplanned pregnancy, struggling with the after effects of an abortion, and concerned about abstinence; it also supports families with earthly needs.

## Advent Worship

When the time comes to celebrate Christmas with family and friends, you know what to expect and do. But do you know what to expect and what to do when it comes to celebrate the spiritual reason for Christmas? Midweek worship services will use Galatians 4:4-5 to help prepare us to celebrate when the time comes for Jesus to come, both in Bethlehem and on the Last Day. Midweek services will be held on Wednesdays, December 4, 11, and 18 at 6:30 pm. There will be a free, fellowship dinner each of these Wednesdays beginning at 5:30 pm.



## Sunday School Christmas Service

This year our Sunday School students will be leading worship with their Christmas service on December 22. The service will use the Chrismons, the Christmas ornaments, and their meanings to tell the wonderful news of Christmas. They will be practicing their recitations and songs for the service during the Sunday School class time on November 24, December 8, and December 15. (There will be no Sunday School on December 1 due to Thanksgiving weekend.) There will also be a kick-off rehearsal on Saturday, November 23 from 10:30 am—12 noon followed by a lunch for the students and their families. All of these practice dates are crucial to ensure that the children are able to learn their recitations and songs, so please make every effort to have them at these practices. If your child(ren) are unable to participate in the Sunday School Christmas service, please contact Brian Haag via phone or text at 414-416-6332 or email at [bjhaag30@yahoo.com](mailto:bjhaag30@yahoo.com).

There will be no Sunday School classes on December 22 or on December 29. We will resume our regular Sunday School schedule on January 5. Please feel free to contact Brian Haag with any questions or additional information.

## End of Life Questions

End of life questions unsettle us, and millions around the world wonder if climate change soon will end the world. Thankfully, God did not leave us guessing about what happens to us at the end of life or at the end of the world. We dedicate November's four Sundays to topics that deal with the end of our earthly lives and the end of this world, and God makes it clear – in the end, everything for the Christian will be OK.

## Christmas Outreach Events

Mark your calendars for back-to-back Saturdays in December. We're planning on participating in the Waterford Christmas parade on Saturday, December 7. If you're interested in helping plan and participate in that event, please contact Pastor Voss or Neil Hankwitz. Our Christmas for Kids event will happen on December 14. This is a chance for kids age 3 - 6th grade to have free fun and, more importantly, to hear how and why Jesus was born to take away our sins. For parents, Christmas for Kids can be free babysitting, freeing you up to do some errands or have a quiet cup of coffee somewhere. Watch for more details to come about this event. Contact Dan Hanke with questions.



Women in God's Service will have their next FAST 15 minute

meeting on November 3 following worship. We will meet from 10:10--10:25 am in the library. Topics will include a treasurer's report, November's gathering and a secretarial vacancy. All women are welcome.

Our November gathering will be on Thursday, November 7 beginning at 6:00 pm. We will share a meal together (soup, sandwiches and salad) and write greeting cards to all the ladies of the congregation, letting them know we are thinking of them. If anyone has cards with envelopes that they would like to donate, we are looking for some that are blank inside so we can add a personal hand written note.

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## Advent by Candlelight

Ladies, mark your calendars for Sunday, December 8 for Advent by Candlelight. This will be an opportunity to gather for fellowship with other ladies, delicious treats, and meditative worship in preparation for Christmas. Family and friends are welcome to join you. More details, including sign-ups, will be coming soon. Tables hostesses, desserts and snacks, and readers will all be needed to make this evening happen. Please contact Janeen Roska if you would like more information.



Senior Moments enjoyed lunch at the Pine Cone restaurant and then went to the Burlington Malt House Theater in October and saw the musical "Nevermore" about the life of Edgar Allan

Poe. It wasn't what any of us was expecting, but it was thoroughly entertaining. We're even talking about going to see "O Little Town of Burlington" on Sunday, December 8 at 2:00 pm. This sounds like a fun Christmas show. If you're interested in going, talk to Diane Kordus or Julie McGill. Tickets are about \$20.

Our November 1 outing is a tour of Holy Hill and lunch at the Sawmill Restaurant. We'll let you know next month how much we all enjoyed the day.

We've got a couple of activities planned for December. We will be hosting the first Advent Supper on December 4. It will be the senior's specialty — potluck! Watch for the sign-up sheet in mid-November.

On Thursday, December 12, we will tour First Evangelical Lutheran located in Racine. This WELS church was established in 1849 and has a unique connection to the start of our synod. The current church building was dedicated in 1897. Pastor Nathan Pope will give us a tour and discuss the architecture and history of the church. Pastor Nathan has a wealth of architectural and historical knowledge of his church and our synod.

We will meet at Living Water at 9:00 am and car pool to Racine; our tour will begin at 10:00 am. Lunch reservations will be made for noon at Well Brothers Restaurant in Mount Pleasant which is about five minutes from the church. This is an old time Italian restaurant serving great thin crust pizza, and they also offer a full menu. First Lutheran is located at 728 Villa Street, Racine. Wells Brothers is located at 2148 Mead Street. A sign-up sheet will be coming soon.

*Senior Moments is a service organization to provide social opportunities for the congregation. All members, 50 and older, are encouraged to join us for fun and fellowship.*

## We Are One TEEN DEVOTION

**Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. —1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11 (NIV)**

Division hurts. No, not the mathematical functions that hurt your brain in homework sessions. Division *between people* hurts. No matter who you are or where you're from, you've seen and experienced the pain of divisiveness.

The family that once was whole, now ripped apart by divorce. The friend group that crumbled because of backstabbing gossip. The team that couldn't get along. The street filled with opposing protestors screaming back and forth. The red-faced political pundits debating (and debasing) each candidate for office.

Quite frankly and quite sadly, when you look out at the world today, there isn't much you see except division. Does anyone get along? Will anyone play nice? Is anyone united anymore? YES! We are.

The apostle Paul reminds us of a spectacular truth that Christ Jesus has accomplished for us. He has made us to be one in him. We are *one body* of believers!

There really is nothing like it in the world. You see, you could be black or brown or white, rich or poor, young or old, male or female, or any other combination of variations and differences in life. Yet you stand side by side and united with the entire holy Christian church on earth and every saint already in heaven. Each soul is bought with blood of Christ and each soul is brought into his family through baptism. Together we form one body united in our Savior and our salvation won for now and eternity.

On this side of heaven, you certainly will feel the pain of division. Sin tears apart and separates. It creates loneliness, isolation, and sadness. But the next time that hurt creeps in, remember your vast support system—a vast body of believers throughout the world and throughout time in heaven and on earth who are your brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

We are one. What strength! What comfort! What peace!

**Prayer:** Lord of the Church, you have purchased and won for yourself the souls of all mankind, and in baptism you have united all believers together as members of your body. Give me comfort in times of loneliness and courage in times of hurt that the body of Christ is there to support me. Help me also to love and support my brothers and sisters in need. Amen.

Teen Devotions are brought to you by WELS Commission on Youth and Family Ministry.

## Prayer

Lord, hear as we pray:

- In thanksgiving for the way you have made us able to give to others, both by supplying us with earthly goods and Christ-like hearts.
- For godly wisdom to use the financial blessings of this congregation in a way that pleases you and benefits others.
- For the poor and needy that as the weather gets colder they are protected with shelter and provided with food and clothing.
- For all those traveling for the Thanksgiving holiday, especially our members, that you keep people safe so that they may enjoy time with friends and family



We pray these things for the sake of Jesus Christ who became poor for us so that through his poverty we might become spiritually rich. Amen.

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## Council Corner

*In an effort to be transparent about topics being discussed at the council meetings each month, we will be sharing some highlights and notes from the month's council meeting in the monthly newsletter. The council encourages members to ask questions and offer insight into any of the topics being discussed.*

**Congregational Finances** - The Lord has richly blessed the ministry at Living Water, and that is evident in the generosity shown His people. After 3 quarters, our giving is more than budgeted and our expenditures are less than expected. The council is projecting a surplus at the end of the year. In the coming months, the council has begun discussing how best to appropriate that surplus.

**2020 Budget** - The council is in the process of creating the budget for 2020. The first draft was reviewed at the last meeting. The council will continue to refine the budget so that it is ready to be presented to the voters in December.



# November 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 9:00 am Senior Moments Outing	2
3 8:30 am Prayer Group <b>9:00 am Worship with Communion</b> 10:10 am WinGS Meeting 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	4 5:00 pm Catechism Class <b>7:00 pm Worship with Communion</b>	5 8:00 am Seniors Breakfast	6 6:30 pm Handbell Practice 7:30 pm Choir Practice	7 6:00 pm WinGS Dinner & Gathering	8	9
10 8:30 am Prayer Group <b>9:00 am Worship</b> 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	11 5:00 pm Catechism Class <b>7:00 pm Worship</b> 8:00 Elders Meeting	12	13 6:30 pm Handbell Practice 7:30 pm Choir Practice	14	15	16
17 8:30 am Prayer Group <b>9:00 am Worship with Communion</b> 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	18 5:00 pm Catechism Class 6:00 Jesus Cares <b>7:00 pm Worship with Communion</b> 8:00 pm Church Council	19	20 6:30 pm Handbell Practice 7:30 pm Choir Practice	21	22	23 10:30 am Sunday School Rehearsal
24 8:30 am Prayer Group <b>9:00 am Worship</b> 10:30 am Bible Class & Sunday School	25 5:00 pm Catechism Class <b>7:00 pm Worship</b>	26	27 <b>6:30 pm Thanksgiving Worship</b> 7:30 pm Pie Social	28 <i>Thanksgiving</i>	29	30



6525 Milwaukee Avenue  
Wind Lake, WI 53185

## Worship Information

**Sunday Worship Service** - 9:00 AM  
**Sunday Education Time** - 10:30 AM  
**Monday Worship Service** - 7:00 PM

## Contact Us

**Pastor:** Aaron Voss  
**Church Office:** 262.895.3700  
**Pastor's Cell Phone:** 262.330.3399  
**E-mail:** [pastor@livingwaterlutheran.com](mailto:pastor@livingwaterlutheran.com)  
**Office:** [church@livingwaterlutheran.com](mailto:church@livingwaterlutheran.com)  
**Website:** [www.LivingWaterLutheran.com](http://www.LivingWaterLutheran.com)

## 2019 Church Council

Here is a list of people to contact if you have any questions or suggestions regarding anything happening in our ministry. Also, if you send a single e-mail to [council@livingwaterlutheran.com](mailto:council@livingwaterlutheran.com), it will reach all members of our Church Council.

**Mike Graffenius**—President  
**Jim Mertz**—Treasurer  
**Craig Scherbarth**—Financial Sec.  
**Bob McGill**—Secretary  
**Jeff Roska**—Head Elder  
**Neil Hankwitz**—Outreach  
**Gary Steffens**—Trustee  
**Brian Haag**—Education

# Thanksgiving Worship

Wednesday, November 27

6:30 pm

Pie Social to follow.

