



GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

OCTOBER 2025

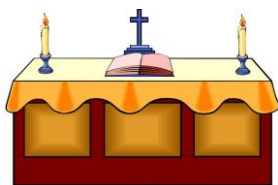


*"Loving, Sharing, Serving
Jesus with you."*

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The Divine Service

I am going to begin a newsletter article series on the Divine Service. It is good and edifying to know why we do what we do, the meaning behind the words we say and hear and sing every week, as well as the symbolic actions we do. Otherwise, we might find ourselves just going through the motions, unaware of what the liturgy might teach us about what is happening in the Divine Service.

First things first. Why do we call it the "Divine Service"? Why not just the "worship service"? "Worship" comes from an old English word meaning to render honor or acknowledge something as worthy. Think, "*worth-ship*." This, however, gives the impression that the focus of the service is what we are doing for God. That is not the case in Lutheran worship. In Lutheran worship, God comes to us and gives us His gifts. That is the reason for our coming together. God is coming down, forgiving sins, and giving life and salvation. Thus, the "Divine Service" is a fitting description. It comes from the German Lutheran term: "Gottesdienst," which means "God's service." God serves us with His Holy Absolution, the proclamation of the Word, and the Sacrament of the Altar. That doesn't mean that no *worship* is also going on. We respond to these gifts by our songs, prayers, confession of the Creed, and so forth.

Did you ever notice that there are times I face the altar and other times I face the congregation? As your pastor, you have called me to proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments. These I do as an ordained representative of Christ and steward of His gifts. I face the congregation when I am speaking Christ's Word to you or baptizing or blessing or

administering the Sacrament of the Altar because I am doing so in the stead and by the command of Christ.

The church, God's gathered people, always faces the altar because it is the church's place to receive the gifts and respond in praise. The Church is the bride; Christ is the groom. She receives His gift of love and responds with her praise and love for Him. In other times and places, outside the Divine Service, *all* Christians are stewards of the Word in the vocations you are given, as you teach your children and grandchildren and share your faith with friends and family. However, during the public Divine Service, there is a holy exchange between Christ and His people, represented by the pastor and the congregation. Christ has ordained an office of the ministry for this purpose, beginning when He called and ordained the twelve apostles to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God and to baptize and forgive sins in His name (see Matthew 16:19; 18:18; 28:18-20; John 20:21-23).

Generally speaking, when I am facing the people, I am declaring something or giving something from God. And when I am facing the altar, I am praying, confessing, and worshipping with the congregation or on behalf of the congregation. After all, I too am merely a child of God and member of His church. I need His gifts as much as anyone.

Remember, the Divine Service is not about what you are doing for God, but what God is doing for you.

Pastor



The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, shares pastoral wisdom on recent events in our country in the *Reporter*. It is an important article, and well worth your time to read. You can find it on Immanuel's Facebook page, or online at reporter.lcms.org/2025/a-pastoral-word-from-president-harrison.

OCTOBER IS . . . **clergy appreciation month**

This provides a wonderful opportunity for congregation members to recognize and encourage those whom God has called to proclaim His message and lead His people, and to commit to pray for and encourage their pastor.

"Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.



-- (1 Thess. 5:12-13)



Confirmed in Christ

On Sunday, October 26th, at 8:45 a.m., The congregation is invited to join this year's Confirmation candidates in the sanctuary to pray for them and listen to them recite selections from the Small Catechism. They will be confirmed at the 10:00 a.m. Divine Service the same day.

You are invited to be there on Oct. 26th to witness the confession of faith given by these young people, renew your own confession of faith with them, and give them the benefit of your blessing and prayers that our Loving Lord will always keep them strong in the Faith they will profess! Encourage them as they continue to grow in this Faith and live out God's plan for their lives!



2026 Higher Things Bake Sale

The youth will be having a bake sale **October 18-19** to help with the cost of the Higher Things Conference in 2026. Please get out your best recipes and consider baking some items for the sale. Bring your wrapped baked goods to the church by Friday, October 17. Then, be sure to come shop for all the yummy goodies over the weekend!

Thank you for always supporting our youth attending the conference!



"I must listen to the Gospel. It tells me, not what I must do, but what Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has done for me."

--Martin Luther

Harmonious Stewardship



“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another” (Romans 12:4-5).

One of the most forgotten concepts in stewardship is the interdependent nature that makes up the Body of Christ and the way that body supports the shared work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is experienced in the local congregation, as well as in broader mission and ministry efforts at the district and Synod levels. Yet in these words, St. Paul reminds the Romans and us that we are indeed members of one another. This is true in our worship. It is also true in our stewardship of the Gospel. Stewards of all shapes and sizes, ages and abilities, affluence and influence are all assembled around Word and Sacrament in the local congregation with no one being more important than the other.

Part of this forgetting lies in what the eyes see and how our human mind operates. Our eyes and our minds are quick to come to the erroneous conclusion that the person who writes the biggest check is the more important steward. Human logic, flawed by sin as it is, could make a claim that the youngest child or the most infirm, aged member of the congregation would certainly be considered something less than important when it comes to the stewardship of the Gospel.

Paul makes it clear in these words that this is not how stewardship of the Gospel is measured in the Body of Christ. Rather, it would be better to view local stewardship like the lost art of harmony in congregational singing. This has been lost not only due to the performative nature of the lead singers of the local praise team, but also because modern hymnals are written to almost force the novice hymn-singer into unison voice. Creative harmonization by talented organists is beautiful to listen to, but does not always support the people in the pews in singing in parts. This is a loss in demonstrating a very practical aspect of whole-body stewardship.

The sound that builds when choral and congregational singers settle into their voice parts is nothing short of heavenly! Yet when altos, tenors and bass sing their individual parts without any concept of how they fit together, the music doesn't sound as powerful. The narrow range of the typical alto line almost sounds monotonous. The tenor line can get painfully high, and the base line can get uncomfortably low. But, when interdependently entwined, along with the melody that is so often carried by the sopranos, the music becomes a tremendously powerful tool in communicating the Gospel.

The same is true of individual stewards. Certainly, stewards with more financial means are in a unique place to “carry the tune” for ministry in a local congregation. But that doesn't rule out the faithful stewardship of the saint - like 94-year-old Hulda, who prayed for her young pastor in German every night while the aches and pains of arthritis and the grief of losing a daughter to cancer kept her awake. This does not rule out Jimmy, the profoundly developmentally disabled confirmand whose basic but dramatically eloquent confession of the faith left an impression on a congregation long after he went to be with Jesus. It doesn't rule out the single parent, the recovering addict, the family coming out of bankruptcy, the elderly widow and everyone in between.

The Lord has entrusted all the baptized with stewardship of the one thing needful: the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No one member of any congregation is more important than another when it comes to this stewardship. The biggest check isn't always the best way to communicate the Gospel. In fact, it is almost always better communicated with the widow's mite, the tenacious stewardship of the talents and so much more.

**--LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article,
October 2025**



Ready to showcase your handmade creations? Start crafting now and reach out to Lori Dobkins to reserve your table for Immanuel's very first craft show—coming November 8th! Don't miss this exciting opportunity to share your talents with the community.



Shepherds & Lambs

The Sunday School Newsletter

October 2025

Rally Day Recognition



Our two third grade students received their Bibles.

Yearly Attendance awards were given to five students with highest honors (0-4 absences), and 3 students with high honors (5-9 absences).

Well done students!!



WE have a dedicated staff bringing the message of salvation to our youth.

<u>Class</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Years of Service</u>
Nursery	Holly Kavanaugh	5 years
K, 1 st , 2 nd Grades	Chris Glick	45 years
K-2 nd Gr. Assistant	Donna Hultquist	1 year
3 rd , 4 th , 5 th Grades	Ingrid Anderson	39 years
6 th , 7 th , 8 th Grades	Dawn Bluzma	50 years!!!
Music	Deb Topolski	6 years
Cradle Roll / Birthday Cards		
Birth-1 st Grade	Debra Wells	30 years
2 nd -8 th Grade	Jen Minnick	2 years
Superintendent	Lynette Jonston-Martin	47 years

Thanks be to God for their dedication!



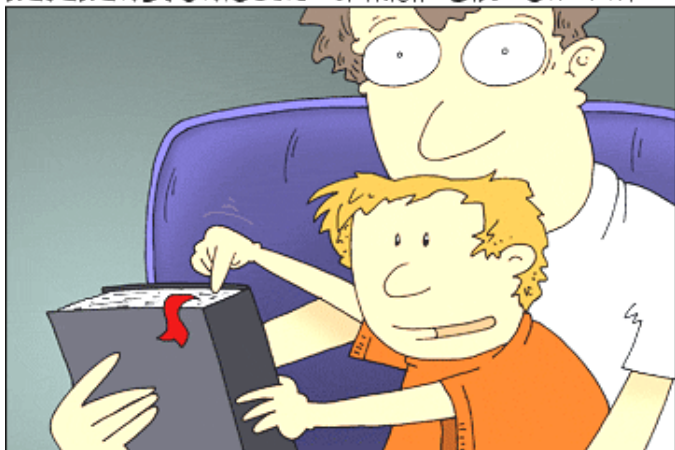
I raised my kids using some of the suggestions from the late Christian psychologist, Dr. James Dobson. Our world has gone crazy, more so recently.

People have their own ideas and do not respect authority or other people's thoughts. It seems that in our society, solid, two-parent, engaged families have declined. As a result in some cases, children are raised with little or no discipline. The moral, God-pleasing attributes we probably were raised with are many times now not so. Dr. Dobson believes that a relationship that is characterized by genuine love and affection is likely to be a healthy one, despite parental mistakes.

Dr. Dobson urges parents to begin teaching respect for authority while children are in the preschool years, although we can also teach this at any age. Many people now defy authority and do what they want no matter what the consequences are. The young child will challenge you with their defiant attitudes. Be firm, but not mean or gruff. Define the boundaries before they are enforced. Children need to know what the expectations are and the consequences of their actions. Determine the child's actions. Are they childish irresponsibility or willful defiance? Your discipline will reflect that. After confrontations with the child, use this time to give them a reassuring hug, and discuss the reason for their punishment and how they can avoid this in the future. For the Christian family, sharing a prayer admitting all of our sins and asking God for forgiveness is needed. Divine forgiveness is a marvelous reassurance, even for a child. We pray that God will lead you in your parenting and grandparenting!

-- Lynette Johnston-Martin
Superintendent

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Thanks to Richard Germain

10-27-2008

I REALLY LIKE YOUR BIBLE, DAD ... HOW DO YOU TURN IT ON?





OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Throughout 2025, we have been gathering items for the *Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child*

boxes. It will soon be time to pack our boxes with the items you have contributed. This month we are focusing on "Christmas in October" by requesting monetary donations toward the shipping cost of the boxes.

Each box costs \$10 to ship and we traditionally ship 100 boxes each year. Please prayerfully consider a monetary donation to Immanuel to help us cover this cost. Make checks out to Immanuel and mark it "Operation Christmas Child."

For more information, please see Kelli Kalvaitis or contact the office.

Thank you for your continuing support of Operation Christmas Child! We cannot do this without all of you.



PLEASE NOTE: The deadline to submit items for the November *Gazette* is **Monday, October 6.**



REFORMATION DAY

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

A mighty fortress is our God,
A trusty shield and weapon;
He helps us free from ev'ry need
That hath us now o'ertaken.
The old evil foe
Now means deadly woe;
Deep guile and great might
Are his dread arms in fight;
On earth is not his equal.



Though devils all the world should fill,
All eager to devour us.
We tremble not, we fear no ill;
They shall not overpow'r us.
This world's prince may still
Scowl fierce as he will,
He can harm us none.
He's judged; the deed is done;
One little word can fell him.

With might of ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected;
But for us fights the valiant One,
Whom God Himself elected.
Ask ye, Who is this?
Jesus Christ it is,
Of Sabaoth Lord,
And there's none other God;
He holds the field forever.

The Word they still shall let remain
Nor any thanks have for it;
He's by our side upon the plain
With His good gifts and Spirit.
And take they our life,
Goods, fame, child, and wife,
Though these all be gone,
Our vict'ry has been won;
The Kingdom ours remaineth.