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# Resurrection LUTHERAN CHURCH



November, 2021

## BIG THANKS FOR THE SMALL THINGS



Recently Melina and I stumbled upon an episode of the PBS series Nature called "My Garden of A Thousand Bees." It was filmed in the Urban Garden of wildlife filmmaker Martin Dohrn at the beginning of lockdown in 2020. And what he did was set out to record all the bees he could find in his tiny urban garden in Bristol, England, filming them with one-of-a-kind lenses he forged on his kitchen table. The results were amazing! As he captured small little bees on a scale we had never even realized was possible. Even though they are small, the importance of bees cannot be understated. This is because they are the most important pollinator in the world because of how they help sustain plant life. And we all know if we didn't have plants for the food chain we wouldn't survive.



Seeing things on such a small scale led me to find other similar shows and I came across one on Apple TV called, "Tiny World." Funnily enough, it is narrated by Paul Rudd on Ant-Man fame, which reminds us of how something little can make a big impact. This is what the show is all about as well, as it showcases nature's lesser-known tiny heroes. Spotlighting small creatures and the extraordinary things they do to survive. One little creature it highlighted on an episode we watched was the Elephant Shrew, which is very tiny, yet very fast, and finds amazing ways to thrive in the middle of the African Savannah.

So, why do I share about these tiny creatures? Well, as we approach Thanksgiving it is easy for us to give thanks for the big and obvious things. We give thanks for our nation, our families, and our things. But as Psalm 104:24-25 reminds us, God makes all things great and small and we are called to give thanks for them all. As we read, "How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number—living things both large and small."

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On Thanksgiving Eve we will sing a hymn entitled “Creator, We Thank You for All You Have Made” written by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, that reminds us of giving thanks for small things as she writes, “God, thank you for rainfall that ends a long drought, For cracks in the sidewalk where little weeds sprout, For birds that build nests in the tops of the trees, for hot summer days when we feel a cool breeze.” And as commentary for this hymn she writes, “In cities, suburbs, and rural areas, too, we find evidence of God’s creative, loving work. When we are praising and thanking God, it is good to look not just at the “big categories” of creation – land, sea, and air-but to celebrate the little details. Take a walk down the street. Look for weeds growing up through the cracks in the sidewalk. Can you identify one plant from another? Can you hear the differences in the birds’ songs?”

As you ponder these questions this season of Thanksgiving I encourage you then to give big thanks for small things. Give thanks for different colors. Give thanks for the bees. Give thanks for a cup of coffee. Give thanks for being able to breathe in and out. Give thanks for a cup of water. Gratefulness will increase in all our lives as we do this. And always give thanks for the greatest small gift we will receive. A little babe we will celebrate in December. Give thanks because little Immanuel will be with us! Give big thanks for the small things indeed!

As we think about giving thanks for our Messiah, we also are encouraged to share His love in little ways. May this be an important reminder that for some people, in really hard places, they might have a hard time seeing what to give thanks for at all. In these times you can be an encourager with small acts of love. As they see you in action, we pray they would echo this action. That these small things would remind them of ways they can give thanks to God for all the tiny things of life and that in doing so their lives would be transformed by Him in a big way forever!

Humbly in Thanksgiving,  
Pastor Matt

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2022 Triannual Giving Partners

At the Voter’s meeting that will be held on December 19<sup>th</sup>, not only will we be approving the budget for 2022, but we will be voting for the three ministries to be our 2022 Triannual Giving Partners. Our triannual giving partners receive a percentage of our contributions in each of the 2022 trimesters. (January – April, May - August and September – December). Some of our past (and current) triannual giving partners have been Mary’s Place, the Des Moines Food Bank, Kairos Prison Ministry and Lighthouse Family Ministries NorthWest. If you would like to nominate other additional South King County ministries to be considered for the 2022 giving partners, please submit the name of the ministry and a brief synopsis of the work and purpose of the ministry to Pastor Matt or Robin Thomas by the end of November. We will then compile the list of ministries received and the description each ministry to be sent out prior to the voter’ meeting. At the voter’s meeting there will be a vote taken to determine the 2022 Giving Partners.



### Christmas Poinsettias

There will be a basket in the Narthex with envelopes for the poinsettia purchases. Make checks out to RLC with note of poinsettia. Questions? Ask Sara Andrew.

## 6 WEEK ADVENT + CHRISTMAS SERIES 2021 COME HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

Here's a bit of information about the upcoming Advent and Christmas series. Advent is an invitation. For many, it is the invitation to get into that Christmas spirit, to have jingle bells, Santa, and all the goodies under the tree. It can also be about counting down the days to the grand celebration and let the holiday transform everything around us. As Christians though we look at it like this: it is the Mass of Christ, the celebration of the Incarnate one who comes to remind us that we are not alone, and God is with us. We are about the longing for the coming kingdom, where there will be no more war, where people will walk in the light, where joy will be found, and love will be the tie that binds us together. That's the home for which we long. That's the invitation this Advent season to our church and the world: "Come home for Christmas."



Below you will see the actual schedule of services, with the readings, and there are a few items to highlight that are going to be different from previous months. On the third Sunday, December 19th you will see we will be having our Voters' Meeting and because of this we will not be having a doubleheader service. For those of you who do like the Traditional Service we invite you to the service on December 26<sup>th</sup>, as that will be a lessons and traditional carols service with communion. Finally, because of the way the schedule worked out, and the availability of volunteers, we will not be having a Christmas Day service this year. We invite everyone who enjoys that service to attend on the 26<sup>th</sup>, as it will be the same format. Thank you for your adaptability and care through this Christmas season! May Immanuel's richest blessings be with you this season!

**November 28th** – 10:00 AM - Time to Go Home –OT: Jeremiah 33:14-16  
NT: I Thessalonians 3:9-13 Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

**December 5th** – 10:00 AM - The Fear of Home – OT: Malachi 3:1-4 NT: Philippians 1:3-11  
Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

**December 12th** – 10:00 AM - The Joy of Home – OT1: Zephaniah 3:14-20 OT2: Isaiah 12:2-6  
Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

**December 19th** – 10:00 AM + Voters' Meeting Following – The Blessing of Home -  
OT1: Micah 5:2-5a OT2: Psalm 80:1-7 Gospel: Luke 1:39-55

**December 24th** – 7:00 PM - Christmas Eve Candlelight- Welcome Home – OT: Isaiah 9:2-7  
NT: Titus 2:11-14 Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

**December 26th** - 10:00 AM - Lessons and Traditional Carols – The Treasures of Home-  
Various Scriptures + Luke 2:15-21

**January 2nd** – 10:00 AM-The Light of Home – OT: Jeremiah 31:7-14 Gospel: John 1:1-20

## A WALKING SHORTCUT by Steve Gruenwald from Concordia Plans Better Health



I enjoy hacks. No, not hacking, hacks. (I want to make that clear just in case anyone from the National Cyber Security Division is reading this!) In recent years the word “hack” has taken on the meaning of “solution” and more commonly referred to as a “life hack.” A life hack is when someone develops a new technique to more efficiently accomplish a task or when someone introduces a new use of an ordinary item. Either way, the hack is intended to save you time and simplify a routine.

Some hacks I’ve heard about include putting a wooden spoon across the top of a pot to keep the water from boiling over. As the water starts to boil up to the top of

the pot, the spoon pops the bubbles keeping the water from overflowing. Another hack is to use a hanging shoe rack with pockets behind a closet door to store cleaning supply bottles. There are also some novel life hacks such as using Doritos as a fire starter. That’s clever when you’re in a pinch, but perhaps a better fire starter would be one made from an empty toilet paper tube stuffed with dryer lint.

Bev and I created our own life hack. It’s a cheat-sheet for what clothes to wear when we go for our morning walks in the ever-changing Missouri weather. We started developing our hack one fall morning when the sudden, cooler weather caught us by surprise. The morning temperature had dropped dramatically from the day before and we couldn’t remember what we typically wore in colder weather. Knowing the temperatures were only going to get colder as winter approached, we wanted to simplify the early-morning decision-making process of what clothes to wear. We started keeping track with a three-columned index card: the left column contained the outside temperature (in increments of 5 degrees), the middle column for Bev’s clothes/layers, and the right column for mine. For the next several seasons, after our walks, we’d jot down what we wore if it was the correct combination, or we’d make adjustments based on if we were too hot or cold (i.e., light jacket, gloves, neck gaiter, etc.).

With our clothes card complete, we simplified the decision making process eliminating any hesitation about what to wear. We match the temperature on the card with the outside temp., throw on the appropriate clothing and off we go! Through the years the clothes card hack motivated us to expand our supply of appropriate clothing, but more importantly, it removed what could be an excuse not to exercise.

Our hack may not be as much fun as watching Doritos burn, but it has ultimately helped us in our efforts to care for our health.

## RUNNING FROM REST by Blake Flattley from [1517.org/articles/running-from-rest](https://1517.org/articles/running-from-rest)

When I was younger, I ran track. I wasn't good. I honestly don't think I can recall winning anything. Conceptually, I knew in those races that I needed to run faster if I wanted to win. Yet, at some point, the best I could do still wasn't as fast or faster than those I was racing. I could try to give that little extra, but it just wasn't there.

Life is not dissimilar to this literal race. Many of us run so hard. We strive and strive at work, at parenting, at fill in the blank. Our culture teaches us that if we aren't busy, we must not be valuable. But, I'd encourage you to question the validity of that teaching.



In a recent conversation, where I confessed my constant desire for busyness, I was asked, "If you always have to be busy, what are you running from?" I've had to sit with this question. Imagine this playing out physically. If we never stopped physically running, eventually, we would collapse. Our legs would give out, and we would likely die from exhaustion. We are not created to run without ceasing. In fact, resting is built into creation itself.

We've just recently entered into the season of fall where leaves will change color and eventually fall from trees until spring comes when they will return, and again flowers will bloom. And, creation is this way because this is God's intent. God intends for his creation not to produce all year long without taking time to rest. In Exodus 20, God even commands his people to rest when he says, "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God" (Ex. 20:9-10).

We hear these words, but still, our inclination is not to heed them. Perhaps you prefer the often-repeated mantra, "I'll sleep when I'm dead." Yet rest does not merely mean catching up from all your work; it is meant to be a gift to enjoy. When we do not cease to be busy, we miss many of the great gifts God gives to us and others through rest.

We often keep ourselves busy out of a desire to take care of others, using excuses like: "If I don't finish this project tonight, the team will suffer," or "I need to take this gig to make a little more money for my family." Yet when we work all the way to the margins, we leave nothing for those same people we intend to care for. Consider Leviticus 19 and the gleaning laws established there. Moses instructs people not to harvest every last grape or piece of food but instead to leave some there for those who may pass by needing food to eat. In the same way, how often do we turn to busyness to care for those in our midst (child, family, neighbor) while simultaneously missing their immediate needs because we have left no margin?

In addition to neglecting neighbors, a constant busyness drives us to the idolatry of work. In Psalm 46, the psalmist tells us of the many things God has done, and then he gives us our role: "Be still, and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10). God invites us to know that he is God and that the universe exists because of him. The world spins because he set it in motion. When we don't take a break, we elevate ourselves and our work to a level that only God should occupy.

Finally, when we don't rest, we refuse to enjoy the great gift that Christ gives. The truth is, if we stop running from rest, we may hear our inner voice saying that we are not enough. We may feel worthless. However, God assures us that in Christ, we are enough. Christ has taken our failures and defeats and exchanges that yoke for his own. He assures us that the work is finished. Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt. 11:28-29). Jesus invites us to find our rest in him. He shows us our value is not found in our busyness. Our value is found in our identity as a child of God. A value he places on us when he paid the ultimate price of death on a cross. And, after rising from the dead, he leaves us with the promise that we may rest in the assurance that the greatest work has been completed, and we too will rise to have eternal rest with him.

Now, may we rest in the fact that the great work is finished, and we are now free to enjoy this life and to love and serve our neighbors. The good news of the gospel makes this so.

### ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR

Blake Flattley is the Executive and Creative Director for CommunionArts, host of the CommunionArts podcast, and an accomplished singer-songwriter. He holds a BA in Humanities and an MA in Theology from Concordia University, Irvine and has served as a Worship Director for churches in Southern California, Houston, New York City and the Phoenix area. Blake currently lives with his wife Tara and their three girls, Amelia, Olivia, and Willa in Southern California.

**LCMS STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY November 2021 Newsletter Article**

Sometimes people don't like it when pastors talk about stewardship. For some, it hits too close to home. It is easier to talk about bad people in Washington, in history, or wherever than it is to think about what our daily life in Christ is supposed to look like and how we are supposed to love our neighbor.

The fact that we don't like it certainly means we ought to face it. So, here are a few simple and practical realities.

God calls us to first-fruits, sacrificial giving. That means that we should give off the top. We should set a percentage of our income as a deliberate gift for the work of the Church and then give that first. We write the check to the Lord's work in the Church before we pay the mortgage or pay for our medicine or pay for anything else. We don't pay for all the stuff we need – and stuff we think we need – and then give from what is left over. That is the first-fruits idea. It is hard because we think we need all sorts of other things first. But that is the point of "sacrificial."

Next, how could the starting point for Christian generosity and sacrifice really be anything less than a tithe – 10%? The ceremonial law of the Old Testament was never arbitrary. In the Old Testament, the Levites received this tithe so that they could be full-time ministers.

Does the New Testament have a ministry that is larger or smaller? It is far larger: "Make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). And we are still to have a full-time ministry: "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:14). So if 10% is what it took in the Old Testament, and we have a bigger mission need in the New Testament, how can we expect the Lord's work to be done on less than a tithe?

By first-fruits, sacrificial, and generous giving – that's how. We shouldn't fool ourselves into thinking that we've outgiven God's goodness or that we've given plenty. We might be tempted to think that way, but consider that no one in the Church has given plenty because no one has given all. No one has died for his sins. Only the sinless Son of God did that.

St. Paul brought the Good News of Jesus into the discussion of our giving to support the Lord's work in the Church when he wrote: "I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:8-9).

As you can see, what the Bible commands about our stewardship can sting. It's Law, and the Law shows our sins. It calls us to repentance. The Law is meant to expose and accuse for the sake of showing us Christ and His fulfillment of the Law. So if first-fruits, sacrificial giving has you squirming, that's the point.

In Mark's account of the feeding of the 4,000, Jesus took the disciples' seven loaves and blessed them. It was nothing among so many, but, of course, it was plenty. Jesus makes something from nothing. Mark doesn't say that all the disciples gave Jesus all the bread they had. It is quite possible that some of them held something back. But even if they did, that didn't stop Jesus from blessing them. Jesus makes something out of nothing. He, who fed His people in the desert with Manna every morning, doesn't need their bread.

But they need to give it. And what they give – however little it might be and however grudgingly they do so – He blesses. He not only blesses those whom He feeds with it, but He blesses them – the givers. He blesses the givers not just in that they wind up with a basketful for each loaf, but they are blessed by learning to trust and rejoice in Him.

The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. The Lord gives abundantly, or He asks us to fast. We do not know what will happen. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. He does all things well, and He works all things together for good. The disciples don't give their bread to Jesus because it is a good investment. They give it because He is good, because they love Him, and because they trust Him. Let us go and do likewise.

# NOVEMBER 2021



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Carrie Thomas	11-11	Jean Sullivan	11-12
Julie Tonkinson	11-20	Barbara Stambaugh	11-22
Bob Tyack	11-23	Ethan Bench	11-27
Tim Gerken	11-28		

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Buzz & Barbara Stambaugh	11-8	13 years
Doyle & Barbara Tonkinson	11-16	30 years
John & Jo Wiltse	11-18	60 years



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