



Heavenly Wisdom

“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks. For this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 – EHV)

What if you opened up your fortune cookie after eating your favorite Chinese meal and it read, “Rejoice always”? My guess is that you would say that wasn’t a very accurate fortune, because all you have to do is look at the last nine months and see that there isn’t much to be joyful about with an ongoing global pandemic and a contentious Presidential election taking place. So what if you cracked open another fortune cookie and it read, “In everything give thanks”? I’m guessing that you would be saying to yourself once again that these fortune cookies aren’t very accurate or helpful, because it is pretty obvious that there is little to be thankful for at this time, because of all the turmoil going on in our world at this time.

But those little phrases or commands, I mentioned in the opening paragraph aren’t just some fortune cookie sayings. They are God’s words to us through the Apostle Paul, and they are not some far-fetched idea or a pie in the sky idea that we can never ever attain. The Apostle Paul wrote these short, concise words of heavenly wisdom to encourage and remind us that we always can and should strive to, **“Rejoice always.” “Pray without ceasing.” “In everything give thanks.”** These words are short, but very helpful!

“Rejoice always.” Joy is a fruit of faith in Jesus. When we belong to Christ Jesus, God wants us to reflect how blessed it is to have forgiveness and eternal life in heaven. It’s deeper than being in a happy mood all the time. Joy is a deep-down blessedness, and a quiet, lifelong celebrating that we belong to Christ. When we look at joy in this way, we realize that this kind of joy isn’t measured by earthly measures such as wealth or health or earthly joy and happiness. It is measured by the certainty that we are forgiven children of God and that our heavenly Father has promised to be with us every day.

“Pray without ceasing.” All day, every day, we get to talk to God. And even though we are sinners who should be shut out from God’s presence, God listens. Because of Jesus, he listens! He listens to our prayers, whether they are out loud or silent, thought out or spontaneous, from a prayer book or in our own words. What a wonderful assurance that we can any time and for any reason talk to God and know he is listening.

“In everything give thanks.” We have so much to give thanks for. We have more blessings than we deserve from our gracious God – both physically and spiritually. Though we too often complain or fall into self-pity or a sense of entitlement, our gracious God loves us and forgives us. He gave his own dear Son Jesus to earn full forgiveness for us by his death on the cross. And on top of that, God blesses us with every spiritual blessing in Christ, for time and for eternity. For this reason we can be thankful even during difficult times.

I pray this month as we celebrate another Thanksgiving season, we see that these aren’t some cute little sayings. I pray that these words give us God’s encouragement and daily help as we live in this sinful world.

Pastor Mark Gartner

Pastor Gartner

November 2020

ALTAR GUILD

Judy Schroeder	470-1559
Katie Rickert	734-6830
Monica Minzlaff	858-8929
Donna Pomeroy	851-3140

WITH THE LORD Our sister in Christ, Elaine Jane Schabo entered eternal life with her Savior on Tuesday, October 20, 2020. A Christian funeral service was held at St. John on Saturday, October 24. ***"I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25.***

RETURNING TO PUBLIC WORSHIP We rejoice that we have been able to return to the Lord's house to worship together, but at the same time we want to do so in a safe manner. The 8:00 am service is the most attended service, which perhaps will make some of you feel uncomfortable. First off, if you feel uncomfortable in this more attended service, we encourage you to attend either the 10:30 am or the Monday evening service which offer plenty of room in order for you to socially distance. In addition, our Council has decided to remove the ropes for the first few pews of the lectern side of the sanctuary. People deciding to sit in these "unrestricted" pews should use their own good judgment on social distancing. We hope that, with enough worshipers sitting in this section, it will leave enough space in the rest of the sanctuary for everyone else to socially distance. If you have any questions, please speak to one of the Pastors or Council members.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION Changes for the Lord's Supper will continue for November 1st and November 29th.

- Pastors will sanitize their hands before each table.
- The wafers will be placed in a flat hand; the pastors will be careful not to touch your hand as they distribute communion.
- The common cup will not be used.
- The communion tray for individual cups will be filled with spaces between cups so that you do not touch other cups.
- Communicants will line up in front of the first pew, practicing "social distancing" unless they are from the same household.

BIBLE CLASSES Pastor Frey is leading a Bible Study on "The Christian and Government" every Sunday morning at 9:15 am.

Each Monday at 8:00 am and Tuesday at 5:30 pm, Pastor Gartner is leading a Bible Study on "The Life of Moses -- A Study of the Book of Exodus".

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME Daylight Saving Time ends in the morning of November 1st. Remember to set your clocks back one hour Saturday night and get an extra hour of sleep.

WOMEN OF FAITH All ladies of the congregation are invited to join us Tuesday, November 10 at 1:00 pm for Bible study and LWMS updates. Moms, bring your little ones.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY All men of the congregation are invited to join us on Tuesday, November 17 at 9:00 am for Bible study.

CHURCH COUNCIL The newly elected members of the Council are: **Pat Gowey – President and Andy Pevonka – Evangelism Chairman.** Tim Springstroh has been confirmed as **Treasurer** for another year. The other Council men are: **Randy Rickert – Vice President, Scott Mahnke – Secretary and Brian Bietler – Head Trustee.** We thank **Kris Wilson**, outgoing President, for his years of service.

THANKSGIVING WORSHIP Thanksgiving Eve worship services will be Wednesday evening, November 25 at 6:30 pm. We will not have a pie fellowship this year. Thanksgiving Day worship will be at 9:00 am Thursday, November 26.

WELS APPLE VALLEY FOOD PANTRY The food pantry thanks everyone for their generous support. For November, the food pantry needs these items: Canned fruit, all canned meats (tuna, SPAM, chicken), bagged/boxed potato side dishes, cookies, all crackers, jam, tomato soup, chunky soups and stews, cream soups, cake/brownie mix and frostings, 1 lb. bags of rice and Minute Rice, pasta and rice side dishes, hamburger helper, shampoo, conditioner and body washes for men and women. Please drop items off at church by **Friday, November 6, 2020.**

November 2020

CHRISTMAS CARDS will be available for purchase beginning Sunday, Nov. 1. The boxes of cards will be on a table in the narthex, along with a container for your payment. All boxes will be \$5 each and it will be self-serve. There will also be individual cards in the spinner rack for 50 cents each. The cards will be out everyday if you'd rather look at them on a day other than Sunday. All the cards we have will be on the table so when they are gone, they are gone.

VOLUNTEER SHEETS Thank you to all who completed and returned volunteer sheets. If you did not fill out a volunteer sheet and you want to help with a St. John activity, let one of the Pastors know or complete a volunteer sheet by Monday, November 9. Extra sheets are on the back counter.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP We want you to know that we are here to help you through any troubles. Please do not be afraid to call any of the Pastors or the Church Office with any of your questions. We will do our best to be of assistance. We ask for your prayers and patience as we go through these uncertain times. Please also keep an eye on each other. Stay in contact with those who are elderly or living by themselves or those who may be going through medical issues. If you happen to run into some financial hardships or know someone who may need some financial help, please don't hesitate to call one of the Pastors.

CENTRAL AFRICA MEDICAL MISSION (CAMM) Gary and Beth Evans have returned to Malawi. They serve CAMM in Malawi in the capacity of Manager of Operations and Head Nurse. Due to the COVID 19, they had been in the United States for the past six months. They have now restocked their shelves with medicines, face masks-surgical and N95, gloves, aprons and bottles of hand sanitizer. They have met with their clinic staff members outside, wearing masks and social distancing to develop a plan to restart their mobile clinic in the four villages they serve in Malawi. God willing, they will begin to see patients October 13 using their new clinic building in Msambo. Devotions and health teaching will be done intermittently throughout the day, rather than once in the morning.

GIFTS TO OUR LORD DURING SEPTEMBER:

		<u>Expenses</u>
General Fund	\$29,872.00	\$33,354.00
General Fund YTD	\$289,576.00	\$256,399.00
Building Fund	\$705.00	
Land Development Fund	\$175.00	
Missions (WELS)	\$1,377.50	
Christian Family Solutions	\$200.00	
Institutional Ministry	\$455.00	
FVLHS Operational	\$495.00	
FVLHS Let the Children Come	\$840.00	

"On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income."
1 Corinthians 16:2

AN OPTION FOR GIVING YOUR OFFERING: VANCO, the company we use for online giving through our website, now offers an app that allows you to give directly to St. John through your smart phone, VANCO Give Plus. Simply download the app, login/create a username, and then find St. John. This app will allow you to give to whatever fund you so desire, as well as set a one-time offering, or a recurring offering with a specific frequency. For more information, contact Tim Springstroh or one of the pastors. Below are the links for the app.

Google Play:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.vanco.gpm>



Apple App Store:

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/give/id1120840616>



LOOKING AHEAD Our Advent mid-week services will be on **December 2, 9, and 16** at **10:30 am** and **7:00 pm**. We pray that you are planning to attend these mid-week services during Advent.