



FEBRUARY 9, 2018 Issue

Come Experience the Power of Grace



Welcome to week 5 of our 5 week journey of living generously. As we have been discussing, the key here is **LIVING** generously. Not just giving away some money, but a true heart change.

SEED TIME is based on Matt 13:37 (the sower) and Gal 6:7-10 and 2 Cor 9:6-11. This is The System Test: Do we embrace God's system for multiplying and compounding His Kingdom? God's system is summed up in sowing and reaping. What we sow we also reap. A person will reap sparingly or abundantly based on what is sown. Gal 6 says "God is not mocked, for what we sow we will also reap." In Malachi 3 God says to test Him, "Test me in this"; it's in the area of giving or sowing.

This needs to be balanced with God's grace in that He gives so much that we do not deserve. But as the stewards in the parable of the talents were rewarded for the risks they took, we too need to be prepared to risk our gifts, time, and resources. A steward is not a manager, he is a risk manager. We need to prayerfully and humbly live in faith and this means to take risks. The big question:

"What risks are you taking today with your time, gifts, and resources?"

Matthew Henry says "The harvest is coming... today it is Seedtime!" Christ sovereignly scatters good seed (the good sons of the Kingdom). As Christ followers, we are to scatter others (as we disciple them) as well as our gifts, resources and time. We enter into the Joy of our Master as we are rich in good deeds, humble and generous. In Eph 5:16 we are told to redeem the time, make the most of every opportunity.

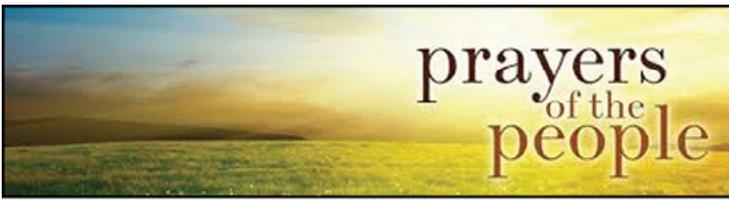
Sowing Seed: Generous living was more than writing checks. Of course no discussion of "sowing seed" would be complete without Galatians 6: Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Simple Kingdom economics. What you sow you will reap. A gardener spending the day quite literally sowing seed understands this well. While giving our "good sheep" to God reflects our love for him, "sowing seed" reflects our understanding that we bring glory to Him when we are fruitful for His Kingdom. We sow by serving others, and being led by the Lord to invest our time, gifts, and resources as He sees fit. Just as Jesus is the sower and the seed is the good seed of the Kingdom, as Christ followers, we sow our time, gifts, and resources as well as sowing the gospel, scattering the seed, watering and harvesting in the hearts of our neighbors.

Matthew 6:3—Now is the Time. What if seeing a need caused us to jump into action the same way a dip in the market would? Sound silly? Look back at Galatians 6: Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Are you interested in being urgent with things that are destroyed or thing that are eternal? It is a simple question but an incredibly important one. We spend so much of our time and money on things that are temporary.

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HEALTH CONCERNS:

Irene Ahl; Sharon Algar; Bill & June Amspaugh; Richard Ashbaugh; Julie Brainard; Heidi Buchholz; Arthur Buehler; John & Joan Burns; Linda Cirelli; Dianne Ewald; Elaine Feller; Rev. Bob Feller; Harriet Feree; Gary Ferguson; Cita Figueroa; Walt Goedecke; Richard Greene; Don & Marion Gremel; Bonnie Guiffre; Gizelle Hayes; Marilyn Jane Heine; Edward Henderson, Jr.; Larry Hinton; Brooke Homer; Evelyn Horst; Wally Jakubin; Bud & Liz Koehlinger; Donna Koelling; Doreen Leikel; Philip Lenharth; Alice Masherella; Dale Mayer; Donna McCullough; Chris Murphy; Merrill Nelson; Perry Nelson; Tanner Nelson; Randi Nelson-Shipley; Bob Ott; Tom Perrodin; Ben Petersen; Herb Phelan; Anne Pingo; John Pingo; Betty Plachy; Virginia Potter; Martin Radloff; Shirley Radloff; Antonia Rafter; Lisa Renbarger; Esther Riesen; Ila Schellpfeffer; Eugene Scott; LuAnn Sjrusen; Julie Stewart; Joyce Sutton; Bud Umphryes; Dave Webster; Joe Wells; Eleanor Wood; Marie Wood; Cindi; June; Linda Bennett

MILITARY:

Chris Bartels (contractor); Isaac Jackson; Tim Mace; Steve Stuenkel

THANKSGIVING:

We give thanks and ask for God's continued blessings for Sharon Algar as she celebrates her 80th birthday.

NEEDS:

We pray for those who have needs and circumstances that only God can take care of—especially do we pray for Cullen for guidance through his difficulties.



Many thanks to all who have leapt into the support for Tanner and his family as he continues weekly radiation in Phoenix.

Over \$500 has already been collected, along with Thrivent support; and the many cards, notes, and greetings are very welcome.

Please stop in the narthex or the school office to jot a word of encouragement to Tanner and his family.

Paul talks about this in 1 Corinthians 9:25-26 "Everyone who competes in the games... does it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way; as not beating the air". Paul was calling the church in Corinth, and our church today, to turn our gaze to eternal things.

Prayerful, risk-taking stewardship will result in a beautiful harvest that will be revealed when Christ returns. In his Bible commentary, Matthew Henry states: "Our present time is seed time". Simply put – now is the time to sow seed. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Jesus made it clear: our giving is not to be a source of attention. Generous Living is godly living. And godly living is humble living.

Ask yourself, with the Holy Spirit's help: Have we been putting off something that God wants from us? Now is the time. Its seedtime.

It is often said that 2 questions will be asked of us in Heaven:

1. What did you do with Jesus? The "good sheep" that we offer Him reflect our gratitude and our understanding of what He did for us.
2. What did you do with what He gave you? It is now seedtime! The harvest is coming but we will not have a harvest unless we sow. John 15:8 says "My Father is glorified in this; that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples." As discussed, in Galatians 6 "God is not mocked... what we sow we shall also reap." Our sowing, or lack thereof will either bring glory to God or mock Him.

May we go out and live lives of generosity. With newfound humility and joyful exuberance!



TRANSFIGURATION, 2018

As Moses, and then Jesus, ascend the mountain, their faces shine brightly in the presence of God. Jesus' disciples, just like the Israelites at the bottom of Mount Sinai, experience a theophany that leaves them frightened and confused. St. Paul interprets the two events as one, where hardness-of-heart is the issue, and the other where the veil of mystery is finally revealed in the salvation of Christ.

EXODUS 34:29-35—As Moses descends Mount Sinai with the second set of stone tablets, his face is shining like the sun, so that all are afraid to approach him. As he instructs the leaders of Israel to follow the Lord's commands that are given on top of the mountain, he veils his face so they will not be blinded.

PSALM 50:1-6—The Lord God shines forth over the whole creation, writes the Psalmist. It is He alone who judges the people because He is the One who set the sun in the sky and the heavens above the earth.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:12-13; 4:1-6—St. Paul tells the congregation in Corinth that, in the days of Christ, the veil is lifted for those who are ministers of the new covenant. He proclaims that the Israelites are looking at that which fades away, rather than that which, in Christ, is now permanent. The Gospel is only veiled to those who are perishing.

MARK 9:2-9—Jesus takes James, John, and Peter to a high mountain, where His face changes to a bright, shining visage. His clothing also changes in appearance, becoming a brighter white than any bleach can manage. Elijah and Moses appear to the four men, which spurs Peter to offer to build tests on the mountaintop. And just at that moment, a Voice from heaven reiterates the words from Jesus' Baptism.



DID YOU KNOW?

In January of 2009, the Arizona License Plate Commission approved the application for Choose Life license plate after a six year legal battle that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Choose Life license plates became available on May 5, 2009.

Now, by one simple step, you cannot only make a statement to our community about the importance of human life, you can also provide funding that will help women find positive, life-affirming solutions in difficult circumstances.

To get your plate TODAY: Go to servicearizona.com

1. Select "Choose Life" and then complete the process. Your new "Choose Life" plates will be mailed to you!

How much does the Choose Life license plate cost? \$25.00 fee per year in future renewal years. \$17 is donated to the Arizona Life Coalition for providing life-affirming hope and resources to the women, men and children of Arizona through truthful and loving education, services, and public policy. The MVD retains \$8.00 for license plate administration.

Let's fill our Ascension parking lot with many Choose Life license plates!

Information provided by the Ascension Beautiful Feet Life Team of Lutherans For Life, equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices for LIFE.

CALLING ASCENSION TO PRAYER

"Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever."

Ephesians 3:20-21

The Elders are extending an invitation to all who attend Ascension to come together for a brief time of prayer after each of our three services. We would like to see corporate prayer become more and more a part of the "fabric" in the life of Ascension.

After each weekend service, we will gather in the southwest corner of the sanctuary; someone will be there to gently facilitate a brief fifteen-minute time of prayer. We will begin this with the Saturday service on February 17.

We will provide some suggestions for prayer topics; however, please bring whatever is on your heart.

That's it... The church coming together to pray... expect great things from our God!

On behalf of the Ascension Board of Elders; Randy Longacre Co-chair



SAVE THE DATE: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Breakfast of country fried steak, biscuits and gravy, eggs, and fruit. Anyone having a horse or rodeo gear that they'd be willing to bring for about an hour for fun and pictures should contact Justin. More information to follow.



Have you ever thought of being an EMT? Ascension is starting an Event Ministry Team (EMT) to encourage fellowship and service for our members and the community. Our first meeting will be on Wednesday February 21 from 5-6pm in Grace Hall. Join us for a soup dinner as we meet to discuss these ideas for 2018. Then join us for a Lenten service starting at 6:30pm.

SEE GOD'S HEART
BE HIS HANDS

SPRING MISSION TRIP - HOUSTON

This spring, Ascension Church has an opportunity to join Disaster Response Fellowship for their annual mission trip. Some of the trip highlights include:

- ✦ The dates for the trip will be March 16-25.
- ✦ Disaster Response Fellowship will have five construction leaders who make a living in construction trades.
- ✦ Cost for the trip is \$250 for each adult volunteer, \$100 for each youth.
- ✦ This mission trip is open to all, including all ages/skill levels. There is opportunity to serve in kitchen capacities as well as working on construction projects within homes.
- ✦ Website for more information on Disaster Response Fellowship is <https://hispoiema.org>.

For questions regarding this trip, please reach out to John Phillip; j.phillip@ascensiontucson.org or 414-759-7749.

LIVING GENEROUSLY

New Women's Bible Study



We will meet in Grace Hall on Tuesday nights -February 20 through April 10, 6:15-8:15pm. Cost is \$15 and scholarships are available.

Sign up in Grace Hall during services this weekend and next weekend or contact Julie Andreu by telephone 520.429.3336 or email at jeandreu@msn.com.



LENTEN SOUPS

Served at noon before the 1pm Wednesday worship service and at 5pm before the 6:30pm Wednesday worship service.



CAN YOU HELP?

NEEDED Friday afternoon/Saturday morning: volunteers to setup chairs in the Sanctuary and refill materials in chair-back pockets in preparation for weekend worship services. Put together a small group, share some refreshments; make it a fun social gathering. Your efforts will be greatly appreciated. Make it part of LIVING GENEROUSLY!

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