

Stewardship at Grace

THE STORY OF THE MONEY WE SPEND FOR MINISTRY 2010 - 2011



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Stories TO Tell & Gifts TO Share

God, through the gift of his son Jesus Christ, has richly and abundantly blessed us as individuals, families and as a faith community. In response to God's loving generosity, we give back to God.

What we give back to God – a portion of our time, talents and treasures – is not a donation to the church. It is a **love offering** to God and is an integral part of our understanding of what it means to worship God and to follow our Lord Jesus Christ as his disciples.

The offerings that we give to God – our expression of gratitude for all of God's blessings in our lives – are given through our faith community and used to bring the message of the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world.

Each of us, along with the Board of Directors and the various committees and outreach programs, must act as responsible stewards of the offerings received. This brochure explains how the offerings are used so that we can positively impact the lives and hopes of as many people as possible both within our congregation, in our local community and into the world.

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*“Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.”*  
Deuteronomy 4:4-5

*“Jesus answered, ‘The first is, Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.’”*  
Mark 12:29-31

## **This is the sacred story of the ministry of our faith community . . .**

This story answers questions such as . . .

- *How are monies used within the congregation*
- *How do we support ministry and mission?*
- *What is being accomplished in the congregation?*

Our Ministries are focussed in six major areas:

- √ Outreach and Mission
- √ Worship and Music
- √ Evangelism and Hospitality
- √ Faith Formation
- √ Pastoral Care
- √ In-reach and Fellowship

The monies we receive do cover costs such as wages and benefits, support of the Eastern Synod and the ELCIC, property costs and maintenance. But rather than thinking of these as expenditures, we invite you to consider thinking of them as investments in ministry.

## **Mission Statement**

**Our mission is “to praise God and serve others through active caring.”**

We do this by: **inviting** people into relationship with God, **growing** together as devoted followers of Christ and **serving** others by the power of the Holy Spirit.

## OUTREACH AND MISSION

*Matthew 25:40* “Whenever you did one of these things to someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.”

A congregation that is “in mission for others” requires a strong commitment from all its members of their time, talent and treasures. Through the direction of God’s Spirit, we are now reaching beyond our walls to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to our city, our country and the world. Your offerings become the hands and feet of Jesus Christ to a suffering world!

- ◆ The **Evangelical Lutheran Women** are in “mission for others” and meet monthly to work on mission projects, fellowship and practice their discipleship. Your paper contributions to the **Abitibi Paper Recycling** bin in the parking lot generates several hundred dollars each year for the ELW and their mission work. Your financial gifts toward their **Praise Offering** on **ELW Sunday** and gifts of baby clothing has meant that our ELW can carry on their ministry reaching those in need throughout the world.
- ◆ Through our offerings we support the work of our **Synod and National Church, Canadian Lutheran World Relief** (known throughout the world for our well digging projects) and (which supports our Good Food Box Program with a grant each year). Our benevolence offering to the Eastern Synod supports **national and overseas missions, Waterloo Lutheran Seminary** and our **camp**s.
- ◆ Through our offerings of time, talent and treasures, we support a weekly outreach program, known as **MacSOC**, into Hamilton’s Beasley neighbourhood.
- ◆ The **Good Food Box Program** runs monthly from September to June providing low cost fresh fruit and vegetables to the community. We are now in partnership with St. John’s Lutheran Church, Faith Lutheran Church, The Freeway, and the Food Bank at McMaster University. Your offering of time, talent and treasure translates into subsidies for low income families and students, pastoral care and witness.
- ◆ Our offerings help our **Sunday School** sponsor a child, Yogarasa Jegeshwari, through **World Vision Canada**.
- ◆ Many people who stop by the church are helped by your contributions of non-perishable food items and your offerings which support the **Pastor’s Discretionary Fund**.

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC

*Colossians 3:16* “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.”

The primary time for a congregation to come together to worship God and for fellowship is at the main worship service. Here we learn what it means to worship God with our offerings of time, talent and treasures through hearing the Word spoken, preached and sung.

### Your offerings support:

- ◆ The maintenance, repair and cleaning of the sanctuary, offices, and Altar Guild room
- ◆ Linens, paraments and supplies for weekly communion
- ◆ Production of the weekly bulletin
- ◆ Salary for the church musician and custodian
- ◆ Music and worship supplies
- ◆ Organ and piano maintenance and repair
- ◆ Flowers and decorations in and around the church
- ◆ Adequate time for the preparation of meaningful sermons and children’s messages
- ◆ Supply clergy and musicians
- ◆ Special services at Christmas, Holy Week and Easter, Thanksgiving, mid-week worship and other special occasions
- ◆ Guest preachers and speakers
- ◆ Baptisms, weddings and funerals
- ◆ Administrative support for all these activities including computers, printers and photocopiers
- ◆ Technology such as the sound system and projection
- ◆ Guest artists

## EVANGELISM AND HOSPITALITY

*Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

As we grow in and practice the marks of Christian discipleship - *daily prayer, daily Bible reading, weekly worship, generosity, nurture and serving* - we become bold in our witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ to the world by:

- ◆ Understanding that each one of us has a ministry by virtue of our baptism
- ◆ Praying for courage and opportunity to talk about our faith
- ◆ Encouraging each other to respond to the challenge of evangelism
- ◆ Being passionate about our discipleship journey
- ◆ Seeking opportunities to talk about our faith while being respectful of others
- ◆ Ensuring that our worship services are alive, relevant and transforming
- ◆ Empowering ourselves through ongoing faith formation and learning
- ◆ Striving to be a thriving and sustainable congregation
- ◆ Extending welcome and hospitality to other groups that use our building
- ◆ Being involved in the life of the congregation by attending worship regularly, joining a small group, hosting Coffee Hour, being part of a committee, team or group that provides learning, faith and evangelism opportunities
- ◆ Giving a generous offering to the Eastern Synod each year to support evangelism and witness through synodical programs
- ◆ Coffee Hour after worship each Sunday

*Did you know that just by coming to worship at Grace on a regular basis you are providing a wonderful form of evangelism to your family, friends and neighbours?*

*Who could you invite to worship next Sunday?*

## FAITH FORMATION

*Matthew 9:35 “Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.”*

Faith formation is a daily experience as we practice our discipleship through daily prayer and Bible reading, attending worship regularly, bringing our children for baptism and Sunday School, attending learning groups and other events when the opportunity is provided, personal reading and learning, discussion with others seeking to grow in faith, and one-on-one discussion with the pastor.

Your offering of time, talent and treasure provide:

- ◆ Sunday School classes
  - ◆ A focus on learning at each worship service
  - ◆ Confirmation Classes
  - ◆ Cell Groups
  - ◆ Adult Learning
- Spiritual Gifts discovery materials and support to help you discover and develop the gifts God has given you.
- ◆ Quality education materials, curriculum and supplies; maintenance, repair and cleaning of Sunday School areas, spiritual advice and counselling by the pastor, administrative support, baptism, marriage and confirmation preparation, guest speakers, planning for special events such as Palm Sunday and the Christmas pageant, early years faith formation materials such as *Splash!*.
  - ◆ Tuesday evening **Candlelite Prayer** is an opportunity for us to learn more about prayer, to pray and fellowship

Bible & Biryani is our new group for young adults (from university age to thirty). They meet monthly from September to June to enjoy a home-cooked meal, and to watch diverse films which stimulate in-depth, open discussion with a spiritual dimension on current issues and topics. Rana Johnson & Pastor Loretta are the facilitators.

## PASTORAL CARE

*1 Peter 5:2 "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers - not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be."*

Pastoral care is a profound expression of love in our faith community offered not just by the pastor, but to each other as we seek to serve each other in love. It includes:

- ◆ Training members of the congregation to be visitors
- ◆ Visits to the sick, infirm and bereaved by the pastor and lay ministers in hospital, retirement home or at home.
- ◆ Visits to new parents and visitors
- ◆ Pastoral counselling by the pastor
- ◆ Regular communion for sick and shut-in members at home
- ◆ Spiritual help and guidance
- ◆ Phone calls to parishioners and others in need
- ◆ Maintenance of an up-to-date congregational list
- ◆ Co-ordination of prayer lists and requests
- ◆ Support for those who come for assistance
- ◆ Development of prayer and healing ministries
- ◆ Study and prayer time for the pastor
- ◆ Administrative support which includes the pastor's car, professional development and book allowances, communion supplies and materials such as *Eternity for Today*
- ◆ The flowers on the altar become part of our pastoral care ministry and are taken to those who are sick, shut-in, in hospital or celebrating a joyous occasion. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

*Amazing*  
**LOVE!**

If you are in need of a pastoral care visit, entering hospital for surgery, or have had a loss in your life, please call Pastor Loretta at 905-527-0877 or at her home: 905-297-8117. Please do not hesitate to call, as often times your needs are not known by the pastor or lay ministers.

## IN-REACH AND FELLOWSHIP

*Galatians 5:13-14 "For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'"*

Through acts of caring and forgiveness we strive to be a welcoming, safe and hospitable faith community. As co-workers in Christ we support each other's ministry, carry each other's burdens and seek to grow a fond regard for each other.

We seek to follow the words of Jesus to love one another and this can only be done when we intentionally come together as a faith community for support and fellowship.

Your gifts of time, talent and treasures help to support a strong and caring faith community and include:

- ◆ Weekly worship services
- ◆ Special worship services during Christmas, Lent and Easter
- ◆ Weekly Coffee Hour
- ◆ Pot-luck meals and BBQ's for special occasions
- ◆ Prayer Chain
- ◆ Caring and Sharing during worship
- ◆ Prayer for each other's needs
- ◆ Greeters and Ushers on Sunday morning
- ◆ Prayer and Healing Ministers
- ◆ Community building events
- ◆ Publicity of our activities such as the newsletter, email, outdoor sign
- ◆ Maintenance of the property and parking lot
- ◆ Gardening and landscaping
- ◆ Administration of tickets, posters, schedules
- ◆ Leadership training and resource materials

## PROPORTIONAL GIVING OR TITHING

**You are invited to be part of this unique and important ministry in the Hamilton area!**

In response to God's love for us, for meeting our needs and blessing us and this faith community, we give back to God from our resources of time, talent and treasure.

As a faith community we have been truly blessed by God for over 55 years. As individuals God has truly been gracious and generous. Indeed, we serve a generous God who gave his Son for us that we may come to know and love God and each other. God is calling us to continue to be the hands and feet of Jesus to our world.

**The Stewardship Committee invites you to prayerfully consider how you and your family will be part of the ministry of Jesus Christ through the work of this congregation through a percentage/proportional giving of your time, talent and treasures.**

## PLANNED GIVING

**HAVE YOU MADE A PLANNED GIFT?** For most of their lives Lutherans give regularly from their income and cash flow through weekly offerings and special appeals. We know that what we give through the church is a gift back to the Creator who is the source of life for each of us.

We also have a Christian responsibility to be good stewards of our assets. A Planned Gift is a way of contributing to the mission and ministry of this congregation and the wider church from your accumulated assets. It is a deferred gift - you decide now how you would like your assets to be used later.

The simplest form of Planned Giving is to remember your congregation or the wider church in your will. There are other ways to plan your response to God's generosity in your life. Some Planned Gifts may provide tax benefits today, others can give you a guaranteed income for life, and some enable you to give a significant future gift at a modest present cost. Decisions on these matters are a very personal and important part of your financial planning.

As a good steward you will want to make sure any gift is well protected, well managed, and used for things you support. Endowment and Trust funds are ways of meeting these goals.

For more information contact Pastor Loretta or **Jeff Pym**, the Eastern Synod Director of Planned Giving at 1-888-308-9461 who can answer all of your questions. Visit the Synod website at [www.easternsynod.org/planned\\_giving](http://www.easternsynod.org/planned_giving) for more information.

*Malachi 3:7b, 10 "Return to me, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts. But you say, 'How shall we return?' Bring the full tithe into the store house, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing."*

