

# THE SERVANT

The monthly newsletter of Servants of Christ Lutheran Church, a congregation of The North American Lutheran Church serving the Cedar Rapids area

Meeting at Robins City Hall Community Room, 265 South Second St., Robins, Iowa 52328  
Worship: 9:00 am; Fellowship & Coffee: 10:00;  
Bible Class and Sunday School: 10:15  
Ronald Voss, Pastor cell: 563-206-4611; land: 563-682-7359

\*\*\*\*\* November 2021

## GOSPEL POTTERY

Dear servants,

About eight years ago, my wife began a new “hobby.” She noticed that a number of churches sponsored fall/spring bazaars or festivals where crafts were sold as part of the event. Focusing on churches that used bazaar proceeds for mission projects, she began creating and donating. After several years she added nursing homes and public libraries to her list of craft recipients. What has made this fun and challenging for her is purchasing second-hand “containers” for the table décor. My wife is a regular at Goodwill, Salvation Army and other second-hand stores where she searches for vases, baskets, boxes, flour sifters, old hats, ceramic holders . . . well, you name it. Sometimes the items are chipped, bent, scraped. In a word, a “piece of junk.” Yet even I, Mr. Non-Crafty, have been amazed at how a “nothing item” can be transformed into something beautiful, delightful, unique.

I recently read a devotion entitled Gospel Pottery. As I read, I drew parallels with my wife’s creations. She takes used, discarded, sometimes worthless articles and re-makes them. And our heavenly Father has been doing that throughout history. Through the redeeming work of His Son, Jesus Christ, and the on-going work of the Holy Spirit, God has taken “worthless clay” and made it priceless. The prophet Jeremiah says it well: *The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD:*

*“Arise, and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.*



As sinful humans, we are in much worse shape than the second-hand items found at Goodwill. We are dead in sin. Yet in the hands of the sovereign Potter, we become Gospel Pottery. Let’s review a few examples.

(next page)



**MOSES:** We proclaim him the liberator of the Israelites; we watch in wonder as he parts the Red Sea; we are stunned when he returns from Mt. Sinai after a 40 day absence, carrying two stone tablets. But that Moses is the Potter's *finished* product. Rewind the film and we see a stammering Moses speaking to a burning bush and whimpering, "God, I'm not the man for the job; send someone else." A man transformed by the Almighty into Gospel Pottery.

**JONAH:** Called by God to travel to the Gentile to preach repentance, Jonah stands on the back towards Nineveh. Pointing to a ship opposite direction, he sings, "Over there, over to sail in *that* ship over there." But God used big fish to turn an arrogant Jonah into a man wherever God sent him. The results? The sin- of Nineveh repented of its sin.



city of Nineveh dock with his heading in the there. I'm going the big gulp of a willing to preach ful, Gentile city

**SAUL/PAUL:** Now, we wouldn't say Saul was a bad guy. After all, he was an educated man, a Pharisee, and held dual citizenship. But he was misguided and persecuted Christians with a passion. But Christ's mercy enabled Saul to see the light; now named Paul, this clay pot emptied itself of self-righteousness bent on destruction and became filled with the Spirit, a piece of Gospel Pottery, that told his congregation in Philippi, "I count everything as garbage because of the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior."

Of course, the list of "seconds" transformed into Gospel Pottery contains many more names. As the writer Luke said, "Nothing is impossible with God." As Christians, we know this. As Christians, we embrace this promise with joy. But why focus on Gospel Pottery in the month of November?

As you know, we will be closing out another church year in just a few weeks. The final weeks include two very special worship celebrations. The first Sunday of November is All Saints Sunday. If you use your imagination for a moment, you can envision this Sunday being called Gospel Pottery Sunday. On this festive occasion, we celebrate all those sinners who believed in Jesus Christ, became saints because of His grace, and have now gone home to be with their Lord and Savior.



The final Sunday of the year is Christ the King Sunday. We celebrate that Christ will return and take all believers home to be with Him. Again, with imagination, perhaps we can visualize a Gospel Pottery Homecoming Sunday. For all of us—any age, gender, race, ability—who love Jesus and long to be with Him, this is the day!!!! All of us broken, chipped, dented, second-hand clay pots find eternal perfection around the throne.

In Christ's love,  
Ron

Called to *Serve*

## November Servants

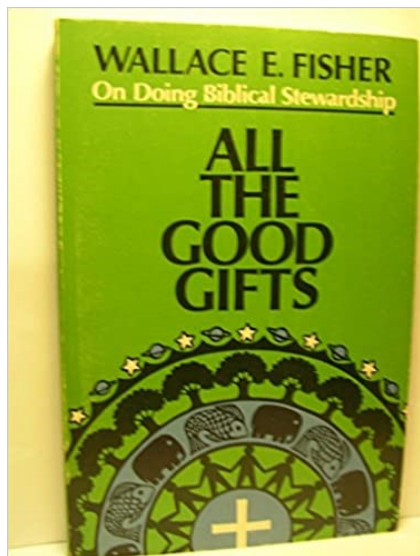
Greeter/Usher: Cliff Waugh  
Communion Assistant: Gerald Retzlaff  
Snacks:  
\*\*November 7—Lenore Heckart  
\*\*November 14—Mary Collins  
\*\*November 21—LaDonna Retzlaff  
\*\*November 28—Linda Drake

Flowers: Mary Collins

Remember in prayer our missionaries in Madagascar Tsaramana Daniel and Fagnaky Josoa Omena.

## COMMITMENT SUNDAY: NOVEMBER 21

On November 21 we will complete the commitment cards for the 2022 Church year, which begins November 28. Think and pray about the areas in which you would like to serve. Thank and pray about your financial commitment for the coming year.



**ALL THE GOOD GIFTS** is our Sunday morning study for the month of November. This book provides a succinct practical guide to “doing biblical stewardship.”

Dr. Fisher rescues the word “stewardship” from misleading and narrow definitions by presenting a sketch of stewardship practices in the New Testament. He describes church stewardship from the fourth century through the nineteenth and presents a biblical view that is critical of current stewardship philosophy and practice.

This book challenges and motivates those who have lost their courage or who have not yet discovered the joys of doing biblical stewardship.

Join us on Sunday mornings.

# MISSION

Publish glad tidings  
Tidings of peace  
Tidings of Jesus  
Redemption and release.



## Mission Giving for November

- ◇ NALC General Fund:  
\$667 (2021 support for this outreach is \$8,000)
- ◇ Trinity Lutheran, a new congregation in St. Charles, MN: \$1,000
- ◇ Mekane Jesus Seminary Mission Project: \$1,000

Current Mission Outreach happens with faithful weekly offerings. Long-term Mission Outreach involves supporting our NALC Seminary that equips future pastors for gospel ministry. Personal estate planning that includes financial gifts to the Seminary helps this happen. Remember . . .

**LEGACY GIFTS MATTER!**

There is a new, free, online magazine called *Celebrating Global Mission*. Four excellent Lutheran mission ministries write the articles and offer guidance in how to make global mission a greater priority in your life and the life of your church. Check it out at [www.cgmmag.com](http://www.cgmmag.com).



## MISSION ENDOWMENT SUNDAY

Mission Endowment Sunday is the 4th Sunday of each month. Donation envelopes will be in the bulletin **November 28**. Use the envelope any time, including as a memorial gift or to honor a special occasion.