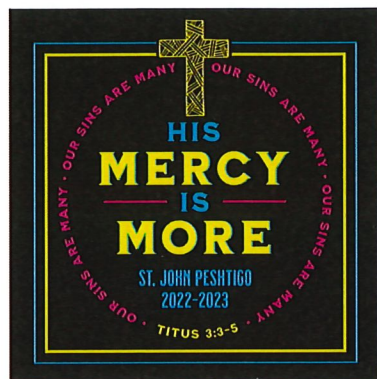


St. John Lutheran School

The Cardinal Chronicle

December 7, 2022



Christmas Service This Saturday

Our school Children's Christmas service will take place this **Saturday, December 10** at **3:00 pm**. Please have your **children to church by 2:45 pm in the church basement**. We encourage you to invite your friends and families to come and hear the beautiful Christmas message of our Savior's birth that the children are excited to share with everyone. A Cookies and Cocoa fellowship will follow the service in the church basement.

Upcoming Events

Nov. 28 - Dec. 19 - Hygiene Drive for Peshtigo Food Pantry

Dec. 7 - Lutheran Pioneers meeting at Zion Peshtigo - 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Dec. 9 - Chapel devotion - 8:15 am

Dec. 9 - Hot Lunch

Dec. 10 - School Children's Christmas Service - 3:00 pm with Cookies and Cocoa fellowship following service

Dec. 12 - Boys' Basketball at STAA, Marinette - 4:30 pm

Dec. 17 - Christmas Eve practice with Sunday School at church - 9:00 - 11:00 am

Hygiene Drive

We have a little more than one week left in our Hygiene Drive. Please help us show love to those in our community who may be struggling this holiday season. Collection boxes are available in each classroom at school, the school office, as well as at St. John Lutheran Church. The drive will run until December 19 when we will take the donated items to the Food Pantry.

Hot Lunch

Hot lunch this week will be pizza provided by the Schwittay family. The cost is \$2 per person. We have four dates open for hot lunch volunteers next semester, January 20, February 3 and April 14 and 21. The students really look forward to these hot meals on Fridays. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Sargent either by email at school@stjohnpeshtigo.org or by phone at 920-228-1563.

Heart to Heart

This month's *Heart to heart: Parent Conversations* featured in a previous issue of our WELS publication **Forward in Christ** article is entitled: *How can we nurture a proper view of "stuff"?* As Christmas approaches, here is a great reminder for us all on who we should truly place our focus: Jesus, our Savior!

Boys' Basketball Game

The boys' joint basketball team with Trinity, Marinette, will have their first game of the season next Monday, December 12 at St. Thomas Aquinas (STAA) in Marinette at 4:30 pm.

Children's Christmas Eve Service Practice

There will be a practice on Saturday, December 17 from 9:00 - 11:00 am for the children who will be participating in the Christmas Eve service, along with the Sunday School children. **Only the students attending the Christmas Eve service** need to come to this practice.


Mission Offering



Our first semester mission offering will be going to the Thai Village, Inc, a nonprofit organization that works with artisans in Thailand (Southeast Asia) to support economic self-sufficiency and Christian education. To learn more about this exciting organization and their history and connection to our WELS mission work in Thailand, please visit their website at thavillage.org **Mission offerings will be collected during our chapel service on Fridays.** Last week we collected **\$35.50**, bringing our total semester offering to **\$265.64**. Thank you for your heartfelt gifts.

2 Corinthians 9:11 – You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

Heart to heart: Parent conversations: How can we nurture a proper view of “stuff”?

 wels.net/heart-to-heart-parent-conversations-how-can-we-nurture-a-proper-view-of-stuff



How can we nurture a proper view of “stuff”?

Every year as Christmas rolls around, I can't help but take stock of all the “stuff” my family has. This year that schedule sped up because we moved right before Thanksgiving. So our fall was spent taking stock of pretty much every item we own. We sold some items and donated many others. It was a great time to discuss how richly we've been blessed and how we can use our blessings to help others, to talk about the role of material possessions in our lives, and to thank God for providing for our physical and spiritual needs.

You don't need to move, though, to have discussions like this with your kids. Read this month's contributions from Linda Buxa and Rob Guenther for ideas on developing a God-pleasing view of “stuff.”

Nicole Balza

When it came to teaching our kids about “stuff,” we kept it simple. When our children turned 12, they were on their own. (Not really, but it sounds more dramatic that way.)

In reality, that's when our children became responsible for budgeting their own money. Usually when kids get an allowance, they view it as “fun money.” We wanted our children to learn that responsible financial stewardship means you give first to God, then put some away for savings, use another portion for responsibilities, and then you can spend on fun stuff.

The lessons

So, beginning when our children turned 12, our part of the bargain was that we would pay for food in the house, educational expenses, music lessons, and a few staples like laundry detergent and hand soap. We did the math of how much we spent on clothes, school supplies, haircuts, sports equipment, toiletries, dining out, and entertainment. We added 10 percent to their total so they could give back to God.

Then we increased their allowance to cover those costs. (See . . . we still paid for them, but they were now in charge of allocating their money.) We also kept a running list of money-making endeavors that were above and beyond their normal chores if they wanted to earn more money. This teaches them that if adults want extra cash, they are welcome to get another job to earn it. It's not like they loved doing it, but the kids did look for opportunities to babysit, to work for the neighbors, and to get real jobs with real paychecks when they were old enough.

Each is now thrifty in their own unique ways. One daughter cuts her own hair (and her sister's hair) to save money. My son does not love to spend money on clothes and shoes, so those are on his Christmas list. They pack leftovers for lunch because that's free to them. (Another lesson in stuff: nothing is free. If it's free to you, someone else paid for it.) They look for clearance items, shop at thrift stores, and reuse school supplies. Still, it's not only about being frugal. They have also learned that some cheap items will break or wear out quickly, so the investment in quality items can be worth the cost.

The potential pitfalls

In the beginning, they were so worried about running out of money, they never wanted to do anything fun. We had to encourage them that going bowling or to a theme park or eating out are all good things that can be built into a budget.

The whole idea is a lot more work for my husband and me. Before this method, I could shop on their behalf. This requires me to take the kids to the store where they can walk around and comparison shop.

It is tempting to want to step in when they are about to make what we consider a mistake. But we remember that it's better to make money mistakes (or any mistakes, really) when they are young and the consequences are smaller.

Our oldest recently left for college and, during one of her first calls back home, thanked us for raising her to be independent. I didn't need to hear that to believe we did the right thing for our family. But it sure was nice hearing it.

Linda Buxa and her husband, Greg, are raising two daughters and a son in Concord, Wisconsin.

A thirsty pigeon flew over the city looking for something to drink. Finally, he spotted a big bowl of water and went into a dive to get what he needed to quench his thirst. Sadly, the pigeon didn't realize that the bowl of water was only a picture on a billboard. You can guess what happened. The poor pigeon slammed into the billboard, broke his neck, and died. The pigeon was deceived by what looked like it would satisfy. In the end, he was killed by what he thought would give life.

Isn't that the way it works with wealth and material blessings for us? Satan and the world around us promise that if we only had more and better and nicer things, new shiny toys, more games, more fun . . . if only we had these things, then we'd really be living! But what looks like it will satisfy and what promises to give life never really satisfies. It only leads to death in the end.

So how do we find contentment? How do we encourage it in our children? Well, nature abhors a vacuum. We can't just get rid of discontent, greed, and materialism from our hearts without filling our hearts with something else. Thankfully, God gives us that something else in his Word: Jesus.

The author to the Hebrews encourages, "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have . . ." But he doesn't stop there. He tells us how we can do this: "Because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you' " (Hebrews 13:5).

So, to save us who crave everything, he gave everything. He humbled himself to be born in a barn, not in a hospital. He lived in a simple house, not one with 800 square feet per person. He didn't have a car, a cell phone, or indoor plumbing. And yet, through it all, he was perfectly content all the time.

And you know why he went through it all: "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). By his perfect life of contentment and by his innocent death on the cross, we are forgiven. We are right with God! We have heaven as our forever home! We truly are rich!

Maybe this year, instead of buying your children more things to put under the tree, consider buying your children an experience. Take them somewhere fun to celebrate the joy that is ours in Christ. Consider teaching them the joy of giving as they give an old toy to someone less fortunate. Consider teaching them the joy of generosity as you give them not just presents but money for them to contribute to a WELS ministry of their choice.

Focus on Christ this Christmas. Focus on why he came: to make us truly rich with the riches of heaven! And let Christ drive away our lack of contentment, our greed, and our materialism.

Rob Guenther and his wife, Becky, are raising four boys in New Ulm, Minnesota.

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