

LWML Sunday

October 4, 2026

Text: 1 Peter 4:10-11

Eagerly Supporting the Mission of Christ

Trinity Lutheran Church

Rev. Tom Boeck

Adapted from "Eagerly Supporting the Mission of Christ" by Rev. Mark Maas, LWML Senior Pastoral Counselor, with stewardship themes adapted from "Following God's Wisdom" by Ron Chewning.

In the name of Jesus, who came not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many. Amen.

There's something rather remarkable happening here this morning. We have gathered in the presence of Almighty God, the One who created the heavens and the earth, the One who gives us every breath, the One who knows everything about us.

And I do mean everything. He knows the things we've done well, and He knows the things we'd rather nobody else knew. He knows our generosity, and He knows our selfishness. He knows when we've eagerly stepped forward to help someone, and He knows when we've quietly hoped somebody else would do it.

And yet here we are. Not because we deserve to be here. Not because we've somehow earned an audience with God. We're here because God has invited us into His presence through Jesus Christ. And then something even more remarkable happens. **He serves us.**

That's why we call this the Divine Service. Before we ever talk about serving God, giving to God, supporting missions, or being good stewards of what He has given us, God serves us. He gives forgiveness. He gives His Word. He gives His grace. He gives Himself. And from everything He has first given us comes our life of faith and service.

Today is LWML Sunday, and Lutheran Women in Mission has a long history of serving and supporting the mission of Christ. But that service doesn't begin with mite boxes. It doesn't begin with mission grants or projects or meetings. It begins here. It begins with Jesus. Because Christian service is never about earning something from God. It is our response to what God has already done for us.

Paul understood that. When Paul met with James, Peter, and John in Jerusalem, they encouraged him to continue proclaiming the Gospel among

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the Gentiles, but they also asked him to **"remember the poor."** And Paul said that was **"the very thing I was eager to do."** I like that word.

Eager. Not obligated. Not guilted into it. Not, "Well, I suppose somebody has to do it."

Paul was eager. Why? Because Paul knew what Jesus had done for him. Paul knew he was a sinner saved entirely by grace. He knew that Jesus Christ had suffered and died for him. He knew that the Son of God had paid the ransom price for his sin with His own blood. And when you know that kind of mercy, it begins to shape the way you look at other people.

That is really what Christian stewardship is about, too. We're beginning our stewardship emphasis today during Bible study, and we'll talk much more about it in the coming weeks. But stewardship begins in exactly the same place LWML mission begins. With what God has already given us.

Our lives belong to Him. Our abilities come from Him. Our time is His gift. Our resources are blessings entrusted to us. And even the Gospel we proclaim is something we first received from Him. Peter puts it beautifully in our Epistle today: **"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."**

Notice where Peter begins. **"As each has received..."** Before there is giving, there is receiving. Before there is stewardship, there is grace. Before there is service, there is Jesus. That's the proper order of the Christian life. We receive from Christ, and then we respond in faith.

Stewardship isn't primarily about raising money. Christian stewardship is learning to see everything God has placed into our hands as something that can be used wisely and faithfully for His purposes. And LWML gives us a wonderful picture of that.

For generations, Lutheran women have taken seemingly small gifts and joined them together for the sake of Christ's mission. A few coins placed

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into a mite box don't look like much. But God has never been particularly intimidated by small things. A little boy's lunch fed thousands. A widow's offering became an example Jesus still teaches His Church through. A manger in Bethlehem held the Savior of the world.

And through the combined gifts of God's people, LWML has supported missionaries and ministries around the world, provided help in times of disaster, supported Braille ministries, helped provide clean water, supported ministries addressing human needs, and above all helped carry the saving message of Jesus Christ to people who need to hear it.

And that is what sets the Church's mission apart. There are many organizations doing good and necessary work in this world, and we can be thankful for them. But the Church has been entrusted with something more: the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We don't simply want someone to have clean water. We want them to know the One who gives **living water**. We don't simply want someone comforted in suffering. We want them to know the Savior who entered our suffering, carried our sins to the cross, and conquered death for us. We don't simply want to make this life a little better. We want people to know that in Jesus Christ there is eternal life. That is the mission Christ has given His Church. And each of us has a place in it.

Now, you cannot go everywhere. You cannot do everything. And frankly, at some point in life, it becomes wonderfully liberating to admit that. But you can do **something**. You can pray. You can encourage. You can serve. You can give. You can speak about Jesus. And you can support others who are able to go places you cannot go and do things you cannot do.

That is part of the wisdom of Christian stewardship. Instead of simply asking, *What do I have?* we begin asking, *Lord, how can what You have given me be used for Your purposes?*

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Our LWML has been asking that question for generations. And Trinity must continue asking it as well. Because our mission is wonderfully simple:

Sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. That mission belongs to all of us. Men and women. Young and old. Those who can travel halfway around the world and those whose traveling days are mostly behind them.

There is still work to do. There are still people who need encouragement. There are still neighbors who need compassion. There are still children and grandchildren who need faithful Christian examples. And there are still people who need Jesus.

So today we thank God for the Lutheran Women in Mission. We thank Him for the women of Trinity who have served faithfully through the years. We thank Him for every mite, every prayer, every hour of service, and every act of love offered in support of Christ's mission.

But most of all, today we thank God for **Jesus**. Because before we ever served Him, He served us. Before we ever gave anything to Him, He gave Himself for us. Before we ever supported His mission, His mission brought the Gospel to us.

You have been ransomed. You have been forgiven. You have been baptized into Christ. **You belong to Him.** And now, surrounded by His grace and filled with His gifts, we have the privilege of asking: **Lord, how can I faithfully use what You have given me?**

And then, like Paul, we can eagerly support the mission of Christ—wisely using the gifts God has placed into our hands so that others may know the same Savior we know.

Because there is no greater gift we could ever share than **the good news of Jesus Christ.**

Amen.