



## LCMS Stewardship Ministry

### A Better Way

Here are some common reasons against tithing. Some say tithing isn't necessary because it isn't expressly commanded in the New Testament. There is no "Thus saith the Lord," or "should" concerning tithing. Others say that Christians give to their congregation in ways much broader than money. They give of their time and their talents, and these together with treasures (money) add up to more than a tithe. Still others say that they give of their treasures to other things besides their congregation, and they want to support those things alongside their church. And then there are those who think Christians shouldn't tithe because of some fear. They are afraid that if they tithe, their gift will be misused, or that after tithing, there won't be enough left over to get the things that they use, want or need.

Here are some reasons why Christians should tithe. Even though the New Testament doesn't specifically command Christians to tithe, the Old Testament people were commanded to. And on top of this, St. Paul often describes giving a regular and generous proportion of the first fruits of one's income — terms similar to a tithe (2 Cor. 8:7–23; 2 Cor. 9:2–7).

But here's another way to think about it. What was the point of the tithe in the Old Testament? Where did it go? This tithe was intended to support the ministry of the Levites. They were not given any land because they had no time to farm; their full-time job was the ministry. What does it say in the New Testament? "The Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14). This is the verse that Luther used in the Small Catechism's Table of Duties to explain what Christians owe to the support of the ministry.

It seems clear from both the Old and the New Testaments that the tithe is the goal of Christians in their giving. But what if we're not there yet? How should we handle this? What are we to do?

The tithe is not specifically commanded in the New Testament, but it sure seems like the implicit expectation of both the Old and New Testaments. So, we're ecstatic that you're giving, and that you're giving in all these various ways — time, talents and

treasures. But there is a better way. And that will only be a blessing to you, just as the Word of God — Old and New Testament alike — promises. Can you try increasing your gifts over the coming weeks, months and years? Can you put your trust in the God who sent His Son to take away your sin and give you everlasting life? And if He did this for you, if He did not spare His only Son, how will He not give you all things? He will not disappoint.



Deacon's Digest,

This week I saw an article in my news feed that spoke to the main reason to be able to achieve a long lasting and very enjoyable marriage. The author used data from a poll conducted by a very experienced marriage counselor. The participants were in various age groups so that the time spent in marriage varied from days to decades. The primary finding was that longer lasting marriages happen when couples find ways to serve one another by putting others' needs above their own needs. The short answer is "kindness". If you will remember my column from last month, one of the things I mentioned is that practicing Christians need to serve one another. Therefore, it is no coincidence that Saint Paul reminded the churches at Galatia and Ephesus to be kind and serve one another in accordance with Jesus' instructions to love one another. Please see **Galatians 5:22-26** [*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup> And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup> If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. <sup>26</sup> Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another*] and also **Ephesians 4:32** [*Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you*]

Christians should pray that the Holy Spirit will fill them up with so much kindness there is plenty left over to serve others with kindness.

Now I have to observe that it is not always easy to display great kindness in our workplace, school, home, or even church. By this, I mean that sometimes we encounter people who emit this warning signal: "I am a person with whom it is difficult to get along." Just remember this person may be abrasive by putting on a tough and bitter anti-social attitude because they can only live as much life as they can rigidly control. This may be because they do not know of God's love for

them. So their anti-social attitude shows their separation from God. We can assume that this person likely has spiritual needs, you can open a channel to God by showing some kindness. Knowing that this person may not get much kindness due to their behavior, your kindness might be an answer to a prayer. Praise God!! Blessings and peace at this time of Easter!

Deacon Joe

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Dear Good Shepherd Lutheran

Thank you so much for your prayers, partnership and support. We thank the Lord for you as our partners in missions. Rev. Ray thank you so much for your dynamic Leadership and the opportunity to visit your great congregation.

We are close to placing a male and female worker at Fort Myers/Naples, Fl. Rev. Timothy Abel and his wife Samantha who both have done work at a Seminary in Australia where Tim did his Master's. They are landing soon at Fort Myers. We are also bringing a couple from Egypt going to Cincinnati. Ramy is a seasoned missionary and has worked in various countries with youth on missions (YOM).

We are also going to start at Dallas after Houston and Austin, TX in the near future. May our good Lord continue to bless you and be with you. Thank you!

Rev Farrukh Khan

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### **Manners & Customs of Bible Times**

#### **Burial**

Burial had to take place quickly because the hot climate led to rapid decomposition. However, a burial never took place on a Sabbath or holy day (John 11:39; 19:31). The body was normally washed, wrapped loosely in a linen cloth, and carried to the burial place on a wooden stretcher (Luke 7:14, where the stretcher or coffin was used for a sick man). Burial could take place in a natural cave or in an artificially-made one (sepulcher) (Genesis 49:29-32; Judges 8:32). Natural caves were widened and provided niches or shelves where the bodies could be laid to rest. Because there were limited numbers of caves, when the bodies had decomposed the bones were removed and put into stone jars called ossuaries. These jars were stored in a corner, and the niches made available for

further burials. The mouth of the tomb was sealed either with a disc-shaped stone that ran in an inclined groove in front of the cave or with a boulder that fell into the access hole beneath it. Either way, the stone was extremely difficult to move once it was in place. Burial caves and sepulchers were painted white as a warning to the living that the dead were there (Matthew 23:27). A living person could not always worship God after having had contact with the dead.

Alternatively, burial was effected by laying the stretcher on the ground and surrounding the body with boulders about eighteen inches (fifty centimeters) in diameter in a rough oblong. The body was then covered by earth, the boulders forming a boundary to the grave. (Burial as such was not common because of the hardness of the ground.) The simple graveyards were always kept outside a village or town (Luke 7:12); only royalty were buried within the city (1 Kings 2:10).

Exceptionally, a body was covered in spices and in paste, and these were tied to the body by layers of white "roller bandage." The paste hardens and impregnated the bandages until a hard-preservative mold or cocoon was formed about the body. A cap was put on the head, and often the jaw was held in position by a bandage under the chin. This was done for Jesus by two wealthy men, following the initial burial in the simple sheet (John 19:40). In Lazarus's case, his hands and feet seem to have been tied together before he was covered with a sheet. His jaw was tied by a bandage (John 11:44). Proper embalming was carried out in Egypt, where the removal of the internal organs took place. The body was filled with paste and the organs kept in a jar (see Genesis 50:2, 26). In Israel, following the burial there was a funeral meal to conclude the period of mourning (Jeremiah 16:7), often for a week or longer (Deuteronomy 34:8).

A woman who survived her husband was in a very difficult position. She could not inherit from her husband. She could remain in her husband's family if the next of kin would take her in marriage. More often the widow was without any financial support. The law therefore said that widows were to be protected (Deuteronomy 10:18, 24:17-21). In the early church, money was set aside to care for widows (Acts 6:1), because in the society of the day, prostitution was about the only way for women to obtain money to live. Paul expected widows to be supported by their families (1 Timothy 5:3-4, 8). The local church was to put the names of widows who had lived good lives and were over age sixty on a charity list (1 Timothy 5:9-11).

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**Beginnings** (by a Church Historian, Bea Daily)

“Tell me again about when I was born.” The plea is common to children everywhere. There is something wonderful that happens to a child as he or she listens to the story of their beginnings.

For my father, there was no story. His young parents had migrated from Slovakia in 1895 to Etna, PA, married, and had my father a year later. They moved to Youngstown, Ohio, where my grandmother became ill with appendicitis, and died when my father was only 18 months old. His father left him with his godparents and returned to Slovakia. The godparents would not tell him about his parents, not even their names. When he would ask, he was told, you do not need to know!

I felt sad for my father not ever being able to say, “Tell me about when I was born.” In 1997, I felt this strong urge to find out what I could about my dad’s family. I went to the Mormon family history genealogy center, found a nice helpful lady there. I asked, “where do I start?” She told me, if you know what city he was born in, start with the church. Do you know what religion they were? That I did! He knew he was born in Etna, PA, on April 4, in 1903 and they were Catholic. I was able to find a baby named Joseph born on that date, and baptized on April 7 at St. Elizabeth Church in Pittsburgh, PA. I ordered a copy of the certificate where I was able to find the names of my grandparents and the names of the villages they came from in Slovakia. Also, the names of the godparents, so knew I had the right person.

I am sharing this story with you to show how important church records/history are. When I first arrived at Good Shepherd, Shalimar, Florida in 1973, Vera Brown, a charter member, who was the church secretary at that time was also the historian. She saw that I was a photographer and could easily record the events



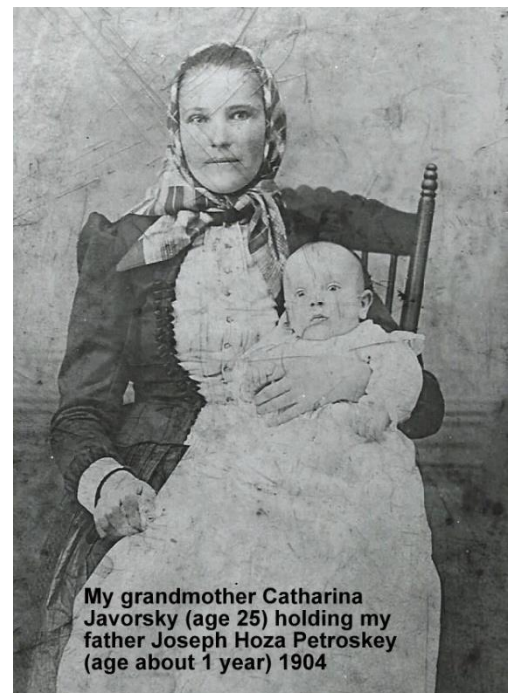
with my camera and asked if I would take over the job. I did! How many years is that? 2021 minus 1973 = 48.

In 2002, on a trip to Slovakia, I was able to find my grandfather's grave (Katarina, name on tombstone, was his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, not my grandmother,) with the help of a 4<sup>th</sup> cousin I met online. In 2017, on a trip to Youngstown, Ohio, I was able to find the location (because she was buried in a potter's grave with no headstone) of my grandmother's grave.

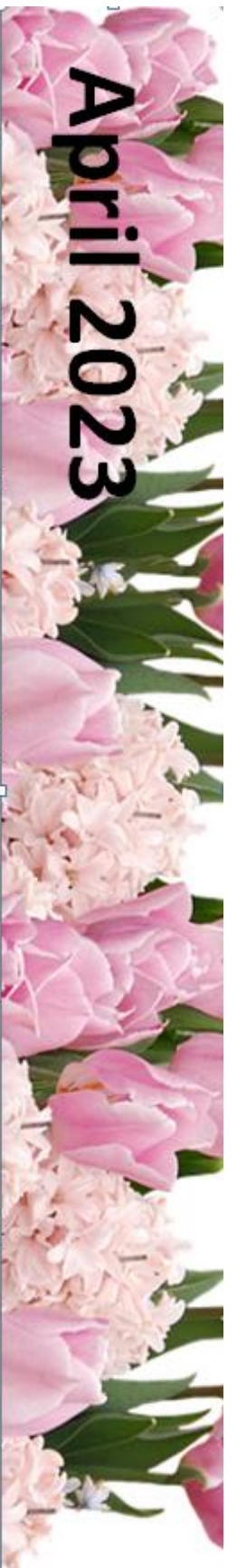
Back when I started my genealogy journey, I would order film strips of church records in Slovakia from the Mormon records in Salt Lake City to view. You had to know if they were Catholic or Calvinist Reform and dates. You could keep the film for two weeks and used their viewer to view them. Today you can view these church records online through Ancestry.com

On my mother's side of the family, they were Slovak Presbyterian in the USA. I then ordered the film for the Calvinist Reform church that was the closest to their small village of Kerestz (Kristy), pop. 300. I had the names of mom's parents. I then started my journey on the Behary/Kardos names. To learn that my maternal grandparents lived next door to each other from the time they were born, grew up, married, and came to the USA. I learned that both of their mother's (my great grandmothers), along with an infant Behary child died on the same day of a cholera epidemic on July 23, 1873. Yes, this is all in the church records.

Det 7:9 says: ***Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.*** I know that my ancestors were believers by the records and the cross on the tombstone of my grandfather. I feel blessed by learning this because there is no time limit on God's abundant mercy for those who love Him.



My grandmother Catharina Javorsky (age 25) holding my father Joseph Hoza Petroskey (age about 1 year) 1904



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>2 Both Communion Both Services Mite Collection 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Contemporary 6:00 PM Youth Group</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 8:00 AM Homeschool 7:00 PM Lifetree Cafe</p>	<p>5 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Pastor's Midweek Bible Study</p>	<p>6 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday 5:30 PM American Heritage Girls</p>	<p>7 1:00 PM Bible Study 7:00 PM Good Friday</p>	<p>1 8:00 AM Praise Band 10:00 AM Egg Hunt Noon Puppet Practice 2:00 PM Palm Harvesting</p>
<p>9 6:00 AM Sunrise Service 7:00 AM Easter Breakfast 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM Puppet Show 10:45 AM Contemporary</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 8:00 AM Homeschool 7:00 PM Lifetree Cafe</p>	<p>12 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Pastor's Midweek Bible Study 4:00 PM Confirmation</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 1:00 PM Bible Study</p>	<p>15 8:00 AM Praise Band 10:00 AM Women's Bible Study</p>
<p>16 Early Communion 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Contemporary 6:00 PM Youth Group</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18 8:00 AM Homeschool 7:00 PM Lifetree Cafe</p>	<p>19 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Pastor's Midweek Bible Study 4:00 PM Confirmation</p>	<p>20 5:30 PM American Heritage Girls 6:00 PM Council Meeting</p>	<p>21 1:00 PM Bible Study</p>	<p>22 8:00 AM Praise Band 9:00 AM Life Team Meeting</p>
<p>23 Late Communion 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Contemporary 6:00 PM Youth Group</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 8:00 AM Homeschool 7:00 PM Lifetree Cafe</p>	<p>26 9:30 AM Quilting 10:00 AM Pastor's Midweek Bible Study 4:00 PM Confirmation</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 1:00 PM Bible Study</p>	<p>29 8:00 AM Praise Band</p>
<p>30 Both Communion 8:00 AM Traditional Service 9:30 AM 5th Sunday Breakfast 10:45 AM Contemporary 6:00 PM Youth Group</p>						

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY



4/1 Curtis Wiese  
4/3 Pat Risley  
4/4 Ethan Haase  
4/6 Nate Lepper  
4/7 Herb Hardwick  
4/7 Lisa Schwartz  
4/8 Tom Foster  
4/8 Lou Hanson  
4/9 James Bier  
4/9 Kelly Keller  
4/10 Kathy Shaw

4/12 Allen Binkley  
4/14 Grey Roberts  
4/15 Marie Berkowitz  
4/17 Keith Amiel  
4/17 Mark Riegenbach  
4/18 Noelle Mondragon  
4/23 Carol Franklin  
4/24 April Adams  
4/26 Joan Fienhold  
4/28 Hulda Mahlum



4/3 Robert and Vivian Moser  
4/7 Don and Dolores Hudson