

News & Notes

Thanks!

...on behalf of the Apple Valley Food Pantry for all your generous donations once again this month! What a great way to share God's blessings with those in need! A special Spring collection is coming up – check the bulletin board flyer for details.

Online Volunteer Form

It's amazing how generously God's blessed our members with gifts and abilities! A handy tool that you can use see the wide variety of ways of using those talents around St. John and then also express your willingness to serve is now online for ease of use. Just go to <https://goo.gl/forms/z5er2thAU1z6vtoL2>, fill out the form, and hit the submit button. Each individual member should submit their own form. Check as many boxes as you wish. If you can't remember if you turned in a paper form in the past – or even if you know you did – it won't hurt to submit it again so we have up-to-date info. We're looking to get every member involved in some area of service, to the benefit of our church family and to the glory of our Savior.

WELS United Annual Meeting

All interested WELS members are invited to provide input regarding activities and outreach efforts in the Valley. Mount Olive, Appleton is hosting this year's meeting on March 14th, at 6:30 pm.

FVLHS Announcements

The **FVL Spring Musical** will take the stage on March 10th and 11th at 6:30 pm, and on March 12th at 2:00 pm. Dinner Theater is offered for the Saturday show. Visit fvlhs.org or FVL's Facebook page for more information and to order tickets. These shows do sell out, so get your tickets early!

FVL's Family Open House is March 7th, from noon – 7:00 pm. Parents and middle school students are invited for personal tours and a drawing for tuition discount coupons. Public and homeschool students are also welcome to attend our **Discover FVL** event on Thursday, March 2nd, from 12:30 – 4:30 pm. Reservations can be made online or contact Rylee Kohls at rkohls@fvlhs.org.

Deadlines are fast approaching for **FVL Youth Sports Summer programs** in baseball, softball, football, and track. These are open to middle school students from across the Federation. Go to the "Youth Sports" page at fvlschools.org to register.

364 Days of Thanksgiving Journal

The book (written by a WELS pastor) that served as the theme of our just-completed stewardship series is on display in the entryway. A bulk order discount is available. Sign the sheet if you're interested in a copy for yourself.

Biblical Guidelines for Giving

New Testament believers are no longer bound by God's Old Testament laws (moral, civil, ceremonial). Included in his ceremonial law was the one that commanded the giving of a "tithe" – a 10% offering – to support the priests who served full-time at the tabernacle / temple. Now, we live in the freedom of the gospel. Our offerings are unrestrained, without obligation, and of our own free-will.

But that's not to say that God doesn't provide us with some very helpful advice. He includes in his written will for us in the New Testament some "stewardship principles" for giving an offering for the work of the church, both locally and globally. **Please consider the following passages as you set personal goals to support the work of St. John congregation. And then may God bless your stewardship of giving!**

- ✠ **Exodus 36:3 (NIV11)** - ³ They received from Moses all the offerings the Israelites had brought to carry out the work of constructing the sanctuary. And the people continued to bring **freewill offerings morning after morning.**
- ✠ **2 Corinthians 5:14,15 (NIV11)** - ¹⁴ For **Christ's love compels us**, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵ And he died for all, **that those who live should no longer live for themselves** but for him who died for them and was raised again.
- ✠ **Matthew 6:31,33 (NIV11)** - ³¹ So **do not worry**, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³³ But **seek first his kingdom** and his righteousness, and **all these things will be given to you as well.**
- ✠ **1 Corinthians 16:2 (NIV11)** - ² On the **first day of every week**, each one of you should **set aside** a sum of money in **keeping with your income**, saving it up.
- ✠ **2 Corinthians 8:3,4,7,9,12 (NIV11)** - ³ I testify that they gave **as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability.** ⁴ They **urgently pleaded with us for the privilege** of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. ⁷ Since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also **excel in this grace of giving.** ⁹ For **you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ**, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich. ¹² For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what one does not have.
- ✠ **2 Corinthians 9:6-8,12 (NIV11)** - ⁶ Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows **generously** will also reap generously. ⁷ Each of you should **give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion**, for **God loves a cheerful giver.** ⁸ And **God is able to bless you abundantly**, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many **expressions of thanks** to God.
- ✠ **Malachi 3:10 (NIV11)** - ¹⁰ "**Test me** in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and **pour out so much blessing** that there will not be room enough to store it."

We ***cheerfully, thankfully, eagerly,*** and ***trustingly*** give ***regular, planned, generous,*** and ***firstfruit free-will*** offerings ***in keeping with our income*** (i.e. a percentage), as ***motivated by our Savior's incomparable love for us.***