

Immanuel Lutheran Church
229 Eleventh Avenue West
Grinnell, Iowa 50112

November 2020 Newsletter

Let's Get Social...

All links are available on our website

<http://www.immanuelgrinnell.org>



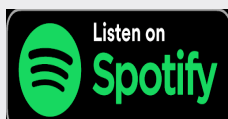
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Reference Information

HAVE YOU...moved? ...changed phone numbers? ...changed email addresses? ...need to update birthday/anniversary dates? Let the office know! Thanks!

LET US KNOW...If you have a loved one ill or hospitalized, have a new baby, would like a pastoral visit, or if any pastoral need arises.

PRAYER REQUEST...If you would like a special prayer during the prayers of the church on Sunday, please contact Rev. Dr. Koepp:

Office: 641-236-6691

Email: koeppj@hotmail.com

Cell: 507-829-3901

Home: 641-260-8394

DO YOU...want to put something in the bulletin or newsletter? Have a prayer request? Birth/Anniversary/Graduation announcements? Upcoming events? If so, please submit the information as you want it to appear in the bulletin or newsletter by the deadlines listed below to the church secretary at immanuelutheran@iowatelecom.net.

Deadlines:

Bulletin – 12 noon of each Wednesday

Newsletter – 15th of each month

For those of you without email access, please call or submit your written request to the church secretary.

IN THIS ISSUE...

Message from Pastor	Pgs 5-9
President Saunder's Piece for Peace	Pgs 10-11
Thanksgiving Service	Pg 12
Advent and Christmas Services	Pg 13
Snowbirds/Church Directory	Pg 14
Member Information Needed	Pg 15
LCMS Stewardship Newsletter Article	Pg 16
November Confirmation Schedule	Pg 17
Jesus Gives Us Rest by Rev. Dr. Todd Jenks	Pgs 18-23
November Eucharist Project	Pgs 24-25

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR**“The Perfect Crazy Wrap-up”**

I can't count how many times I have heard it, and quite frankly it's getting sickening, “Well, it is 2020” This phrase of exasperation is an attempt to piece together some modicum of peace with the big events over this last year. How great then we have reached November. As November wraps up the year, it is just as crazy as the year itself; so, it is fitting to have this the November of 2020.

I can hear you already, “Pastor, the year ends in December. We have a whole month yet to go.” While the world calendar ends in December, the Church Year calendar ends in November; this is great news!

Why? Consider what happens in November. The first day finds itself celebrating the Feast of All Saints', which is a feast that calls to mind how one becomes a saint (a true saint washed in the blood of the Lamb of God), as well as their example of Christian living. On that same day this year, we turn our clocks back one hour; this results the darkness of night being seen earlier and earlier in the evening. As the darkness grows longer, this year in our nation, we go to the polls to vote for an end to many contentious electoral races. Just over a week later, the nation sets apart a day to honor those men and women who have served in all military branches defending the freedom for those elected ones to bicker, and us to quarrel while electing them.

In the church, really since October 29, which is the festival of St. Michael and All Angels, the texts turn their attention to the end of times. As the crops turn ready to harvest, the church takes this time to remind God's children that His time of harvest is upon us. Ever since the Resurrection of Christ Jesus, we have been living in the end of days. Ripe are the fields, and the time for work is now; night is coming when no one can work. We pray that God would send workers into His harvest field. As winter draws near, so does the end of the world. It is no wonder that we also observe a day of thanksgiving. We gather to give thanks for our daily bread. We recognize that all life, from the womb to the grave is not only given by God Himself; it is also sustained, both body and soul, by God's gracious hand.

As the church year ends, we focus on repentance and hope. We hear about the times. We are strengthened by His Word to await the return of Jesus Christ in all His glory. This culminates in the Last Sunday of the Church Year, where we enact through our liturgy the Last Day itself. When Christ comes back to judge the world, His people are gathered in joyous celebration around His throne with the Lamb in the midst of them on the throne dispensing His gifts.

Then, while the nights get longer and darkness looms heavy over the land, the church continues this joyful preparation. In the midst of darkness, the church recalls, ***"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*** (John 1:1-5)

This light of Christ has come and is coming again in all his glory. He is the day that has no end. Darkness is a day to Him. Consider the Psalm prayed over you at your baptism,

“I lift up my eyes to the hills.

From where does my help come?

2 ***My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.***

3 ***He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.***

4 ***Behold, he who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.***

5 ***The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade on your right hand.***

6 ***The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.***

7 ***The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.***

8 ***The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time forth and forevermore.”*** (Psalm 121)

This is the prayer of steadfast hope in the midst of change. It is the fervent prayer that proclaims, ***“All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. 7The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.”*** (Isaiah 40:6-8)

While the world constantly changes, while it constantly fights for who is in power, while it bickers over who gets to make what decisions for whom, the Church has only one Everlasting Head. We end this crazy month, as we end this crazy year, with a new beginning and wonderfully use the term *Advent*.

Advent means coming. It is a time of preparation for Christmas. As we prepare to celebrate the first coming of Christ as Christmas, we cannot help but look forward to His second coming. While we wait for His second coming, we rejoice in Advent now, His coming to us in Word and Sacrament. Advent has two wedded themes of repentance and hope. The season of Advent has a mixed beginning. What we have today is a mix of two different traditions. In the 5th Century, Gaul practiced a 40 day season of penitential reflection to prepare for Christmas, and Rome observed a four week time of joyful preparation. Eventually, these two approaches merged and we see both of these elements in our practices today. We use either blue or violet, darker colors to remind of penitence. We also use rose during the third week, as a more joyful color to our preparations. We remove overtly joyful songs of praise from our liturgy such as the Gloria in Excelsis and the alleluias. We even remove the flowers from the altar. These things are all held in reserve to be brought out at the celebration of Christmas, thus adding to our joyful celebration.

As we wait in joyful expect, it is difficult to resist the pressure to bring Christmas into Advent. This is accentuated in a supposed dreary year like 2020, and the temptation is heightened as the world blasts Christmas music everywhere even before the Day of Thanksgiving. Please resist. There are great spiritual blessings in letting Advent have its way. The Sunday's proclaim the prophecies of Christ's birth, the angelic messages to Joseph and Mary, and His return on the Last Day. The Advent wreath helps us to mark the time, which adds more lights, more reminders of Christ the light of the world, in the long dark days.

What a perfect end to 2020. As the world despairs, the Church hopes. As the world bickers and debates, the church confesses and sings. As you end this year and begin a new one by God's grace, I encourage you to spend some time memorizing and singing this hymn all November long:

LSB 332 "Savior of the Nations, Come"



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
 3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
 4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and

here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
 of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
 vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:
 king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,

That the Lord chose such a birth.
 Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
 God was there up - on His throne.
 His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

- 5 God the Father was His source,
 Back to God He ran His course.
 Into hell His road went down,
 Back then to His throne and crown.
- 6 For You are the Father's Son
 Who in flesh the vict'ry won.
 By Your mighty pow'r make whole
 All our ills of flesh and soul.
- 7 From the manger newborn light
 Shines in glory through the night.
 Darkness there no more resides;
 In this light faith now abides.
- 8 Glory to the Father sing,
 Glory to the Son, our king,
 Glory to the Spirit be
 Now and through eternity.

*Text (sts. 3, 6–7): © 2006 Concordia Publishing House; (sts. 4–5, 8): © 1978
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+Soli Deo Gloria+

Rev. Dr. Joel G. Koepp

President's Piece for Peace

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders
District President

"Grace, mercy, and peace to you all." That is the intro to every sermon I preach. They are connective words which mean that the result of God's grace and His never ending mercy is peace. A properly preached sermon delivers and results in these three aforementioned words. That is why I finish each sermon with, "Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds on Christ Jesus." Once again the resultant gift of divine service is peace.

We are at a time of chaos with the pandemic (not to mention many other issues assaulting our day-to-day existence). We need peace. We need peace now as much as did Israel when they were standing between the Red Sea and the oncoming Egyptian soldiers. We need peace now as much as Israel did when they were carried into exile. We need peace!

What we need, we have. We have peace where Christ Jesus has promised to be for our sake. He delivers to us His peace through the Means of Grace. His grace is in His Word, in the waters of Holy Baptism, in Holy Absolution, and in the Holy Supper of our Lord. We do not go to church to experience Jesus, we go there to meet Him. In divine service God comes to meet us with grace and mercy which results in peace.

I say this because I have traveled our beloved district quite extensively throughout this pandemic. It is all too clear that some of our regular attenders of Divine Service are not present during this time. While they may be watching by live-stream (and that is beginning to wane as well) they are not in the presence of the Sacrament of the Altar nor are they benefiting from the community of believers. This is not good for the soul nor for the church.

Caution is being taken by our congregations. I see it practiced with great care everywhere I have been. I am very proud of our pastors. They have shown patience, wisdom, courage, and compassion for the membership. I have not seen one of our congregations being careless toward members attending church. Outside of sickness, injury, or other mitigating factors, there is good reason for the body of Christ to be assembling to receive God's Holy Goodness.

It may well be time to go visit these members who are still greatly afraid of COVID. I do not recommend letters, cards or email. I recommend a visit to their homes should they accept you. Go and visit them and talk about the community of believers and what courage we propagate with each other. Speak about the Sacrament of the Altar and the intrinsic value of every Sunday communion. There is not one member of the church who does not benefit from a properly received Body and Blood of Jesus.

If families are going about their daily work and school schedules, traveling to the grocery store for food, going to activities of any kind and of any sort, they can also be coming to Divine Service. There is more precaution taken by our pastors and church leaders than at public assemblies of other sorts.

I know I am sounding preachy here and I don't mean to do that per se. I simply trust in what the Means of Grace deliver and the strength they provide. That strength is not provided should we be absent from them. We are a church body who believes and confesses an incarnational theology. We believe God is present among us for our good and for our sake. He might be present everywhere but we are not. We are locally confined to wherever we are. For that reason we rejoice that our Lord travels space and time to come to us. He reaches through all matter to touch our ears and our lips with forgiveness of sins. The result of such divine

President's Piece for Peace

Rev. Dr. Brian S. Saunders
District President

action is His peace. Peace we have with Him now. A peace we desperately need is a peace we have in the Means of Grace, gathering together as the community of faith.

President Saunders

Thanksgiving Service
Wednesday, November 18
6:30pm



"I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Psalm 118:21–24



Advent Services

Wednesday, December 2 at 6:30pm

Theme: 'Covered to Prevent Fear'

Wednesday, December 9 at 6:30pm

Theme: 'Covered to Separate the Holy and the Common'

Wednesday, December 16 at 6:30pm

Theme: 'Covered: The Veil that Conceals and Buries'

Wednesday, December 23 at 6:30pm

*Theme: 'Covered No More: Jesus Removes the Veil
for Eternal Breath of Fresh Air'*

Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 13th at 10:30 am

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Thursday, December 24th at 4:00pm

Christmas Day Service

Friday, December 25th at 9:00am

New Year's Eve Service

Thursday, December 31st at 4:00pm



To those of you that “fly” south for the winter and would like your monthly newsletter mailed to you, please submit your address, date departing and date returning, to the church office. Even those that have submitted their address in the past, please do so again to make sure we have the correct address. The newsletter can also be read online at www.immanuelgrinnell.org



If there are any address/phone/email changes, please submit those no later than November 15th to immanuellutheran@iowatelecom.net

Jesus said to His disciples, ***“Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.”*** (Mark 16:15-16) Paul wrote to Timothy, ***“Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”*** (1 Tim. 4:16)

In effort to preach the Gospel to the members of Immanuel, the Pastor and elder's are tasked with keeping close watch on both the teaching and its hearers. There are several members of Immanuel for whom we have either no contact information, or not the correct contact information. If you do, we are asking you to pass it along to either Pastor or the Board of Elders (Joel McDonough, Steve Haase, Darlo Kelting, and Ken Mergen), so that we can, ***“consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”*** (Hebrew 10:24-25)

First Name	Last Name	City	State
Christine	Carstensen		
Clinton	Hagedorn		
Dennis	Hagedorn		
Patrick	Harms		
Eric	Heimsoth		
Sara	Heimsoth		
William	Nagel		
Kiara	Petersen		
Travis	Puls		
Tyler	Puls		
Alicia	Routier	Sully	IA
April	Routier	Sully	IA
Tyler	Routier	Sully	IA
Hannah	Smith		
Matthew	Smith		
Nathan	Smith		
Samantha	Smith		
Jenna	Tanner		
Lydia	Tanner		

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry
Newsletter article – November 2020

Our Father in heaven has claimed us as His own. By the shedding of His Son's blood, His death for our sins, and His resurrection for our justification, God the Father has received us back into His family. By water – combined with His Word, promise, and Name – the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in us. We belong to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is in us, and we are in Him. And, being in Him, all things are ours. In Him, we are richly and abundantly blessed.

Our true treasure is that we belong to the most Holy Trinity, and everything that is His – righteousness, peace, eternal life – also belongs also to us. Even our temporal treasures are gifts from His fatherly divine goodness and mercy.

We receive our treasures from Him, and thus, as good stewards of His varied grace, we manage them in such a way that they may be returned to Him. We bring them to Him, hallowed through prayers of thanksgiving and God's holy Word, as a sacrifice.

Thus, all our possessions, as gifts from God, are also sacrifices to Him. We eat to nourish our bodies. We share with our family, neighbors, fellow Christians, the poor, and even our enemies as holy things given by the holy God. His temporal gifts are blessings to and for us, and they bring blessings upon us even as they are pressed into His service for His kingdom.

Thus, we place all that we have into God's hands, and He never fails to remember us. He pours out the fullness of His promises upon us. We give thanks for all that He has done, is doing, and will continue to do. We give thanks by not taking for ourselves, but, giving to all even as our heavenly Father has given to us.

As we prepare for the celebrations of Thanksgiving, may we all give thanks continually for all that we are and all that we have because of God's providential care. And may we be all the more diligent in bringing everything that we have received from God to Him, so that He may bless it and employ it for the good of all – even for us. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance.

CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE FOR NOVEMBER

5th/6th Grades

November 4

Luther Movie

November 11

MEMORY WORK: First Article and meaning (all of it)

LESSON TO BE COMPLETED IN CLASS: Lesson 8

BIBLE LESSON: Matthew 12

November 18

MEMORY WORK: First Article and meaning (all of it)

LESSON TO BE COMPLETED IN CLASS: Lesson 9-10

BIBLE LESSON: Matthew 13-14

November 25

No Class

7th/8th Grades

November 4

Luther Movie

November 11

MEMORY WORK: 7th Commandment

READING ASSIGNMENT DUE BEFORE CLASS: Large Catechism 384-388

LESSON IN CLASS: SCQ 78-82

November 18

MEMORY WORK: 8th Commandment

READING ASSIGNMENT DUE BEFORE CLASS: Large Catechism 388-392

LESSON IN CLASS: SCQ 83-87

November 25

No Class

Jesus Gives Us Rest

by Rev. Dr. Todd Jenks, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Ames, Iowa

Words are funny, aren't they? Many times, we don't mean literally what we are saying with the words we are using. For instance, have you ever said, "I'm so hungry, I could eat a horse"? Have you said it? But have you ever actually done it? When they were young, my sons loved it and laughed when I would say, "Time to hit the road!" On occasion, they would actually run outside to our street and hit the road with their fists.

So how about this one: "Sick and tired"! Have you ever said it? Have you ever felt it? Are you feeling sick and tired right now? When you are sick and tired of something, does that mean you are vomiting and have a fever from it? When you are sick and tired of something, you are not literally ill, but you are frustrated, worn, and weary by some ongoing issue or problem.



How many people at this very moment are sick and tired of the ongoing pandemic? How many people are sick and tired of the tension and dissension regarding every little decision, such as whether to wear a mask or not to wear one? How many people are sick and tired of waiting and waiting and waiting, wondering when this will ever end, when we can go back again to what life was before this pandemic came along to whack us?

Are you worn and weary from this ongoing pandemic? Have you gotten tired of hearing all the talk about coronavirus waves, when all you would rather think about this fall is the waves of the wondrous seashore or the lovely lakeshore? We are indeed sick and tired of the endless coronavirus. And the whole thing is far from over. Are you worn and weary from all of it?

In reality, you could ask that same query about any ongoing problem in your life. For all life's lingering problems, God gives us the answer—Jesus. Jesus is the one we can turn to, and need to turn to, with all of our problems. So, have you been turning to Jesus? Have you been finding your rest in Him?

Jesus proclaims, **“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest”** (Matthew 11:28). Jesus tells us further, **“I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls”** (Matthew 11:29). Do you rest in Jesus? When you are weary of the world in which we live, do you find your rest in Jesus? What does this even mean?

Where do we find our rest? Too often, when we have stressors and “dis-stressors” in life, we turn to the substances of this life to try to relieve our stress. You all are very familiar, I’m sure, with the term “emotional eating”—maybe you even are personally familiar with the practice of emotional eating. You may likewise be familiar with the practice of emotional drinking, using that drink to cope when you’re on the brink of tossing in the towel. God tells us we don’t need substances to cope with life’s problems and pressures. We need Jesus, the One in whom we can find true rest. Those substances will only give you a momentary assist as you address your problems, and generally they will give you other, greater problems to boot. Jesus will give you an eternal assist for all your problems, and relying on Him will make you even stronger than you were apart from Him.

Do you rest in Jesus? Will you rest in Jesus? Maybe you’re familiar with the practice of resting when you are in court. The attorney may say, “I rest my case.” Well, for every single case we encounter in life—every single problem or issue that we encounter in life—we can find rest in Jesus Christ. Jesus proclaims in our Gospel today, **“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest”** (Matthew 11:28).

I’ve told my congregation about the children’s sermon by the pastor who was asking the kids a question about what lives in a tree and stores nuts and a kid replied, ‘Well, pastor, it sounds like a squirrel, but since the answer is usually Jesus, I’m going to go with that.’ Jesus is not always literally the answer to every question. For example, what do you use to change a tire? Jesus is, however, spiritually and in reality, the answer to every single problem in life.

We’re facing a big problem right now as we keep going through this pandemic. How do we survive it? How do we keep from going crazy from the uncertainty? How do we handle the stress? Jesus is the answer. We can rest in Him, find our strength in Him. We can keep going through Him, endure and persevere through Him. We can find our rest in Jesus.

So, what does it mean to rest in Jesus? Well, there are two ways to rest. One way to rest is simply to take a break from all your labor. Certainly Jesus gives that to us. One way He does so is in worship, as we are strengthened through His Word and Sacrament. Remember on the seventh day after God's six days of work in His creation, God Himself rested, setting a pattern for us and showing to us the importance of rest. So, rest in Jesus truly means taking time to worship Jesus and to bask in the beauty of His Word.

But another way to rest is to be at peace and at ease knowing you've got what you need. As a student during my nine years of graduate school, four at seminary and five for my PhD, I would have fellow students who would not be at rest about an upcoming test. Quite often, it would be because they had not put in the time to study and to prepare properly. They were quite anxious to take that test. I was generally quite pumped to take that test. Why? I had studied hard, I had read and reread, I had taken many notes, I had inwardly digested what I had been learning. I was pumped up to go show what I learned, like an athlete who wants to compete to show what their training has done for them.

A weightlifter who has strength from working out doesn't get worked up about doing a pump. He knows he's got the muscle mass to do it, to lift that big unit. A runner who has trained for an event doesn't get stressed out about running a race. She knows she has the stamina to go the distance.

You have Jesus in you. He gives you His stamina, so you can go the distance. Through Him, you can do it! Remember what Paul proclaims in Philip-
pians 4:13? **"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!"** Have you heard somebody say, "I don't know if I can do this, keep coping with this coronavirus?" Have you yourself felt like that or even said that? You CAN do it! Jesus is with you to sustain you and to give you rest in Him.



In Psalm 55:4-6, when David was enduring a truly trying time, David wrote, **"My heart is in anguish within me ... O that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest! I would flee far away to the desert."** Do you ever feel like that?

Do you wish you could fly away to get away from it all, so you could find rest from all the stress? That was David's hope, and sometimes it's ours. But it's not always the answer. For instance, during coronavirus you may not want to go away because traveling may increase your chances of catching the virus. And God's answer isn't always taking away our problems—it's giving us the One who gives us rest and strength to cope with our problems! Jesus proclaims, **"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest"** (Matthew 11:28). As we rest in Christ's Word, like we do in worship, Jesus gives us hope to cope and strength to endure and persevere.

Friends, we will get through this pandemic. We can survive and even thrive. And why? Will we get through this because we are such great people? No, although you truly are all wonderful people. Will we get through this because we as a nation are so great, the United States? No, although if you're like me, you do thank God for our country. Why will we get through this? How can I say this?

And how can I say it not just with hope, but with certainty and conviction? We will get through this because we have the Almighty God with us! He promises to never leave us, He promises to strengthen and sustain us. He gives us the wondrous Jesus, in whom we find rest, and in whom we find strength to cope with life's stress and distress.

Just as Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount encouraged us to look to the birds who do not worry about how their needs will be met but trust their Heavenly Father, we are called on to trust Him, too. Continuing with that theme of the birds, I'd like to share with you another Word from the Lord. **"Those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint"** (Isaiah 40:31). Remember those words? Now I've heard different opinions on how well eagles actually soar and how much strength they actually have, but the point of the verse still applies. When you rest in Jesus, you will soar and have stamina. If you rest in your own strength, you will not.

Haven't we all been experiencing this during these days of the pandemic? When we have tried to cope with this craziness with the strength that is in each of us, we just can't muster the luster we need. But when we turn to Jesus and the strength He gives us, we not only can keep plugging along, we can be strong.

Think about what Jesus did when He gave His life on the cross. He paid the price for your sins with His own holy and precious blood. And after He did that, in essence He rested. He looked up to His Father in heaven and said, **“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”** His body was placed in the tomb, where He rested for three days in anticipation of His resurrection.

Jesus loves you and gave Himself for you. Surely He is with you to give you what you need to get through. For the times we’ve tried to find our rest and relief in places other than Him, He took our place under God’s wrath and paid the price for all of that. He died and won forgiveness for you. After completing His work and resting in the earth, Jesus emerged to bring you new birth. When you are born again, you are made a new person in Him. A person who doesn’t have to find rest in what this world offers, which really won’t keep you rested but may just cause other problems instead. Through Christ, we can find true rest.

Remember the saying, “Everything I really need to know I learned in kindergarten”? Well, in many ways we could say, everything I need to know I learned from Moses, who wrote the first five books of the Bible and who—other than Jesus—the Scriptures call the greatest prophet. We think we have it bad. Think about Moses, leading those vast hordes of people for the Lord, facing off against ferocious Pharaoh, leading people who were finding their rest in things that were evil. Remember in the desert, when the people were feeling worn and weary by how long they had been wandering? Remember in the desert, when the people were looking back to how things had been prior to what they were enduring and were longing for those days to come back again? Remember in the desert, when the people were feeling a lack of rest, and so they tried to find their rest in something quite ludicrous, building a golden calf and worshipping it?

So, there was Moses, perturbed and plagued by all of that. He turned to the Lord in frustration and said to the Lord, “You have been telling me lead these people, but you have not let me know whom you will send with me.” What was Moses saying? What you might say today as you face the coronavirus and feel all alone and outpowered? Moses was saying, “Lord, I can’t take this, I can’t do this, I can’t make it on my own.”

Remember what God said to Moses? Remember God's answer? The Lord replied, **"My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest"** (Exodus 33:14). Look carefully at your English translation and you should see that when God says, **"My Presence will go with you,"** the words "My" and "Presence" are both capitalized. This is a proper noun! This proper noun, a name for God Himself, is reminding us of the proper response to all of life's problems—to remember that God is with us. When we are in the desert of life, He will not desert us.

When I was in college, I took the class Desert Biology. We learned some wonderful things. I remember how much I enjoyed writing my research paper on the horned toad. One point I remember from that class is the climatological components of a desert. We often think of a desert as hot and dry, but in terms of climate, it is a place of vast variation of extreme conditions. It gets drastically hot in the day and can cool down dramatically at night. The average daytime high is 100, the average night-time low can be 25, so a difference of 75 degrees—quite extreme.



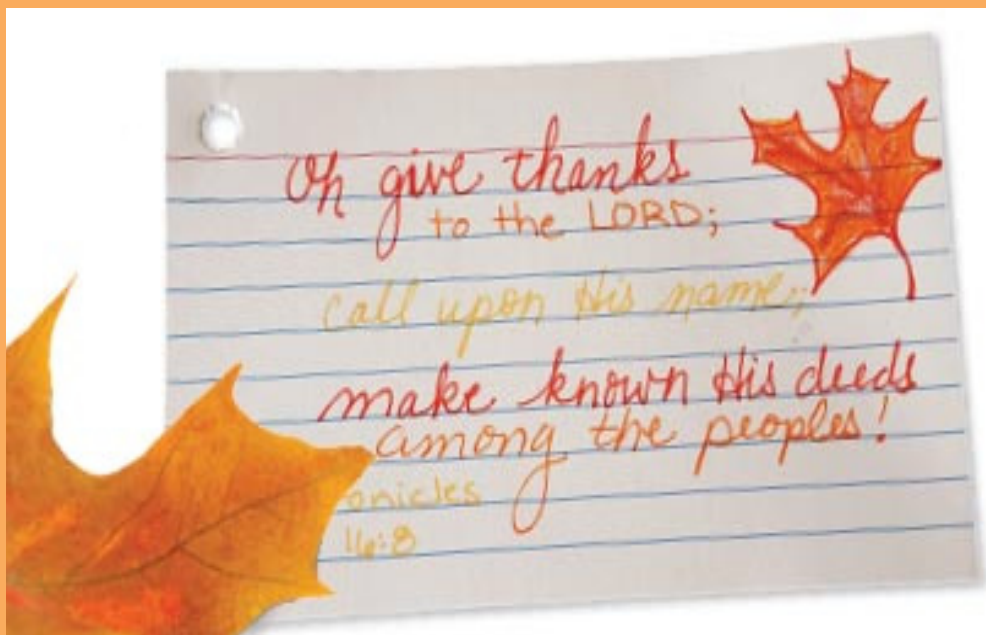
Moses was in a literal desert, experiencing those extremes. Amidst those extremes, when Moses thought he couldn't take it, God told Moses that he could make it. God told Moses that He, the Present God, was all that Moses needed. **"My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest"** (Exodus 33:14). Moses could rest in God and keep going. We are in a metaphorical desert, experiencing extreme conditions at this moment, amidst the long-lasting pandemic. God tells us He is all we need. We can find our rest in Jesus. The proper response to life's extreme conditions? Listen, it's simply this: to find our rest in Jesus.

And since that's the proper response, this is also a proper place for me to say, "I rest my case!"



November Eucharisteo Project

During the days leading up to Thanksgiving, consider setting apart a time of reflection and Eucharisteo (a Greek word meaning 'saying grace' or 'giving thanks'). Beginning November 1, you are invited to participate in a Scripture reading plan that is focused on giving thanks to God. You might even take it a step further, selecting a verse (or portions of verses) from the day's reading to write out on index cards, a note pad, or a journal. The discipline of writing Scripture engages your head, hands, and heart. It slows us down, letting the Word sink in. It also gives us tangible reminders to keep at our fingertips, to display in our homes, or to share with our family and friends.



The November Scripture Reading Plan begins
November 1 and ends November 26.

November Eucharisteo Project

Reading and Writing Scripture — Giving Thanks to God

Read a portion of Scripture each day, starting November 1. Select a verse (or verses) to write out on an index card, a note pad, or a journal. You may choose to string or clip the cards on a ribbon to make a "Thanksgiving Garland", include them in Thanksgiving cards, or use them as place cards at your table. Share your daily verse on social media [#lwmlintheword](#)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. 1 Chronicles 16:8-12 | 14. Psalm 30 |
| 2. Psalm 107:1-9 | 15. 1 Chronicles 16:23-36 |
| 3. Philippians 4:4-7 | 16. Psalm 28:6-9 |
| 4. Psalm 147:1-7 | 17. Hebrews 12:28 |
| 5. Colossians 2:6-7 | 18. Psalm 116:12-19 |
| 6. Psalm 145:1-13 | 19. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18 |
| 7. Isaiah 12 | 20. Psalm 111 |
| 8. Psalm 136:1-9 | 21. 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 |
| 9. Ephesians 5:15-21 | 22. Psalm 9:1-2, 7-10 |
| 10. Psalm 100 | 23. 1 Corinthians 15:50-57 |
| 11. 1 Timothy 4:4 | 24. Psalm 118:19-24 |
| 12. Psalm 75:1-3 | 25. Revelation 4:8b-11 |
| 13. Colossians 3:12-17 | 26. Psalm 95:1-7 |



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