PRINCE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH
October 2026

The Good News

Pastor's Press: Grounded in God's First Gift

Dear Friends in Christ,

As autumn turns and the seasons begin to shift around us, our congregation enters a meaningful season of change of its own. This fall, we are taking a fresh, intentional approach to our annual stewardship emphasis—regrounding ourselves in what it truly means to offer our time, talents, and treasures in response to God's abundant grace.

Change in church life can sometimes feel uncertain, but scripture reminds us that biblical stewardship is not about meeting a building budget or filling empty slots on a volunteer schedule. It is a foundational element of our dynamic life of faith.

Grounded in God's First Gift

In Lutheran theology, our understanding of giving starts with a simple truth: **God is the original Giver.** As Martin Luther famously wrote in his explanation to the First Article of the Apostles' Creed, God has created us and given us everything we have—our bodies, minds, talents, resources, and daily breath—out of pure, fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us.

When St. Paul reflects on generosity in 2 Corinthians 9:7-8, he reminds us:

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work."

Because God's grace comes first, our stewardship is never an attempt to earn God's favor or pay back a debt. Instead, stewardship is a joyful, uncoerced response to God's radical generosity. Giving is an act of worship and trust—a reflection of the Gospel at work in our daily lives.

Time, Talent, and Treasure: Serving God's People

As we step into this new season of stewardship together, we are inviting every household to reflect on how God is calling us to steward three vital gifts:

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Council Corner

At our last Council meeting, Council approved the recommendations of the Stewardship Task Force and reviewed draft revisions to the facility use policy.

Pastor posed the question: “If you had $10 to expand God’s mission in our community, how would you spend it? (and it can't be used for existing church ministries or building/personnel)” We discussed our answers - which included themes around welcoming neighbors, helping people in need, and supporting youth - and how they reveal values and focus for ministry.

Council has been working to find a coordinator for the Supporting our Neighbors (SON) program at POL and because we do not have someone who has the capacity to lead this ministry at this time, POL will not be able to participate in the SON program this year. Please continue to pray for the program and the families it supports, and we can be grateful for the gifts of that ministry we have shared over the years! Feel free to reach out to Becky Linke, Annie Sakaguchi, or Sarah Wheeler if you have any questions.

Pastor’s Press Continued

COTINUED FROM P. 1

- **Our Time:** Choosing to *prioritize life together* in community, worship, prayer, and deliberate rest, making space to notice and serve our neighbors in a fast-paced world.
- **Our Talents:** Offering our *unique skills*—whether teaching, cooking, organizing, listening, serving, fixing, or singing—to support the ministry of the Church and care for those in need around us.
- **Our Treasure:** Committing financial resources *intentionally, proportionately, and joyfully* to sustain our shared mission, care for our community, and support local and global outreach.

When we share these gifts, we aren't just keeping a church running; we are participating in God’s ongoing work in the world. Every hour volunteered, every gift shared, and every financial pledge made translates directly into tangible ministry: feeding the hungry, comforting the grieving, teaching our brothers/sisters, and gathering around Word and Sacrament.

Looking Ahead

Over the coming weeks, you will hear more about this updated approach to stewardship. You will have opportunities to hear personal stories from fellow members, reflect on your own spiritual journey of giving, and pray about how God is calling you to participate in our shared future.

I invite you to pray with me as we walk through this season of transition together. May God open our eyes to the abundance already present in our lives, free our hearts for joyful generosity, and guide us as we seek new ways to love and serve God’s people.

In Christ's Grace and Peace,
Pastor Sena Norton

2026 Fall Stewardship Campaign Information

What do we mean by stewardship here at Prince of Life? Looking around our community you can see it, hear it and feel it. True Christian Stewardship is our joyful, daily response to the overwhelming grace and love that God has already poured into our lives.

In October, you will receive a Stewardship packet, including an intent card for the upcoming year. Please pray and reflect over it. Ask how God might be calling you to invest in His work by sharing your time, talent and treasure. Everything is a gift from God, and we invite you to take time to plan faithfully for the future, on-going support of our shared mission.

The intent cards can be returned in their envelope to the box in the narthex or to the offering plate any time before November 15th. Extra packets will also be located in the narthex.

"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" 2 Corinthians 9:7

Rediscovering Grace: Why Martin Luther's Legacy Still Matters Today

When Martin Luther posted his Ninety-Five Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg in 1517, he wasn't looking to start a new church. He was simply seeking an academic discussion about the practice of selling indulgences—certificates that promised forgiveness of sins in exchange for money. Yet that humble act sparked the Protestant Reformation, transforming not only Western Christianity but the global landscape of faith, culture, and human freedom.

At the heart of Luther's breakthrough was a profound theological realization, grounded in his study of Romans and Galatians: **we are saved by God's grace alone (sola gratia), through faith alone (sola fide), revealed in Scripture alone (sola scriptura).**

For Luther, salvation was not a commercial transaction or a system of spiritual earnings. It was a free, radical gift from God through Jesus Christ. Luther's insight freed believers from spiritual anxiety, declaring that our worth before God rests entirely on Christ's work, not on our own perfection or efforts.

Key Contributions of Martin Luther

- **Scripture for All:** Luther translated the Bible into the common German vernacular, ensuring that everyday people—not just scholars or clergy—could read, hear, and engage God's Word directly.

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Proportionate Giving

The concept of proportionate giving shifts our understanding of stewardship away from arbitrary rules or transaction-based donations and grounds it deeply in a life of faith. Rather than asking *"How much does the church or organization need?",* proportionate giving asks "*How does my giving reflect my relationship with God and the blessings I have received?"*

What Is Proportionate Giving?

At its core, proportionate giving means *offering a deliberate percentage of your income or resources back to God's work,* rather than giving whatever happens to be left over at the end of the month.

Instead of focusing strictly on the amount given, proportionate giving focuses on the ratio of giving relative to one's total income. This principle applies equally regardless of financial circumstance: a household earning $30,000 choosing to give 5% is practicing the exact same spiritual discipline as a household earning $300,000 giving 5%.

Approach	Focus	Spiritual Intent
Residual Giving	Giving from leftover funds	Intentionality is secondary to other expenses.
Flat Amount Giving	Giving a fixed dollar target	Focused on the target dollar amount rather than personal capacity.
Proportionate Giving	Giving a fixed percentage of income	Tied directly to personal income and God's dynamic blessings.

Why Is Proportionate Giving Grounded in Faith?

1. It Acknowledges God as the Ultimate Source

Proportionate giving begins with the biblical truth that everything we have —our income, abilities, time, and physical assets—ultimately belongs to God (Psalm 24:1). When we set aside a specific proportion of our income first, we actively confess that God is the primary provider of our daily bread, not our own self-reliance.

2. It Reflects Biblical Precedent

Throughout Scripture, giving is consistently tied to proportion and capacity rather than static requirements:

- **The Old Testament Tithe:** The practice of setting aside a tenth (10%) established the principle that giving scales directly with increase (Deuteronomy 14:22).
- **Proportional Capacity in the Early Church:** In the New Testament, St. Paul encourages believers to give in direct proportion to how God has prospered them:

"*On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper..." — 1 Corinthians 16:2*

- **The Heart Over the Amount:** Jesus commended the poor widow not for the monetary total of her two small coins, but for the scale of her sacrifice relative to what she had (Luke 21:1-4).

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Rhythm and News: Music Director Updates

Fall is officially here, and we're about to enter into the "busy" season of the church year: three more festival Sundays before Advent, in preparation for the celebration of our Lord's birth. Lots to celebrate and much to do. I hope the season holds great joy and as well as time for peaceful reflection.

If you enjoy the festival services in the tradition of the Lutheran church, why not step it up and participate in one of those special service elements? There's a choir opportunity coming up in preparation for Reformation Sunday, and you are welcome to join with friends as we prepare a fun, impacting musical offering. We'll meet on the three Wednesdays before the 10/27 weekend. If you can join us, just show up!

6:15-7:15 pm – Wednesdays: 10/7, 10/14 and 10/21

Here's to new adventures in worship!

Suzan, Music Director

Rediscovering Grace Cont.

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- **The Priesthood of All Believers:** He dismantled the divide between sacred and secular, teaching that every Christian—whether a pastor, farmer, parent, or artisan—serves God faithfully in their daily vocation.
- **Music in Worship:** Believing that music was a magnificent gift from God, Luther wrote hymns in the people's language (such as "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God") so the whole congregation could participate in singing their faith.
- **The Freedom of a Christian:** Luther famously wrote that "a Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none; a Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." Set free by grace, we are called to love and serve our neighbors unconditionally.

Why It Still Matters Today

In a modern world that constantly evaluates our worth based on productivity, performance, and achievement, Luther's message of unconditional grace remains as urgent as ever. We still live under the weight of secular "indulgences"—the constant pressure to prove ourselves, earn acceptance, or buy peace of mind.

The Reformation reminds us that **God's grace comes first.** Because we are already loved and accepted in Christ, our good works are not a payment to earn God's favor, but a *joyful, free response* of love toward our neighbors.

As we reflect on our Reformation heritage, we remember that to be a church grounded in the Gospel means to be continually reformed (semper reformanda) by God's Spirit—always turning back to the radical grace, love, and truth found in Jesus Christ.

Proportionate Giving Cont.

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3. It Makes Stewardship First-Fruits Giving

Proportionate giving naturally leads to "first-fruits" giving (Proverbs 3:9). Instead of treating faith as an afterthought—giving God whatever happens to remain after bills, savings, and discretionary spending—we prioritize our financial commitment to God's mission at the top of our budget.

4. It Is Intentional, Prayerful, and Unforced

Determining a percentage requires prayer, intentional conversation, and spiritual reflection. It moves financial giving out of the realm of impulse or guilt and into a regular, joyful practice of worship. As St. Paul highlights in 2 Corinthians 9:7, God invites us to give deliberately and cheerfully, recognizing that our generosity grows as our trust in God's grace deepens.

Growing into Proportionate Giving

Proportionate giving is a spiritual journey rather than an all-or-nothing demand. For many, it begins by calculating current giving as a percentage of income—often surprising people by how small or large it actually is.

From there, individuals and families are invited to pick a percentage, grow by 1% each year, or work toward benchmark goals like the traditional tithe (10%). The ultimate objective is not achieving a rigid number, but cultivating a free, trusting heart that responds generously to God's boundless grace.

Practical Steps for Household Planning

1. Calculate Your Current Percentage:
Take total annual giving to church/ministries and divide by total annual household income.

Current % = (Total Annual Giving / Total Household Income) x 100

2. Consider "Step-Up" Giving:
*If reaching a target goal (like 5% or 10%) feels daunting, commit to increasing your proportion by **1% each year**. Small, incremental adjustments make growth manageable and sustainable.*

3. Automate Your Giving:
Setting up recurring weekly or monthly online transfers helps make first-fruits giving automatic, ensuring your stewardship commitment remains top-of-mind alongside monthly living expenses.

Angel Tree 2026:"Winter Welcome" Arrives in the narthex Sunday, 11/1

During the holiday season Prince of Life traditionally supports a community ministry via our Angel Tree gifts. This year our selected ministry is **Lutheran Community Services Northwest's *Winter Welcome*.I am pleased to say that Prince of Life has committed to supporting 10 individuals through the program during this holiday season!** We will be providing additional support for Lutheran Community Services NW (LCSNW) in the form of gift cards that can be distributed to other clients.

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Angel Tree 2026 Continued

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The Details:

- Gift collection will be througout the **ENTIRE MONTH OF NOVEMBER, Delivery will be the first week in December.**

WHITE TAGS

- **WHITE TAGS represent** the **10 individuals** we have committed to support. To keep things equitable, the goal is to spend **aprroximately $50 per WHITE TAG individual. Items from the WISH LIST are preferred**, but gift cards are ok as well - any combination equaling $50.
- These gifts should be **returned WRAPPED** with the **RECIPIENT'S NAME** clearly written **on ALL gifts**. Feel free to use the original tag if you wish.
- Please plan to **PROVIDE A GIFT RECIEPT** for any **CLOTHING or SHOES** purchased.
- **Can't commit to $50?** You can **find another person** to work on your tag with and **SHARE THE COST.**

YELLOW TAGS

- **YELLOW TAGS** should be **claimed only after all WHITE TAGS** have been.
- **Gift cards purchased** should be **from Fred Meyer, Target or Safeway** as they are accessible and offer a wide range of goods.
- Return Gift Cards **UNWRAPPED**.

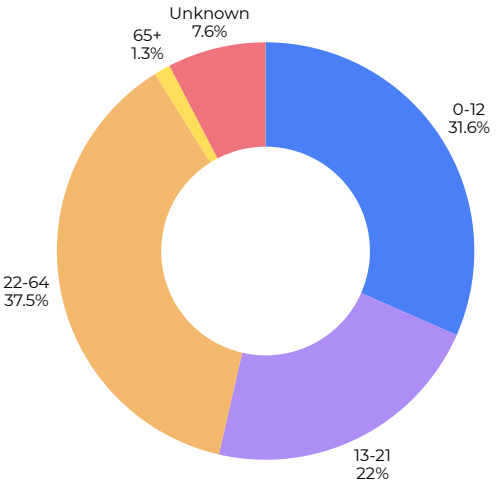
Questions? Contact Melissa Martenson 503-631-4569 (land line, leave a message) or melissa.martenson@yahoo.com.

About LCSNW

The Community Integration program at LCSNW which oversees Winter Welcome, served **709 clients** during fiscal year 2024-2025.

In 2025, LCSNW was able to help **282** of these 709 individuals **through their Winter Welcome program.** The more donors they have, the more families they can support!

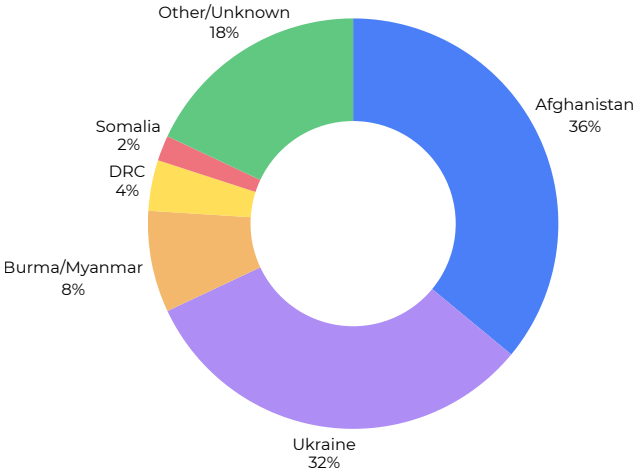
Age



Language Spoken

Ukrainian (31%)
Dari (22%)
French (5%)
Arabic (5%)
Rohingya (4%)
Burmese (4%)
Pashto (4%)
Unknown (22%)
Other (3%)

Country of Origin



October Celebrations

Birthdays

3 Becky Linke

5 David Stark

8 Lillian Hulett

12 Pauline Voderstrasse, Soraya Morgan

15 Mary Swanson

18 Doug Wood

19 Carol Bresky

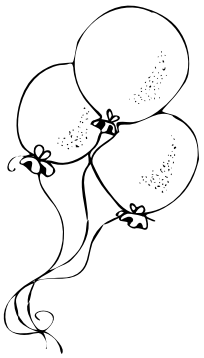
26 Yvonne Sawtell

27 Joe Sawtell

Anniversaries

8 John & Debbie Mohlis

23 Greg & Traci Anderson



God's Blessings on your celebrations!

Thank you from Pr. Joel

To Pastor Sena Norton and the Saints at Prince of Life Lutheran Church:
Thank you for the opportunity to be with you and to deliver the sermon on September 20, on the occasion of two ordination anniversaries — Pastor Sena's 3rd and my 50th. What a festive day! As a congregation we could unite our hearts and voices in praise to our Lord who has called each of us uniquely as God's people. Joyful keyboards and instruments, music and hymns, and robust singing! Vibrant red color all around. And splendid decorated double-chocolate anniversary cake during fellowship time! A special treat.

Thank you also for the good wishes and comments you gave to my wife Deborra, who has shared this 50-year ministry with me. God's rich blessings in your ongoing mission through Prince of Life.

Pastor Joel and Deborra Schmitz

October Fellowship Opportunities

All Church Potluck
10/11

We're doing an Oktoberfest theme for this month's potluck. Bring your favorite German or harvest themed dishes.

Family Game Night
10/16

Join us at 6:30 with your favorite board game and a Potluck dish to share.

Men's Lunch
10/20

3rd Tuesday each month. Men are invited to meet at Wichita Pub (OC) at 12pm for food and fellowship. Need a ride? Call Harlow Jacobson at 503-656-1616.

LLL Happy Hour
10/20

This month we'll be meeting at 4pm at Coasters Crossing (by the OC Amtrak station). We'll be eating outside - so bring a jacket!

October Calendar

				1 9am Peace by Piece Quilters 6:15 Scouts	2	3
4 10am Worship 11am Coffee Hour 6pm Private Event	5 4:30 Private Event	6 8:45 am Gleaners 5 Private Event	7 10am Bible Study 4pm Navigators USA 5pm Music Rehearsal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Recovery 1st	8 9am Peace by Piece Quilters 12:30 OC Women's Club 6:15 Scouts	9 12pm Scrapbooking Group	10 9am Scrapbooking Group
11 10am Worship 11am Potluck 11am Space Cadets Mtg.	12 2pm Red Cross Blood Drive 4:30 Private Event	13 8:45 am Gleaners 10am Material Girls 4:30 Worship Committee 5 Private Event 7pm Council	14 10am Bible Study 4pm Navigators USA 5pm Music Rehearsal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Recovery 1st	15 9am Peace by Piece Quilters 6:15pm Scouts	16 6:30 Family Game Night	17 9am DAR 9am Backpack Buddies Packing
18 10am Worship 11am Coffee Hour 6pm Private Event	19 4:30 Private Event 5:30 Sequoia Crossing HOA	20 8:45 am Gleaners **11am Peterson Memorial** 12pm Men's Lunch 4pm LLL 4:30 Private Event 6pm Private Event 7pm Private Event	21 10am Bible Study 4pm Navigators USA 5pm Music Rehearsal 6:15 Choir 6:30 Dessert Church 6:30 Recovery 1st	22 9am Peace by Piece Quilters 12pm Backpack Buddies 6:15pm Scouts	23	24
25 10am Worship 11am Coffee Hour	26 **Nov Good News Deadline** 4:30 Private Event 7pm Private Volunteer Event	27 8:45 am Gleaners 5pm Private Event	28 10am Bible Study 4pm Navigators USA 5pm Music Rehearsal 6:30 Recovery 1st	29 9am Peace by Piece Quilters 6:15pm Scouts	30	31

PRINCE OF LIFE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
13896 MEYERS RD
OREGON CITY, OR 97045

Prince of Life's Welcoming Statement:

The love and mercy of God move us to welcome all people,
including those who have ever felt excluded because of race, sex, age,
sexual orientation, gender identity or expression,
physical or mental challenges, addictions, imprisonment,
economic status, family status, or anything that might divide us.

Whatever your country of origin or ancestry,
wherever you are on your journey of faith,
we welcome you.
Our unity is in Christ.

PRINCE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH
ALL ARE WELCOME! We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation.

To know the love of God in Jesus Christ, and to share that love through word and action

phone: 503-657-3100
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