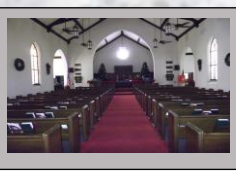
FIRST FRUITS

WE GIVE OUR FIRST FRUITS **BECAUSE HE GAVE US HIS ONLY SON**

June 2026 **Volume 29 No. 6**



First Things First...

This I Believe

"...in your hearts honor Christ, the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you yet do it with gentleness and respect." **1 Peter 3:15**

Belief exerts a powerful influence on every aspect of life. As Peter says above, there is a hope in everyone who believes in Christ the Lord. Each one of us should be ready, at any time, to make a defense (tell the reason) for that hope. In the upcoming issues of *First Fruits,* I share summaries of what I believe so that you may know me more fully and so you may see the reason for the hope that is in me. This month I look at what I believe the Bible says about tithes, offerings, and gifts.

Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord...And every tithe of herds and flocks, every tenth animal of all that pass under the herdsman's staff, shall be holy to the Lord. **Leviticus 7:30,32**

Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver... **2 Corinthians 9:7**

To tithe or not to tithe...that is the question. Or is it the question? What does the Bible say?

Many amusing and unscriptural statements have appeared in sermons and devotions, not to establish doctrine or truth, but to "break the ice" for meaningful discourse on the subject. Two favorites include:

a. The pastor tried to take advantage of the congregation's lack of knowing Greek by saying, "The Greek word for 'tithe' actually means twenty-five percent."

b. Two men are stranded on an island. One panics, while the other relaxes. The first asks, "Aren't you afraid we'll die?" The second replies, "No, I make $100,000 a week and tithe faithfully. My pastor will find me,"

The Bible presents tithes, offerings, and gifts to God as three related but distinct forms of worship, each expressing gratitude, obedience, and devotion. In short: tithes are the first tenth belonging to God, offerings are voluntary gifts beyond the tithe, and gifts (or freewill offerings) express personal generosity and worship.

While tithing is commanded in the Law (Leviticus 27:30), it predates the stone tablets given to Moses. Abram gave a tithe to Melchizedek (Genesis 14:20), and later, Jacob vowed a tithe to the Lord (Genesis 28:22). As time passed, these collections were used to support the Levites (Numbers 18:21), care for the poor, promote worship, and demonstrate trust in God's provision (Deuteronomy 14:22-29; Genesis 45:10-11). God invited the Israelites to 'test" Him by bringing the full tithe and trusting His providence to supply blessings than were needed. The tithe is a structured, God-ordained act of worship acknowledging His ownership and provision.

Offerings are voluntary gifts given beyond the tithe. Freewill offerings were given from the heart: "from every man whose heart compels him" (Exodus 25:2). They included thanksgiving, sin, fellowship, and worship offerings (Leviticus 1–7). The people gave willingly for the Tabernacle (Exodus 36:1-7) and the Temple (1 Chronicles 29:9). In the New Testament, offerings emphasize cheerful, willing giving: "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Offerings express love, gratitude, and devotion, not obligation.

Gifts to God include any act of generosity—money, time, resources—given to honor God or bless others. The widow's two coins show that God values the heart more than the amount (Mark 12:41–44). The Good Samaritan demonstrates sacrificial generosity (Luke 10). The New Testament highlights the spiritual gift of giving—joyful, Spirit-led generosity (Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8–9). Gifts to God are any acts of generosity done in love, humility, and worship.

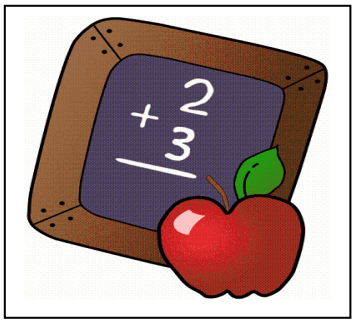
Why These Three Forms of Giving Matter

- Recognition of God's ownership — Everything we have comes from Him.
- Support for ministry and community — Tithes and offerings sustained worship and helped the needy.
- Formation of a generous heart — Giving shapes character and deepens faith.

Jesus emphasizes sacrificial giving fosters blessing and reciprocity — "Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure, you use it will be measured back to you." (Luke 6:38). It is true: we cannot outgive God, although the basis for sacrificial generosity grows from this: we love because He first loved us…and this commandment we have from Him: whoever loves God must also love his brother." (1 John 4:17,21)

Next month I plan to look more deeply into the New Testament teaching of generous, intentional, sacrificial giving. Until then, remember…

JESUS LOVES YOU AND SO DO I! PASTOR GRIER



First School And Day Care

The First School would like to thank the church members for coming out to the Preschool graduation! It was such a joyous event! Now we are starting all our fun summer activities!
VBS will be a tropical theme and it will be July 6-10! If you have any questions, please text Bree at 361-235-1053.
Thank you and God Bless!

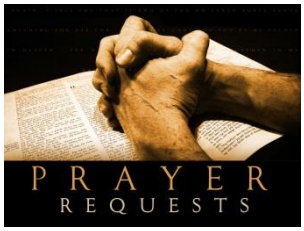
Bree Joines
The First School Director

First School Board Meeting –
Thursday, June 11th, 5:30 p.m.

June Readings

06/07 Hosea 5:15-6-6, Psalm 119:65-72, Romans 4:14-25, Matthew 9:9-13
06/14 Exodus 19:2-8, Psalm 100, Romans 5:6-15, Matthew 9:35-10:8
06/21 Jeremiah 20:7-13, Psalm 91:1-10, Romans 6:12-23, Matthew 10:5a,21-33
06/28 Jeremiah 28:5-9, Psalm 119:153-160, Romans 7:1-13, Matthew 10:34-42

06/09 Asa Lundy
06/09 Diane Stewart
06/10 LeAnne Lundy
06/12 David Kight
06/15 Ashlyn Hanna
06/20 Helen Kight
60/20 Marolyn McMillan
06/22 Ruth Speckles
06/27 Kirbie Woods



Our FLC Family
Rhonda Atchetee
Cora Lee Bishop
Pastor & Alys Grier
James & Sheila Herrington
Marilyn Kight
Larry & Kim Ledwig
Lloyd Nelson
Ashley Schoeneberg
Bentley

Friends of FLC
Candace Janecka
Misty Elliott

BAPTISM

06/09 Colton Labay
06/09 Adeleigh Labay
06/16 Nerissa House
06/16 Kyle House
06/21 Thomas Hernandez
06/30 Ellis Lundy

List will be cleared on the 1st in January, April, July and October. Please help us stay current; call the office with changes or additions.

PRAY FOR
ALL WHO
SERVE IN
THE US MILITARY

06/09 Joshua & Sarah Barosh
06/17 Kevin & Cori Koudela
06/27 Chris & Ryan Hanna

WE'RE HERE WHEN YOU NEED US

OR

Office hours: Tues & Thurs: 8:00am - 4:30pm
Wed: 8:00am – 12:00pm

Phone: 979-543-5847
Email: office@firstlutheranec.com

COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, June 15th
6:00 p.m.

Pastor Clyde Grier:
Phone: 979-541-6173

FLCEC Manna Meals Team

Our FLCEC Manna Meals Team will take a summer break from serving. The May meal provided was the last until the new rotation begins in September. Thank you to our team for their work with the Manna Meals program.

FELLOWSHIP LUNCH

Sunday, June 14

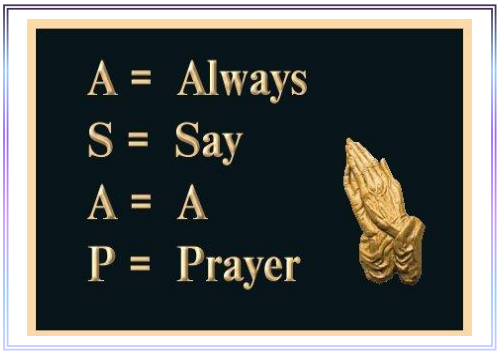
We will have a hamburger/hot dog lunch and fellowship honoring high school graduates Clayton Joines and Emma Moulden.
Members are asked to help provide side dishes for this lunch. Please check the sign up sheet.

First School Board

Thursday, June 11th
5:30 p.m.

Church Council

Thursday, June 15th
6:00 p.m.



Pre-Gathering Seminar:
(To explore theme more deeply)
Seminar begins Friday, July 24th, at 1:00 p.m. To attend add $25 more.

Friday Night Pork Tenderloin Dinner
to benefit St. Paul's Children's Ministry
$20 early/$25 late

LCMC Texas District Gathering
July 24 - 25, 2026
(4:30 p.m. Friday evening – 4:30 p.m. Saturday)
St. Paul Lutheran Church, New Braunfels, TX
Theme: CALLED (2 Timothy 1:9)
Keynote Speakers: Ben Griffin, Nathan Hoff, Julie Smith
Tickets: $80 thru 6/30, $110 after 6/30
(includes T Shirt)
To Register: Forms are available in the church office
Or register online:
www.lcmctexas.org/annual-gathering

June 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4 Women's Bible Study 6PM	5	6
7 Worship Service 10:45 AM w/Communion	8	9	10	11 First School Board Meeting 5PM	12	13
14 Worship Service 10:45 AM Fellowship Lunch	15 Church Council Meeting 6PM	16 Newsletter Items Due	17	18	19	20
21 Worship Service 10:45 AM w/Communion	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Worship Service 10:45 AM	29	30				

June Responsibilities

ASSISTING MINISTER: Pat Marek
SEXTON: Gaynard Wigginton
USHERS: Ted Schoenfield, Gaynard Wigginton
ALTAR GUILD: Cathy Schoenfield, Billie Jean Bram

READER

7th Diane Stewart
14th Kirk Marek
21st Dagny Thane
28th Ted Schoenfield

If you are unable to serve on your date, please find someone to take your place.

JUNE FLOWER CALENDAR

7th Open
14th Open
21st Open
28th Open

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

304 Oscar
El Campo, TX 77437
979-543-5847

Email: office@firstlutheranec.com

ESTABLISHED FEB 1893

Worshipping Christ and Sharing the Word for over a century.

Clyde Grier, Pastor
Helen Marie Kight, Organist
Christine Richter, Office Manager
Bree Joines, Director of First School

***Join us on FACEBOOK** or check us out at*
www.FIRSTLUTHERANEC.COM

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS: Calvin Borak, Jan Chatel, Lionel Chatel, Will Joines, Karen Kight, Cindy Mathews & Doug Mathews

OUR NEWSLETTER CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.FIRSTLUTHERANEC.COM

Join us on Sunday mornings!

Sunday School – 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service – 10:45 a.m.