



MAKING GOOD USE OF GOD'S GIFTS

- REV. DEBORAH LEMOINE



Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. -1 Peter 4:10 NIV

Christmas gifts can be pointless if we don't use them. The same is true of spiritual gifts. God has given each of us gifts that are meant to be

used, but I think we often struggle with how to use them. The beginning of a new year is a good time to think about how we use our gifts. Think of the questions we tend to ask ourselves with each new year: Where have I been? Where am I going? What do I want to do differently this year? These are all questions of purpose. They are questions of giftedness. What are my gifts and what am I going to do with them? In theological language, we talk about being "called" by God. What is God calling us to do with the gifts we've been given? Frederich Buchner is a theologian and author who said, "The place God calls you is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Where is it that your gifts can be used to help people most?

This month we will work together to answer this question with our sermon series, "Unwrapping your Gifts," and our January 21 half-day workshop on discovering your gifts and using them to glorify God in the world. Too often, we consider this as a question of career choice only. But what we get paid to do is a small fraction of who we really are.

Sometimes, we assume that there is one specific thing to do out there that eludes us, and if we could just find it, we could finally feel like we are living into our purpose. We get so caught up in assigning purpose to the things we do--but what if our purpose is more about who we are, and who we worship, than what we do? Our purpose isn't found primarily in what we do; our purpose is primarily found in the one we worship and love. So maybe God's purpose in your life is wider than you think. It's not a bull's eye. There are a million ways to glorify God and enjoy him forever--dozens of jobs we could do and countless relationships we could engage in. It is how we do them that matters.

I pray you will consider joining us for the Discover Your Strengths Workshop on Saturday, January 21 from 9:00 am-Noon at the Mid-County Site. Led by Rev. Adam Mustoe, a Gallup certified Strengths Coach and second-generation pastor, as he shares how you can unlock and leverage your unique talents and strengths to make the greatest possible contributions to your work, ministry, and personal life. Scan the code, visit our website, or contact the office to register for this special event.



I hope you will join us this January as we unwrap God's gifts and learn how to use them to bring Good News into the world in the new year.

Blessings,
Pastor Deb

CONFIRMATION 2023 BEGINS JANUARY 31

- REV. ELISABETH DANIELSONS

Confirmation Class for 2023 begins on January 31 for students from in seventh grade and up. We will meet Tuesday evenings to have a time of worship, and then each week we will explore theological topics that will help our youth to have a better understanding of God themselves, and the church as a whole. These sessions are not intended to provide "all the right answers" but will hopefully provide a framework for life-long faith. At the end of the confirmation sessions, student will have the opportunity to join Salem and become a part of the United Methodist Church in worship on May 7.

We have already invited families with confirmation-age students to participate, but if you are a one of these families and did not receive an invitation, please email me at elisabeth@saalemstlouis.com or scan the qr code to register online.

We invite all members of Salem and The Connection to pray for our students this spring as they come together to learn more about their personal faith and what it means to be a part of Christ's Holy church.



SALEM'S CHRISTMAS OFFERING AND LIVING OUT THE WORDS OF JESUS

- REV. DEBORAH LEMOINE

The scriptures consistently tell us how to respond to hunger. There are nearly 50 references to feeding the hungry and caring for the poor in the Bible--and when faced with a hungry crowd, Jesus told the disciples not to send them away to find food, but to feed them right where they were. "You feed them," Jesus said. It is perhaps the most compelling command Jesus gives us.

Salem's nutrition and literacy programs reflect our commitment to feeding the hungry in our community right now, but it also reflects our determination to bring Good News to our community through systemic changes that reduce the generational impact of hunger and illiteracy on children and families in St. Louis and beyond. Your giving provides hot meals to homeless teens, but it also gives them access to social workers and educational opportunities to help them toward self-sufficiency. It provides breakfast and lunch all summer long for kids at Freedom School but also provides books and teachers to increase reading levels for kids that participate. We provide meals for hungry people at Haven Street but also spiritual nourishment through prayer, communion, and authentic community at table. We feed, we tutor, we serve, we build relationships. We strive to make God's Kingdom real.

Your giving at Christmas--over \$50,000, Salem's largest Christmas offering in memory -- will be used to purchase groceries and meals to make all these things happen. Thank you! But I invite you to get involved as well. Serve a meal at Haven Street on Monday or Wednesday evening, prepare a meal for hungry teens at Epworth's Drop-In-Center, tutor students at St Louis Public Schools, watch for an opportunity to help at Freedom School this summer. Get involved. Because when we share a table with someone, we share more than food--we share hope. For more details on how you can get involved in serving visit saalemstlouis.com/serve, scan the qr code, or contact the church office and we can help you get connected.



Salem is committed to remembering and living out the words of Jesus -- "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in."

Your giving at Christmas and your service throughout the year makes this work possible -- good news for all people indeed. Thank you.



KIDS NIGHT OUT



SCAN TO REGISTER

Your kids won't want to miss Kids Night Out! They'll have a blast with their friends while you can enjoy a night out or in.

LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH
6:00-9:00 PM (EXCEPT MARCH & JUNE)
KIDS 6 WEEKS THROUGH 6TH GRADE
REGISTRATION REQUIRED
\$20 PER CHILD | \$40 MAX PER FAMILY



Ash Wednesday Worship Service // February 22, 7:00 pm // Mid-County Site // You're invited to a special Ash Wednesday worship service featuring imposition of ashes, music, Holy Communion, and engaging message. All are welcome to join us as we mark the beginning of Lent. Nursery care will be available. Join us in-person or online.



Friendship Club // We're kicking off for the new year on Thursday, February 9 and will continue on the second Thursday of each month through the spring. Dates are: February 9, March 9, April 13, and May 11. Join us for lunch, fellowship, and a time of learning or entertainment. Spring program details coming soon! For more details or to register contact Jennifer Horne at (314) 991-0546 or jennifer@saalemstlouis.com.



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We have a variety of teams and ministries that will help you find a place to serve and use your skills and passions. We think you'll find that the time and energy you invest will offer returns in new friendships, spiritual growth, and personal satisfaction through seeing the impact you can make to our community.

WAYS TO GIVE



MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

- 1 WEB: SALEMSTLOUIS.COM
- 2 TEXT: [SALEMSTLOUIS TO \(833\) 834-5661](tel:8338345661)
- 3 APP: [SALEMSTLOUIS](#)
- 4 MAIL: [SALEM CHURCH OFFICE](#)

<p>MID-COUNTY 1200 S. Lindbergh Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63131 (314) 991-0546 salemstlouis.com</p>	<p>SOUTH-CITY 6701 Virginia Avenue St. Louis, MO 63111 (314) 256-0545 theconnectionstlouis.com</p>
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PLEASE SEND ALL MAIL FOR BOTH SITES TO THE MID-COUNTY ADDRESS. THANK YOU!

SHARE A PRAYER REQUEST



SCAN ME

Did you know you can share prayer requests with our staff and prayer team? We regularly share a prayer list with our prayer team and staff, who will pray for your request, and will contact you if you request follow-up care.

WORSHIP IN-PERSON OR ONLINE

In-Person Worship Schedule
Mid-County: 9:30 am - Modern Worship (Multipurpose Room)
Mid-County: 11:00 am - Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
South-City: 11:00 am - Modern Worship (The Connection Sanctuary)

Online Worship Schedule Sundays or Anytime On-Demand
9:30 am - Modern Worship Livestream
11:00 am - Traditional Worship Livestream