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January 28, 2021

Dear Members and Friends of Joy Lutheran Church,

Based on the gift each one has received, use it to serve others, as good managers of the varied grace of God. – 1 Peter 4:10

Recently I was holding my 6-month old grand-daughter, frustrated that once she grabs my hair she won't let go. It was a sort of an "ah-ha" experience that not only is HOLDING ONTO items a development step, but also LETTING GO of them. It made me think of all aspects of life, including stewardship. What we are given in terms of resources are all ultimately gifts from God, our creator and redeemer and witness to God's care for us.

We are called to "let go" of our time, talent and resources and use them to the glory of God. I am so thankful for the many examples of people sharing their time, talents and resources here at Joy Lutheran Church! We are asked biblically to give a tithe or ten-percent of our resources to our faith community or Church. Thanks to people's offerings, Joy Lutheran Church has been able to sustain and grow its ministries even in a very tough year. Some of those ministries include:

- Virtual Worship offered both Sunday and Mid Week during Advent and Lent
- Sunday morning worship using COVID-19 mitigation protocol
- Drive Through Communion once per month
- Outdoor Easter and Christmas Eve services
- Vacation Bible School (virtual style July 2020!)
- Revitalized Sunday School (a COVID cautious gathering of 4 classes after worship)
- Our Mask tree
- A Call Committee set up to discern a new Pastor
- Food Bank Ministry (we increased our giving three fold during COVID)
- Earthquake repairs to the interior building
- Ministry Site Profile completed

This Spring, Joy Lutheran anticipates calling a new Pastor. Even now, the Call Committee has received names of possible candidates from the Bishop. As we are on the cusp of this new chapter, it is important to keep up our giving. **For those of you not severely impacted financially by COVID, I humbly ask you to prayerfully consider raising your giving a percentage amount that challenges you.** In my own personal life, I have found that committing myself to a tithe allows a discipline that has enhanced my family life for over 40-years and helps me keep the perspective that all I have belongs to God not "me."

Thank you again for your prayers, support and giving of yourself to our Lord's ministry here at Joy Lutheran Church. You make a profound difference!

In Christ's abundant grace,

Karen Sonray, Interim Pastor