



# The Network

Winnetka Covenant Church

1200 Hibbard Rd • Wilmette IL 60091 • 847.446.4300

November, 2014

**November  
7, 14 & 21  
Friday Night  
Fellowship**

**November 25  
Interfaith  
Thanksgiving  
Service**

**Inside this issue:**

Christian Formation	2
Music Notes, Wednesday Nights	3
Events and Opportunities	4
Trustee News, Local Missions	5
Women's & Men's, Ministries	6
MOPS, Lucia, Women's Retreat	6
Mailbox, Youth News	7

## 10 Reasons NOT to Give to Winnetka Covenant Church

This is the time of the year when we focus on stewardship—although I would argue that most Sundays are stewardship Sundays. Every time we enter into a Biblical text that leads us to explore what it means to give of ourselves and to follow Christ because of what Christ has done for us, that is a stewardship Sunday in my book. Listen to the sermons and read your Bible with that in mind, and see if you hear it, too.

But I digress. On Sunday, November 23, we will have the opportunity to make a commitment to give money to support the church's mission and ministries for the coming year—to make a pledge that will help the church discern what the scope of our ministry will be for the coming year. I'm tempted to make a convincing argument for why you should give to the church. But instead, I'm going to start by doing the opposite.

**Don't give to church if ...**

1. You think you are being coerced to give.
2. You have to give grudgingly.
3. You think your gifts don't make a difference.
4. You believe that you are a self-made person - you made the money; it's yours to do what you please with it.
5. You don't value what God has done for you through Jesus Christ.
6. You don't believe that God really cares about what you do with your money.
7. You don't believe that we are blessed to be a blessing.
8. You believe that giving your time and your talents is a valid substitute for giving your money.
9. You believe that you should only give what's left over when you've used what you want and need.
10. You aren't interested in learning how to trust God with your life.

**If you do need some reasons TO give, here are some to consider.**

1. Giving makes you feel good.
2. God expects us to give.
3. The gifts I give are needed to make a difference in the world.
4. The gifts I give are needed to help our church's mission continue and grow.
5. I already have as much or more than I need.
6. It helps me to not be controlled by money and stuff.
7. It helps me to trust God more and put God first in my life.
8. It is part of my spiritual discipline.
9. It is a way for me to show that I am grateful to God.
10. I realized that what I have really belongs to God in the first place.

Truly, if any of these reasons apply to you, you're probably not in a position to give right now.

There are many reasons why we give. But ultimately it all comes down to the fact that we give to God because of what God has given us - the gift of God's Son, Jesus Christ - the gift of a new relationship with God through Christ - the gift of salvation and eternal life with Christ. In thanksgiving for God's outpouring of love for us, our only response can be the giving of ourselves.

*(continued on back page)*

# Christian Formation

## Sunday Mornings For Children

**Rotation Sunday School is for children age 4 through grade 5**

**Theme for the year: *Test of Faith***

Throughout the scriptures, people faced many challenges to their faith. From Adam and Eve to you and me, there are times when we do well and live in ways that are pleasing to God. At other times we find ourselves in need of God's grace because we have missed the mark. Through the stories of faith, we learn that God's grace is always extended to us.



## Sunday Mornings For Adults

**Adult & Sr. High Sunday School this fall -**  
October 19 - November 23

**Human Sexuality and the Mission of the Church**

Reflection, discussion, and sharing around Human Sexuality and the Mission of the Church flows out from our fall discussion of the early Church and the book of Acts. As we explored the early Church's struggle to understand what it meant to embrace the ministry of their crucified and risen Christ, the gathered group began a discussion around human sexuality, by sharing their personal experiences related to the LGBT community. The adult Sunday School participants desire to reflect scripturally and theologically, and over the next weeks, Kurt Peterson, along with other teachers and scholars, will help us read and reflect together. All adults and sr. high students interested in joining the conversation are welcome at 9:30 each Sunday morning in the Upper Room.

## Wednesday night all-church activities

Beginning with a delicious dinner, served from 5:30-6:15, all members and friends of Winnetka Covenant Church are encouraged to come each week for a night of fellowship, singing & praise, and learning. Following dinner and singing/skit time, the whole group breaks up into activities for every age group. Nursery is provided for children up to age 2, and age group activities are planned for everyone from 2 years of age and older, including adults (see page 3). Note: there will be no Wednesday night activities on October 29 or November 26. Bring yourself and bring a friend to join in the fun.

**November 9 - December 14**

*Children's Christmas program practice to begin. We will take a break from the rotation format as the children prepare for the program.*

9:30-10:10 a.m. Children age 4 through grade 5 will practice for the Children's Christmas program in the choir room.

10:10-10:30 a.m. Children will gather in room 203 for special Thanksgiving/Advent Sunday School workshops each week.

December 21, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Christmas Sunday School celebration in room 203.

**Parents, please mark your calendars -**  
**The children's Christmas program will be at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 14.**

**Advent Sunday School - Love Blooms Bright**

November 30, December 7, 14, 21

9:30-10:30 a.m. in the Upper Room

Intergenerational Advent Sunday School

Sr. High Students and Adults welcome

*This is the irrational season, when love blooms bright and wild. Had Mary been filled with reason, there'd have been no room for the child.*

Madeline L'engle

Advent is truly the irrational season - in the midst of winter darkness and cold, we seek and find hope, peace, joy, and love. Parents, grandparents, teenagers, friends, and visitors are invited to come and embrace "the irrational season, when love blooms bright and wild." We'll eat together, share together, enjoy music and story together, and attend to the presence of God together. Come, for love blooms bright in Advent.

# Music Notes

Just fresh from choir rehearsals - both children and adults. How refreshing! We are just getting into Christmas preparations, so if you've had a thought of singing, you should jump in now. We have the most amazing diversity of music from medieval chant to contemporary - and nearly every century in between. Be sure to thank your nearest choir friend for making all of this possible! Our singers are so versatile. Their faithfulness makes all their individuality come together in an amazing ensemble!

This November we are preparing:

## 11/2 - All Saints Sunday

For prelude, our Handbell Choir plays the Cheryl Baker arrangement of Promise Land. Then, a new GIA anthem, "I Am Resurrection and I Am Life" by Russell Schulz-Widmar, is based on the Book of Common Prayer text and set in appropriately medieval sounding chant with a haunting cello accompaniment. Jon Pegis (cello) will be joined by Carol Yampolsky (violin) and Nancy Magill (piano) for instrumental improvisation on communion hymns.

## 11/9 - Youth Mission Trip Report

Choir sings "Keep Your Lamps", the rousing and inspirational spiritual with Joel Stucki on conga.

11/16 - "Jubilate, Sing Joyfully" is a great Dave & Jean Perry anthem with syncopated melody and vocal and piano ostinato sure to set a happy fire in your soul.



## 11/23 - Stewardship Culmination

We sing the grand Motet of Johann Pachelbel, Nun danket alle Gott - Now Thank We All Our God. Soprano carries the steady proclamation of thanks over the playful, energizing counterpoint of alto, tenor, and bass. For me this musical setting expresses the awesome and overarching expanse of God's blessing as it inexplicitly works out in the complexities of our lives. As the text says, "Now thank we all our God, who from our mother's arms hath blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love and still is ours today."

## 11/30 - Advent 1

We anticipate the coming of Christ. Not knowing when Christ will come again, we are admonished to always be ready, be awake. We sing Bach's familiar "Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying."

May your heart be uplifted by God's spirit through the inspiration of music.

*Dawn Pegis*

## Wednesday night opportunities for adult formation: 6:45-7:45 p.m.

### Called to Be Church—

#### The Book of Acts for a New Day

This is a simple time of Bible reading and reflection on the life of the early Church and our own journey together in Christ's community these days. Using the Acts of the Apostles as our text, we wonder together:

- What was at the heart of their life together?
- What challenges did they face?
- What was their mission?
- How did they approach ministry in their culture, time and place?
- Who were the characters active in the infant Church?

Of course, as we do this, we are reflecting also on our life as the Church these days, and our own stories. We read and reflect together. Come and join us!

### Women Walking Together into the Heart of God

13 weeks, through December 17

*Sensible Shoes* is a fictional story written by Covenant Pastor & Spiritual Director Sharon Garlough Brown, of four women's walk together on a spiritual journey. You are invited to walk that same three month journey with Judi Geake, who recently completed her certification as a Spiritual Director at North Park Theological Seminary. There are daily scripture reading, prayer, reflection questions, and journaling (5 days a week), then group discussion of the covered chapter on Wednesday nights. We will look at how the women are responding to (or resisting) the presence and love of God, allowing them to become windows and mirrors into seeing ourselves more clearly as we consider our own life with God.

Questions? Contact Judi

This current group is now full and closed to new participants. If you are interested in a future session of the same topic, please leave your name in the church office.

### Concerns Group

Prayer Room

This group is for anyone in the church, ranging from the curious to the passionate, who is interested in exploring current issues of compassion, mercy and justice. In this group we will talk about the issues and listen to each other's opinions and ideas, using books, films, articles, and special guests as resources for discussion. The group decides whether and how they can or will take action together or as individuals to make a difference

# Upcoming Events and Opportunities

## Friday Night Fellowship

September 12, 2014 through January 30, 2015 - 7:30 p.m.

Come and fellowship with your Church family! Get to know new friends, and enjoy dessert! Each week a gathering will take place in someone's home. The host provides coffee and lemonade, and the rest of us bring a dessert to share. There will be time for informal conversation, and we will gather together for a time at the end for group conversation and prayer for the Church and for one another. Here's the best part ... no RSVP needed! Just come and join us when you can. Hosts are listed on the calendar included in this publication.

## Holly Fair

Saturday, November 8, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Covenant Village of Northbrook (2615 Techny Rd., Northbrook)

The residents of Covenant Village invite us to participate in their annual event. Items for sale include: Antiques, Collectibles, Door Prizes, Jewelry, Framed Art, Needlework, Books, Woodcrafts and Crafts, Christmas Decorations, Baked Goods and Edibles. A coffee shop with Swedish Pastries and other refreshments will be available for your enjoyment. Lunch is available in the Bistro from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. For more information, call 847-480-6380.

## Being Present: A Faithful Response to Mental Illness

November 8 at North Park University

North Park University's symposium on the church's role in mental illness to consider how congregations and healthcare professionals can accomplish together what neither can do alone. Full conference information is available at [www.northpark.edu/Events/Mental-Health/Symposiums](http://www.northpark.edu/Events/Mental-Health/Symposiums). Questions: (773)244-6214 or [faithandhealthsymposium@northpark.edu](mailto:faithandhealthsymposium@northpark.edu).

## “And on the 7th Day God played bocce ... again!”

November 16, 4:00-7:00 p.m., at Pinstripes in Northbrook

Please save the date for the 2nd annual Lumunos Bocce Event. This year there will again be wonderful food, drink, fellowship, and bocce, along with a terrific auction and a chance to rub elbows with members of the Lumunos Board of Directors. While Lumunos has been involved primarily with our men's retreat, this event is for couples, singles, and anyone interested in learning more about finding God's call in your life.

## Interfaith Thanksgiving Service

Tuesday, November 25, 7:30 p.m., hosted by the Bahá'í House of Worship.

You are warmly invited to join members of your congregation, friends, and neighbors as the Winnetka Interfaith Council celebrates its annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at the North Shore's landmark Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette.

The approximately 40-minute service will consist of prayers and readings from the sacred literature of the world's great religions, including the Torah, the New Testament, the Qu'ran, and Bahá'í sacred writings. Readings will be interspersed with joyous sacred music sung by an interfaith choir. A program in the Temple's Welcome Center - immediately below the Auditorium - will follow, featuring additional music, remarks by the Council's president, Dr. Mitchell Slotnick, and a keynote address by Ms. Layli Miller-Muro, Executive Director of Metro Washington's Tahirih Justice Center, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting, through its legal services, the rights of immigrant women and girls living with the threat of violence. Refreshments and fellowship will follow.

The Bahá'í House of Worship is at the corner of Sheridan Rd. and Linden Ave. in Wilmette. Parking is available on the east side of Sheridan Road, directly opposite the Temple. For those who wish to share their holiday joy, donations to the New Trier Township Food Pantry, either monetary or canned goods and other nonperishable foodstuffs, will be most welcome.

## Christmas Camp at Covenant Point

December 27 through January 1 at Covenant Point Bible Camp, Iron River, Michigan

Our own Pastor Peter will be the camp pastor this year. Register today ([www.cpbc.com](http://www.cpbc.com)) to get in on this fantastic week to linger in the season of Christmas together, enjoy great food, adventure in the snow, and savor spacious time with friends and family.

## The Winnetka Covenant Church financial summary through September 2014:

As of the end of September 2014, our financials remain healthy compared to last year; however, we are slipping in our general fund giving. We had an unusually low September giving and are \$40K behind our planned giving. So, please help us catch up if you happen to have fallen behind in your pledging or regular gifts.

Note: The 3Q giving statements were sent via email in order to save postage and be green. If you prefer a hardcopy statement or did not receive a statement email, please contact the church office.

### YTD Financials

- o General Fund Giving and Receipts through September 2014 - \$749,624  
We are about \$42K short in General Fund giving.
- o Expenses are running at 2014 planned budget.

### Comparisons to Prior Year and Budget:

	2014 Actual	2013 Actual	%	2014 Bud.	%
General Fund Receipts	\$ 749,624	\$ 706,861	106%	\$ 806,343	93%
Expenses	\$ 804,705	\$814,390	99%	\$ 802,923	100%
Net Operating Income / (Loss)	\$(55,081)	(\$ 107,529)			

	<u>9/30/2014</u>	<u>9/30/2013</u>
Cash -General Fund	\$(79,536)	\$(108,259)
Building Fund*	0	3,050
Exchange Accounts	105,280	103,991
Depreciation Set Aside*	0	40,877
Petty cash	125	125
Memorial/Bequest Funds*	<u>6,177</u>	<u>248,873</u>
	\$32,045	\$288,657
Investments*- Memorial/ Bequest Funds	\$213,347	\$65,885
General Fund	<u>22,209</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	\$235,556	\$65,885

\*\* Investments consolidated into NCP DIA investment funds.

### Capital Projects

- o Final landscaping completed around the front sign and near the gym doors
- o Playground project in its final landscaping stages
- o Capital projects with the Hawkinson home (\$3500), the church paid its fair share equity percentage
- o The Trustees are starting the budget planning for 2015. If you have any suggestions or inputs, please contact a Trustee or the Church Office.

## Local Missions and Other Opportunities

**A Just Harvest - November 6 and November 20** at 1:00, cooking in our kitchen. On the 20th we are also asked to send a crew to the Kitchen to serve the food. They will meet at church to depart at 4:30 and return about 7:00. There is a sign up on the bulletin board by the kitchen.

### Family Promise - Two opportunities to help

1. On November 11 Lou Malnati's in Wilmette and Evanston will partner with Family Promise for a fundraiser. 20% of the total sales will be donated to Family Promise. The flyer has to be mentioned when placing a delivery order; for dine-in and carry-out purchases the flyer has to be printed out or shown to the employee on your electronic device. Flyers available in the office.
2. Jewel is running a program through the end of the year where they are giving stamps with purchases to be saved for cookware. If you shop at Jewel but don't need the cookware, please take the stamps anyway and donate them to Family Promise. They will be used to help provide the families with what they need as they move into independent housing. A box will be in the office for the stamps.

## Women's Ministries Notes

Following are ongoing groups for the women of the church. They all welcome new participants at any time.

### *Quilters, Knitters, etc. -*

Meet on the **second Thursday of each month** for fellowship and service. Watch the weekly bulletins for details and location of the meeting.

### *Sharing Group -*

We cordially invite all WCC women to join us on the **fourth Thursday of each month at 12:00 noon** for lunch and fellowship at Baker's Square. Watch the bulletin for the November meeting date. You'll enjoy the fellowship! Call Marian Eckhardt with questions.

### *Stitch and Study -*

Stitch and Study, combining prayer, conversation, and craft/needlework projects, meets on the **third Tuesday of each month** at the home of Marilyn Nelson at 7 p.m. New participants are always welcome to come for the prayer and conversation, with or without a project. The **November meeting will be on the 18th.**

### *Tuesday morning Bible Study -*

The Tuesday Morning Women's bible Study meets weekly from September thru April, at 9:30 a.m. We invite you to join us for this year's study of the Gospel of John. This gospel has always been a favorite. It is familiar and simple, yet so profound. You will also enjoy the fellowship! Study Guides will be available in the church office and in class. Questions: contact Joann Larson.

## Lucia - December 6

Preparations for the annual Lucia festival are underway. Reservations for the breakfast will be taken following church on Sunday, November 16. No reservations are needed for the program.

If you are interested in having a table at the boutique, please contact Jane Rivi. If you are interested in helping with the program, please contact Inger Eiesland-Schultz. As always, we welcome baked goods for the bake sale. These should be dropped off at church on Friday, December 5. We also welcome bakers who are willing to bake cookies (spritz and pepparkakor) both for the breakfast and for sale in the boutique. Recipes are available in the church office and clean cookie tins will be available in the kitchen.

## MOPS Comes to Winnetka Covenant

The Winnetka Covenant Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) group started in September and will continue through the year. The theme of this year's MOPS group is entitled *Be You, Bravely*.

It meets the first Friday of each month from 9:30-11:00 and is open to mothers and their children, ages birth to 5 years. For more information about MOPS you can contact Elizabeth Schwartz or visit [mops.org](http://mops.org). Childcare will be provided while mothers in the community connect and better equip themselves for the journey of life. If you would like to volunteer for childcare, please contact Elizabeth. Cost will be \$50 for the year.

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### **Women's Retreat—February 6-8, 2015**

It seems a long way off, but the women's retreat will be February 6-8, 2015 and we are pleased that Judi Geake will be our speaker again this year, and the theme is "Happiness Is a Choice." Registrations are being taken following church on November 2 and 9. You won't want to miss this, so get it on your calendar now. Think about someone you can personally invite to attend the retreat with you, especially someone newer to the church.

## Men's Ministries News

Men's fellowship will again meet the first three Saturdays of each month at 8:00 a.m. Men, watch your e-mail messages and the bulletins and Network for details.

Watch also for information on opportunities to participate in work projects and for singing together. If you would like to be included on an e-mail list for notifications of events, please contact Paul Christmas.

## Mailbox

Dear Winnetka Covenant Church friends,

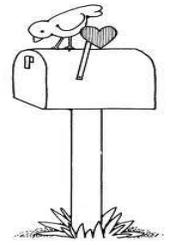
How thoughtful and gracious of all of the congregation to remember our birthdays with so many well-wishes and "high coffee" these past couple of weeks. We are thankful to God for this very caring and supportive community over these many years.

Grace, Love & Peace,  
Art and Laurel Nelson

My dear friends at Winnetka Covenant Church,

Thank you so much for your prayers, call, and cards during my rehabilitation from my knee replacement surgery. Thank you also for the lovely mum plant and visits from Pastor Andrea and Pastor Pete as well as many friends. I am so thankful that I am healing well and getting stronger each day. I am so blessed.

Ruth Schmid



There are no directory corrections this month, as a new directory has just been printed. Be sure to pick one up in the Narthex. If you live at a distance and would like one mailed, please let the office know.

### Network by e-mail -

Some people like to read things on paper and some prefer to receive information online. We would like to be sure our friends and members receive the Network in the form they are most likely to read it. If you would prefer to receive the Network by e-mail, please send your information to Joan at [wccjoanwallgren@gmail.com](mailto:wccjoanwallgren@gmail.com).

### Covenant Companion -

Winnetka Covenant church values our denominational magazine, the Covenant Companion, which often includes articles written by members of our church. We participate in the every-member subscription plan, providing subscriptions for each of our member families at a reduced subscription rate of \$18.00. If you haven't done so yet this year, we welcome reimbursement, if you are able, to help us cover the cost to the church. This can be done online or in the Sunday offering.

## Youth Notes

Junior and Senior High Youth Groups are having a fun and busy fall season of activities. A full fall calendar has been communicated to the students and their parents but here are some of the highlights:

1. **Sunday School** - There are offerings for jr. and sr. high (separately). The High School class is currently meeting with the adults in the Upper Room (see page 2), and the Jr. Highers are in the youth room upstairs from 9:30-10:30 on Sunday mornings before worship. Sunday School has a different feel than youth group gatherings - hope the students can be part of this time.
2. **Youth Group Meetings** -
  - Sr. High** - regular meetings on November 2, 16, 23, and 26. The 9th will be Covenant Youth Collision - service night with Cornerstone ministries. Gathering for coffee on Wednesdays, November 5, 12, 19, not the 26th.
  - Jr. High** - regular meetings on November 5, 12, 19, not the 26th.
3. **Retreats** - We look forward to our winter retreats. High School (One Life) at Covenant Point is Feb. 13-16 and Junior High (Deep Freeze) at Covenant Harbor is Jan. 16-18.
4. **Special Events** -
  - Jr. High - November 1 at 5:50, event at Sky High.
  - November 21, Junior High Covenant Youth Collision Event
  - Sr. High - November 7-8, Dude/Ladydudfest (Guys and Girls Night)
5. **Parent Gathering** -
  - November 10 at the home of Kurt and Cathy Peterson.

Christy Bouris

## **Winnetka Covenant Church Network**

1200 Hibbard Road  
Wilmette, Illinois, 60091

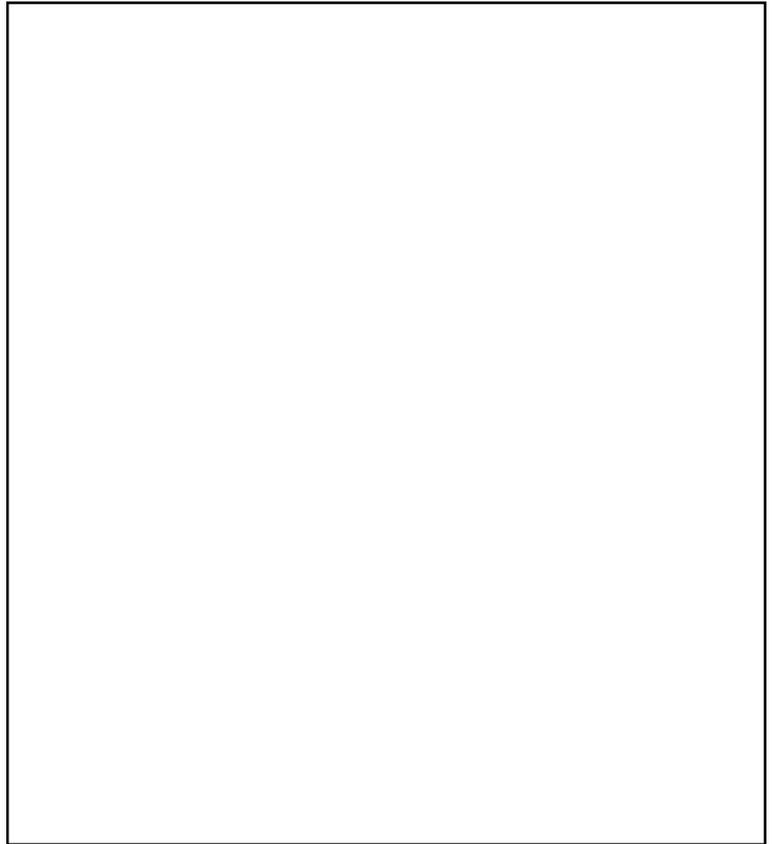
847-446-4300  
www.winnetkacovenant.org

### **Our Mission**

To be a Christian community and to proclaim  
the gospel, Worshiping together in love,  
Nurturing people in faith,  
serving others as Christian disciples,  
And building a world of justice and hope  
in the name of Christ.

### **Guidelines for Loving Relationships**

We hold grace as our highest value.  
We practice honest, open, direct communication.  
We speak the truth in love and listen in love.  
We believe the best about each other, valuing  
others above ourselves, as Christ does.  
We allow room for mistakes, acknowledging that  
mistakes are part of the growth process.



## **10 Reasons NOT to Give to Winnetka Covenant Church** *(continued from page 1)*

Spend some time between now and November 23 focusing on why you will give. When you know *why* you give, let it guide *what* you decide to give this year.

This is also the time of year when our church leaders are discerning what the mission-based budget will be for 2015. Prayer will be a significant part of their process, as they seek God's guidance in how our budget can best reflect and help us to implement the church's mission for the coming year. I ask that during the next two months you would pray for our church leaders as they engage in this important process.

A wise person once said, "We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give." One of the greatest signs that God's heart is being formed within us is demonstrated by our giving. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave ...". Remember who you are - the spitting image of a God who is first and foremost loving and giving. Let's live into our identity as God's children by being the loving and giving people he has created us to be.

*Andrea Johnson*