

# Coming Soon to LCR - A Celebration of Thanksgiving

*O come, let us sing to the LORD; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!*

***Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;*** *let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!*

*For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.*

*In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also.*

*The sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land, which his hands have formed.*

*O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!*

*For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.*

*Psalms 95: 1-7*

Congregations that approach financial stewardship from a biblical perspective do so as an expression of Thanksgiving for the abundant blessings that flow from God. They do not view the money Christians give to their church merely as a way to pay its bills. Those congregations see financial contributions as a way to help people grow spiritually in their relationship with God by supporting their church's mission and ministry with a percentage of their incomes.

We are privileged to be invited into God's presence, and we should always enter that presence in a spirit of Thanksgiving. One way we make a "joyful noise" is through our good stewardship and generosity in sharing those gifts.

The Discipleship Team has selected "Come Into His Presence with Thanksgiving" as a theme for this year's stewardship emphasis. Based on the familiar "Consecration Sunday" program, it is a way to teach the biblical and spiritual principles of generous giving as an integral part of the Christian life.

Throughout the next several weeks, the Discipleship Team will be making announcements and leading events that are based on the biblical philosophy of the need of the giver to give for his or her own spiritual development, rather than on the need of the church to receive. Rather than looking at ourselves as dues-paying members of a budget-centered organization, we will explore our response as followers of Jesus Christ who want to give unselfishly as an act of discipleship. We will encourage people toward proportionate and systematic giving in response to the question, "What percentage of my income is God calling me to give?"

During morning worship on Celebration Sunday, November 16, we will be asking those in our community to make their financial commitments to our church's missionary, benevolent, and educational ministries in this community and to ministries around the world.

Every person in our community who completes an *Estimate of Giving Card* does so voluntarily by attending morning worship on Celebration Sunday, November 16. For those who choose to not complete an *Estimate of Giving Card*, the procedure is done in such a way that no one feels personal embarrassment if he or she chooses not to fill out a card.

We will do no home solicitation to ask people to complete cards. During morning worship our guest leader, Pastor David Olson, will conduct a brief period of instruction and inspiration, climaxed by members making their commitments as a confidential act of worship. You may remember that Pastor Olson recently served as interim Bishop of the Metro NY Synod. We are blessed to have him serve as our spiritual leader and guide our program this fall.

We will encourage participation in all upcoming events through the Discipleship team and ministry leaders. Since we will make no follow-up visits to ask people to complete their cards, we will make every effort to inform, inspire, and commit everyone to attend Celebration Sunday worship on November 16.

Thanks in advance for your enthusiastic participation in "Celebration of Thanksgiving" events.

May the Holy Spirit be your guide in the days ahead.

John Heidgerd  
Director of Discipleship Ministries