

**OUR MISSION:** Empower, equip and encourage the people of God to make Christ known

## ***Give us this day our daily bread.***

*The Lord's Prayer, 4th Petition, Small Catechism*

AJ Jacobs, a self-professed agnostic who is not sure he believes in God, spent a year of his life living as literally as possible according to the "rules" or commands that he found in the Bible. He shared his experience in the book [The Year of Living Biblically: One Man's Humble Quest to Follow the Bible as Literally as Possible](#).



"At the beginning of the year," he says, "I wrote down every rule, every guideline, every suggestion, every nugget of advice I could find in the Bible. It's a very long list. It runs 72 pages. More than 700 rules. Some rules were wise, some completely baffling. Some were baffling at first, then wise. Some were wise first then baffling." When the year was over, Jacobs developed a number of his own lists, among them a list of the "most unexpectedly wise and life-enhancing rules" that he had discovered along the way. These can be found on the web at <http://ajjacobs.com/resources/the-rules/>. The fifth rule on this list was:

"Give thanks. The Bible says to thank the Lord after meals. I did that. Perhaps too much. I got carried away. I gave thanks for everything – for the subway coming on time, for the comfortableness of my couch, etc. It was strange but great. Never have I been so aware of the thousands of little things that go right in our lives."

Our old friend Martin Luther might say that through the discipline of giving thanks Mr. Jacobs discovered daily bread. In his explanation of the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer, Luther said:

*In fact, God gives daily bread without our prayer, even to all evil people, but we ask in this prayer that God cause us to recognize what our daily bread is and to receive it with thanksgiving.*

It is as if the discipline of giving thanks opens our eyes, ears, and hearts to see more than we would see otherwise, a world filled to overflowing with daily bread. "What then does 'daily bread' mean?" Luther asked in his Small Catechism and then answered his own question:

*Everything included in the necessities and nourishment for our bodies, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, farm, fields, livestock, money, property, an upright spouse, upright children, upright members of the household, upright and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, decency, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.*

Giving thanks opened AJ Jacobs' eyes to see this daily bread filling his life. It can do the same for us. Why not give it a try, not just on Thanksgiving Day, but

every day? Imagine the thousand bits of previously overlooked daily bread you will see!

And, giving thanks for the daily bread in our own lives can also open our eyes, ears, and hearts to see the many people around us and in the world who do not have all the daily bread they need: refugees, the poor, those who struggle with hopelessness or aimlessness, victims of natural disaster, war, and prejudice...May our giving thanks also move us to be grateful enough that we ourselves, as individuals and communities, will reach out to become bits of the daily bread for which others pray.



Peace be with you,  
+Bishop Bill Gafkjen

## Give a Gift that Isn't Easy to Wrap

Below are three easy ways for your congregation to be involved in the ELCA World Hunger GOOD GIFTS program. Pick 1 (or all 3!) and give a gift that will change lives!

Your congregation can journey through Advent with a 4 session study based on the lectionary, questions for reflection, prayers & hymn selections. The study can be used as a guide for worship, adult study forums, or personal devotions at home. The study guide was included in the fall World Hunger Action Packet, or copies can be ordered from [www.ELCA.org/Hunger/Resources](http://www.ELCA.org/Hunger/Resources).

ADVENT CALENDARS are available (for free!) and make a great gift for you congregation members as they journey through the season. Celebrate this season of anticipation with daily Scriptures, hymns, prayers and stories from recipients of Good Gifts. Order from [www.ELCA.org/hunger/resources](http://www.ELCA.org/hunger/resources).

GOOD GIFTS is a wonderful way to ease the stresses of Christmas shopping and to raise funds for ELCA World Hunger! The Good Gifts catalog is available at [www.ELCA.org/goodgifts](http://www.ELCA.org/goodgifts).



If your congregation wants to have a Good Gifts Fair or display or if you have any questions or need help, contact Mary Anderson at [mm.anderson3600@gmail.com](mailto:mm.anderson3600@gmail.com)

## Invitation to Webcast October 27

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Please mark your calendars for the next live webcast, "Ecumenical and Interreligious Witness on the Eve of the Reformation Anniversary," on Thursday, Oct. 27, at 7 p.m. CDT. As Lutherans, we have 499 years of history, but on this day we will explore:



What was the Reformation, and what does it mean for Lutherans and ecumenical partners?

What is "Declaration on the Way," and why is it significant for Lutheran-Catholic relations?

What might ecumenical and interreligious relationships look like in the future, and what does this mean for our faith community?

Tune in to the live webcast on Oct. 27 by visiting [ELCA.org/webcast](http://ELCA.org/webcast), where a link to the recorded video will be made available after the broadcast. A live stream also will be available at [Facebook.com/Lutherans](https://Facebook.com/Lutherans). If you would like to submit a question to be considered during the live webcast, please send it to [livinglutheran@elca.org](mailto:livinglutheran@elca.org) and provide your name and your congregation's name, city and state.

God's peace,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Advent Planning Webinar

How is your Advent worship planning coming along? Let us demonstrate how [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com) can bring creativity, collaboration, and convenience to your seasonal worship preparation. In this 45-minute overview webinar, participants will see examples of how this planning tool enables you to develop and download seasonal worship experiences that are deeply local and highly creative. Sundays and Seasons is offering this webinar Thursday, October 27. To learn more and to register, [click here](#) or visit [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com)



## Lectionary Year A Preaching

Matthew's gospel provides the story of Jesus with two of almost everything, including two donkeys for the dramatic ride into Jerusalem and even, finally, two Jesus figures in the scene that reveals how the child born to Mary and Joseph will save his people from their sins. Matthew's gospel teaches the depths and workings of forgiveness more fully than any other gospel even though it leads the canonical league in threats of weeping and gnashing of teeth. Preachers who learn to turn Matthew's narratives upside down find in the gospel bountiful resources for honoring the death of Christ and comforting penitent hearts. Lutheran School of Theology in St. Louis offers this preaching seminar by the Rev. Dr. Fred Niedner on November 10 from 9:00-2:30. The seminar will be offered by live webcast. The cost is \$37 by Oct. 25 or \$42 after. Register online at <http://www.lststl.org/courses/>.