

1010

for

OPEN MINDS

Proportionate Giving



Sunday,
November 17, 2019



ST. JOHN—ST. JAMES

Evangelical Lutheran Church & School

November 17, 2019

OPEN MINDS

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

This weekend is the second of a three-week stewardship emphasis titled *Ten for Ten*. In this worship series, we are looking at the daily struggle we all face when two paths are set before us, one by God and the other by this world. Shall we live for this life or the life that is to come? One very obvious way that struggle manifests itself is when we plan our finances.



Americans are generally shy when it comes to talking about money. The Lord isn't. He speaks to us about worldly wealth and possessions over 2,300 times in his Word. Last week we heard that the Lord asks, without apology, to be first in our hearts. The Lord's position in our hearts is to be reflected in our firstfruits giving. Firstfruits giving calls for us to *open up our hearts* and offer up to God our first and our very best.

This weekend, the Lord will *open our minds* to consider the magnitude of his blessings. Each of us has been blessed in different ways and at various levels. What should our thoughtful, prayerful response be to these blessings? That's where the Bible's teaching about proportionate giving is such a help. For some families with fewer resources, the practice of giving 10% of their income might be a significant leap of faith. For other families with more resources, the practice of giving 10% may be a starting point for faith-filled giving.

St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth, "On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made" (1 Corinthians 16:2). Christians are blessed as they put God's principles of proportional giving into practice!

Our worth will follow this path.

- Week One: OPEN HEARTS (Firstfruits Giving)
- Week Two: OPEN MINDS (Proportionate Giving)
- Week Three: OPEN HANDS (Sacrificial Giving)

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

Dear Father, you have given me so much more than I can ever return to you. Give me the wisdom I need to respond to your love thoughtfully. Strengthen my will to dedicate all that I am and have to your glory thankfully. I ask this in the name of the One who lived and died for me, Jesus Christ, your Son, my Lord. Amen.

INVOCATION and OPENING VERSES

M In the name of the Father of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

M “Everything under heaven belongs to me,’ declares the LORD.”

C **“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.”**

M “You may say to yourself, ‘My power and the strength of my hands have produces this wealth for me.”

C **“But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.”**

M “The earth is the LORD’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.”

C **“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.”**

(Job 41:11; James 1:17; Deuteronomy 8:17,18; 1 Chronicles 16:34)

CONFESSION OF SINS

M Lord God, heavenly Father, we humbly come before you today knowing that we have failed to speak lovingly, think purely, or act rightly. We have sinned against you and against others...
...when we waste the precious time you give us.

C **...when we are slow and hesitant to spread your Gospel.**

M ...when we are restless or relentless in our preoccupation with worldly wealth.

C **...when we ignore the needs of those in our lives.**

M ...when we don’t care for the bodies and minds you have given us.

C **...when we refuse to make you our first priority.**

(Silence for personal reflection)

M Hear our confession, for we have sinned are in need of your mercy and forgiveness.

C **Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.**

M God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C **Amen.**

M In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord!



1 Al - might - y Fa - ther, heav'n and earth
4 We, Lord, would lay, at your re - quest,
With lav - ish wealth be - fore you bow;
The cost - liest of - f'ings on your shrine,
Those trea - sures owe to you their birth,
And when we give and give our best,
So rich - ly fur - nished for us now.
We but re - turn your gifts di - vine.

PRAYER OF THE DAY



O merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature. Make us always thankful for your loving care; and grant that we, remembering the richness of your grace may be faithful stewards of all your good gifts; through Jesus Christ, your Son our Lord, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



Amen.

SCRIPTURE CALLS FOR OFFERINGS THAT ARE "IN KEEPING WITH YOUR INCOME," THAT IS, PROPORTIONATE. THESE OFFERINGS ARE GIVEN SO THAT GOD'S PEOPLE MIGHT BE A BLESSING TO OTHERS, MEETING PHYSICAL AND ETERNAL NEEDS.

Epistle Lesson

1 Corinthians 16:1-4

¹Now about the collection for the Lord's people: Do what I told the Galatian churches to do. ²On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made. ³Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. ⁴If it seems advisable for me to go also, they will accompany me.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed



I believe in God the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

JESUS TEACHES THAT LIKE IN THE PARABLE GOD ENTRUSTS HIS PEOPLE WITH WEALTH AND EXPECTS THEM TO USE THEM FOR HIS GOOD PURPOSES. WE ANSWER TO GOD FOR HOW WE USE ALL OF HIS RESOURCES.

Gospel Lesson

Matthew 25:14-30

¹⁴ “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. ¹⁵ To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. ¹⁶ The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. ¹⁷ So also, the one with two bags of gold gained two more. ¹⁸ But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

¹⁹ “After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.’

²¹ “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

²² “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.’

²³ “His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

²⁴ “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’

²⁶ “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and

gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

²⁸ “So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. ²⁹ For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them. ³⁰ And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Song of the Day:

Jesus, Priceless Treasure

Christian Worship, Hymn # 349,v1,4,5

MESSAGE

Pastor Darin D. Aden

Matthew 25:14-30

What Really Matters Is Knowing the Master

OFFERING OF GIFTS

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M Lord God, you created the heavens and the earth; from your hand come boundless riches.

C **We thank you, Lord, for making us your stewards. We pray that you will grant us faith so that we can please you in our stewardship.**

M Lord, help us to see that time, the talents, and the financial resources we have are a sacred trust from you.

C **We ask for your help, Lord, to use all our resources in worthwhile activities that will give you honor and praise.**

M Lord, help us to spend time in your Word and in prayer that you might nourish the faith you give us.

C **Please change us, Lord, from fear and selfishness to trust and generosity.**

M Help us, Lord, to be wise and fruitful stewards of the opportunities that you give us to use our gifts to give your kingdom further reach into our hearts, homes, and to all humanity.

C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

M May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C Amen.

10 for 10 BIBLE STUDY—Open Minds *(begins next page)*

10 for 10

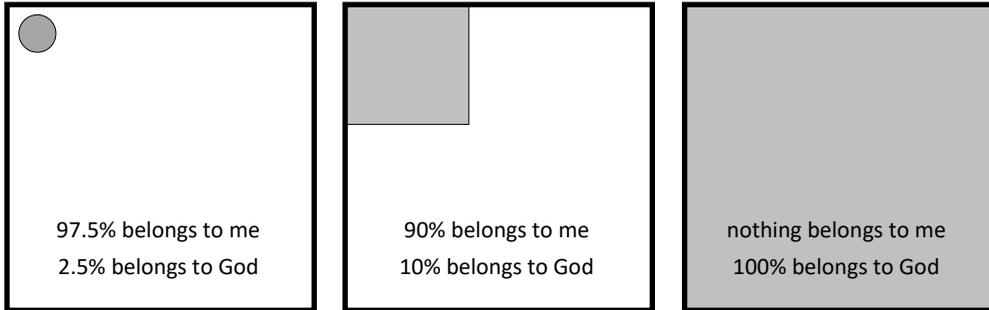
OPEN MINDS

Proportionate Giving

BIBLE STUDY: Proportionate Giving

I. INTRODUCTION

- ? Which of these diagrams do you think most accurately reflects the Bible's teaching on money, possessions, and our use of them?



Proportionate giving begins by recognizing
who really is the _____.

II. GOD OWNS EVERYTHING

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

John 1:3

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Job 33:4

The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Job 41:11

The LORD said, "Who has a claim against me that I must pay? Everything under heaven belongs to me."

Exodus 19:6

The LORD said, "...the whole earth is mine."

God _____ everything
and therefore _____ everything

III. WE, BY NATURE, RESENT GOD'S OWNERSHIP

Think of the way we talk about wealth and possessions. At every step we are forgetful of the fact that God owns everything.

- There are two children who want the same toy. *"Mine!"*
- There is the man talking about his salary. *"Last year I made \$52,000."*
- There is the admiration for the "self-made millionaire."

We need to constantly guard our hearts and minds, remembering God created all things, and therefore owns all things. Anything we have—our life, our intellect, our time, our possessions—we have because he generously gave them to us.

James 1:17

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father.

Point / Counter-Point

Below are things we tell ourselves. In your own words, explain how God answers.

Man says: *"I put in my time."*

God says: *"Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (James 4:13-14).*

Man says: *"It's my brain and talent that are responsible for my success."*

God says: *"I have filled him (Bezalel) with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood" (Exodus 31:3-5).*

Man says: *"I've worked hard for what I've got!"*

God says: *"You may say to yourself, 'My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.' But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:17-18).*

The Takeaway

- a) If I don't recognize God's complete ownership, I need to _____ of my idolatry.
- b) If I do recognize God's complete ownership, as his forgiven child I give to him _____.
- c) If my life's focus is on earthly possessions, every day I live is a day I come closer to losing _____.
- d) If my life's focus is on heaven, then every day I live is a day I come closer to _____ everything.

IV. QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS...

So, our New Man wants to honor Christ through percentage giving. That New Man now wrestles with the following questions.

“What percentage should I give?” Turn the table on legalism!

- Abraham gladly gave _____%, a “tithe” (Genesis 14:20)
- Old Testament law _____ people to give multiple tithes (Numbers 18:21-23; Deuteronomy 14:22-29)
- Zacchaeus freely gave _____% (Luke 19:1-10)
- The widow of Zarephath and the widow at the temple gave _____% (1 Kings 17:7-16; Luke 21:1-4)

The point? Let the percentage of your gifts flow from the Spirit's work in your heart. *“Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”* (2 Corinthians 9:7).

“How much of God's money do I need to live on?” Turn the table on greed!

- ? Consider these two examples. There is a single mom with two children who made \$30,000 last year. She gave \$2,500 in offerings. There is a two-income family with two children who made \$110,000 last year and gave \$11,000. Who gave more?

The point? God is so generous, he often gives us so much income that we can not only meet our needs but also purchase some things we want, but don't really need. However, if we better distinguish between wants and needs... if we focus on *earthly* needs and *heavenly* wants... it frees us up to be exceedingly generous with our offerings.

“What will my investments be earning 50,000 years from now?” Turn the table on materialism!

Matthew 6:21

Jesus said, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Martin Luther

I have held many things in my hands and I have lost them all. But whatever I have placed in God’s hands, that I still possess.

- ? You gave \$10,000 to support our congregation. Your gift was used to fund efforts to reach the lost. It funded the teaching of God’s Word to young and old. A portion of it was sent to WELS to support world-wide mission efforts. How might you enjoy that investment 50,000 years from now?

The point? Even Jesus had a treasurer. Ministry requires funding. An earthly investment can bring joy only in this life. But investing in gospel ministry can reap blessings that we will enjoy for all eternity.

“Do I fully comprehend Jesus’ sacrifice for me?” Turn the table on self-centeredness!

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

- ? Part of “the American Dream” is upward mobility. Americans typically aspire to move up in their socioeconomic status. There is also the possibility of downward mobility. People who were rich can end up dirt poor. There is no greater example of downward mobility than Jesus. Describe a) how big a step down he took and b) why he was willing to take that step.

The point? Giving generously will never be achieved by focusing only on the Scripture passages which talk about generous giving! The gospel—the good news of Christ’s sacrifice, resurrection and the glorious eternity that is waiting for us—is what the Spirit uses to empower joyful, generous giving.

V. NEWS AND NOTES

- This week is the time to study the information in your *10 for 10* commitment packet. Please read the letter, use the planning tools included, and prayerful consider what your response will be.
- Two weeks from today is when commitment cards will be gathered. Important note: your commitment cards will not be opened. They will be placed near the altar for ten weeks and then returned to you unopened for your prayerful reflection.
- Please do not place offerings in your *10 for 10* commitment envelopes. The only thing that goes in that envelope is your giving plan.
- Additional devotional material has been/will be shared. Read. Ponder. Pray.

Closing Song:

Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us

Christian Worship, Hymn # 486, w1,2

C Verse 1



**If on earth my days he lengthen,
He my weary soul will strengthen;
All my trust in him I place.
Earthly wealth is not abiding,
Like a stream away is gliding;
Safe I anchor in his grace.**

C Verse 2



**If on earth my days he lengthen,
He my weary soul will strengthen;
All my trust in him I place.
Earthly wealth is not abiding,
Like a stream away is gliding;
Safe I anchor in his grace.**

St. John—St. James Ev. Lutheran Church

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Worship Services

Sunday—8:00pm ■ Sunday—10:15 am

Church Office—920-754-4568 ■ School Office—920-754-4432 Office

Hours: 7:30am—3:00pm, Monday-Friday ■ Website: stjohnstjames.com

Bulletin information emails: cbubolz@stjohnstjames.com / aschrubbe@stjohnstjames.com

November 17^h

23st Week in Pentecost

SERVING YOU TODAY—8:00 am Ushers—Dale Barnard, Joe Hoyer, Gary Bernhardt, Chuck Kiehn, Bob Baribeau ■ **10:15 am Ushers**—Roger Hoida, Dave Hoida, Bill Ebert III, Deven Krepline, Howard Haese ■ **Church Cleaners**—Adam/Melissa Bubolz, Andy/Heidi Bubolz, Nick/Amanda Schrubbe, Ray/Suzanne Bubolz ■ **Flower Committee**—Joan Behnke and Barb Herzog.

SERVING YOU NEXT WEEK— 8:00 am Ushers—Dale Barnard, Joe Hoyer, Gary Bernhardt, Chuck Kiehn, Bob Baribeau ■ **10:15 am Ushers**—Roger Bubolz, Jim Bubolz, Bill Ebert III, Deven Krepline, Howard Haese ■ **Church Cleaners**—Archie/Pat Olp, Mary Fenlon ■ **Flower Committee**—Joan Behnke and Barb Herzog ■ **Communion Set-Up**—Knier Family ■ **Organist**—Judy Mangin.

CONNECTION CARDS—Visitors and Guests please fill out the Connection Cards located in the church pews and place them in the offering plate or hand them to our ushers on your way out of church. Please come and join us again!

COMMUNION SET-UP/TAKE DOWN—Looking for 2-3 volunteers to form a team to be added to the Communion schedule. If willing to volunteer, please call the office at 920-754-4568.

USHER TEAM LEADERS—There is a signup sheet on the usher's podium to fill our needs for selected Holiday services. Please make sure all the ushers on your team are looking at it and have them sign up if they will be in attendance for any of these services. Thank you.

NOVEMBER SPECIAL SERVICES—Mark your calendars! **Hunter's Worship Service**—Thursday, November 21 at 6:30 pm, **Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service**—Wednesday, November 27 at 6:30 pm and **Thanksgiving Day Worship Service**—Thursday, November 28 at 9:00 am. Thank you for joining us!

Our Father's Business

Today

Preacher, Pastor Darin Aden
Organist, Charmaine Wagner
9:05 am Sunday School and 9:05 am Adult Bible Class
9:05 am CREW

(11/18) Mon.

6:00 pm Stewardship Committee Meeting
7:00 pm Ladies Aid Meeting

(11/20) Wed.

3:30 Confirmation Class
No 6:30 pm Praise Choir Practice

(11/21) Wed.

6:30 pm Deer Hunter's Worship Service

FAITH-FUN-FELLOWSHIP—Bible Study and Basketball Faith-Fun-Fellowship will be held on Sunday, December 1 at 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm. After a short bible study, we will divide up into teams and play for fun! This fellowship is for confirmed members of St. John – St. James and St. Peters. Need more information, please call Andy Bubolz at 608-434-4019. Come enjoy the fun!

LYA FUNDRAISERS—LYA has 2 fundraisers coming up. **TODAY! LYA will be serving a spaghetti dinner from 11:00 am-12:30 pm in the SJSJ commons with a free will offering.** The second will be a Craft/Bake Sale on Sunday, December 15th open between services and after late service and also with a free will offering.

SCRIP LAY-A-WAY—The Christmas layaway program will be beginning on November 17. You will find a scrip order form in your November/December newsletter and also in the office. Scrip lay-a-way will allow you to order from the scrip program and then pay for it when you pick orders up. Orders generally need one week to be filled. Please contact the school office (754-4432 or 754-4568) or a scrip volunteer if you have any questions.

CHRISTMAS DECORATING—The Decorating Committee wants to invite ALL MEMBERS to help in decorating the church for Christmas! We will begin on Saturday, November 30@ 9am in the sanctuary. Any questions can be directed to Abby Stuebs. Thank you!

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE—Church Attendance: (11/03) 150 + 108 = 258 ■ Communion Attendance – 191

BUILDING FUND—Our loan payment for the new addition is \$9,370.00 per month. We pay two payments a month for a total of \$9,370.00, which helps to reduce the interest we pay but offerings have been falling short administration tries to keep a balance of \$18,000 to cover months when shortfalls occur, but offerings have fallen short and our balance is starting to get low. Our new building has served us very well and we ask that you prayerfully consider contributing to the Building Fund.

POINSETTIA ORDERS—On a table in the West Church office you will find order blanks for Red, White, and Blue Poinsettias for Christmas this year. The Blue and white poinsettias will be placed in the gym for both Children’s services. Please print clearly on your orders and have them back to us by Sunday, Dec. 1, 2019.

LWMS—Free-will monetary donations can be placed in the LWMS boxes today, which are located at each exit of church, for this month’s collection toward a Lutheran Women’s Mission Society’s mission project. The mission project will be designated in April. Thank you!

NATIVITY SCENE—St. John–St. James will have the first ever Nativity Scene display from 12:00 pm—6:00 pm on Saturday, December 7 in conjunction with the 3rd annual Christmas in the Village. Drop off your Nativity in the Commons area on Friday December 6 from 5:00 pm—8:00 pm or on Saturday, December 7 from 9:00 am—11:00 am. Display’s are open to everyone in the community so please inform whomever you know that would consider displaying their Nativity. If interested in donating some Christmas cookies for the event, please take one of the gingerbread men from the board. Thank you so much for your generosity!

KID’S CHRISTMAS TREAT BAGS—In the West Church Office there will be a donation box placed on the table to collect donations for our Children’s Christmas Bags that are given out to the children as they leave the Christmas Eve Services.

FUNERAL SERVICE VOLUNTEERS—We are looking for retired men and women who could be "on Call" to set up and tear down tables and chairs whenever there is a Funeral service. When the Lord calls one of his lambs’ home, we would reach out to see who is available to help the family with their service. The size of our current "on call" list puts all the burden on a small group, and we would like to have more options to ensure we have help whenever a family needs us. If you are willing and able to serve, we would love to add your name to the on-call list. Please call or text Gary Bernhardt - 920-629-5221 or by email - bebehardt@gmail.com“ Thank you.

COLLEGE BASKETBALL—On Friday, November 22nd the men's & women's basketball teams from Martin Luther College will play Holy Family College (formerly Silver Lake College) at the UW Manitowoc Campus. The women's game will begin at 5:30pm & the men's game is scheduled for 7:30pm. There is no admission charge to attend these games. All SJSJ families are welcome to attend.

LAKESHORE LUTHERAN CHORALE WINTER CONCERTS: You are cordially invited to attend one of the Lakeshore Lutheran Chorale winter concerts. The concerts will be on Saturday, December 7th at 3pm and Sunday, December 8th at 3pm both will be at First German at 1025 South 8th Street in Manitowoc.

JUNIOR LANCER BAND AND YOUTH CHOIR CONCERT – “A December Journey” will be on Sunday, December 15th at 3:00 pm in the MLHS Gymnasium. This concert features the Jr. Lancer Beginner Band, Concert Winds, Jazz Kids, and Youth Choir. Come and enjoy!



A Veteran Day program was held on Monday, November 11th at the Reedsville Elementary School. Below is a list of members from St. John – St. James Lutheran Church who have served our Country.

We Thank each of you for your service to this great nation!

Craig Anhalt

Lawrence Bratz

Dan Berkholtz

Karl Bubolz

Erwin Waack

Ruth Seefeld

Gene Wagner

Allan Behnke

Bill Dallann

Adam Haese

Paul Kiekhaefer

Delmar Knier

A.C. Buchner

Lee Maertz

Peter Broehm

Jeff Doemel

Ken Stecker

Bob Busse

Donald Busse

Gary Torsch

Randy Loose

Jeff Herzog

Dan Duchow

Mel Mangin

Rodney Bubolz

We sincerely apologize if we have inadvertently missed anyone. If you are a veteran and your name is not listed above, please notify the office at 920(754-4568) so that we