

# Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

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<http://ImmanuelHouston.org/>

May 2017

## Running with Endurance

In the past two years I have taken quite a renewed interest in physical fitness. I try to watch what I eat, when I eat, and make sure I'm physically active every day. All this has been in an effort to be a better steward of the wonderful gift of life that God has provided for me and also to set an example for my sons to do the same.



Recently one of my sons asked me a question I thought I would never thought to hear him ask me, "Hey Dad, the school district is having a 5K family fun run. May we do it?" I was shocked. Not only was my couch potato, video game addicted son wanting to go on a run to raise money for charity, he was asking ME if I would come and run also! My answer surprised me. I told him we could start training immediately.

*<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup>looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2).*

So often our faith gets neglected. We don't make an intentional decision to let it become inactive, but little decision by little decision we fall into a less and less active faith life and soon we are spiritually out of shape. This race is no less important than any physical race; our eternal fate rests in the balance.

It may not seem so important day to day, but just like preparing for a 5K, training and preparation count. Remember to immerse yourself into the body of believers. Run with other runners. Pray with other believers. Let yourselves be built up by one another.



*(continued on page 3)*



## Immanuel's Fearless Four

Did you know that "once upon a time," Immanuel had a golf team? Good Samaritan Home held an annual golf tournament for Lutheran churches and the money raised benefited the Home and its ministry.

Our "Fearless Four" originally consisted of Bob McFarland, Lonnie Angst, Fred Cooper, and Ed Richter. When Ed Richter transferred to St. John Lutheran, the fourth team member spot was held by various others over the years: Roy Ballard, Tommy Evans, Dan Queen, Ron Angst, Tommy McFarland, Kyle Cooper, and Max Bolen, Jr.

I don't remember a tournament ever getting cancelled because of bad weather. I can remember the exciting and smiling faces of Bob, Lonnie, and Fred, as we met for breakfast at the Triple A Restaurant. These men were ready for action.

So, on the morning of the tournament, under blue skies, the echoing shout, "Fore!," was the cry. Lutheran pastors, teachers, and other Lutheran members teed off for the trophy awarded to the winning team. Some wore their church colors, but our Immanuel team wore their lucky shirts, had hidden rabbits' feet, and the beautiful golf clubs that they had shined the night before. Someone asked, "Did this group of golfers have a crowd of followers as some do on TV? I was not present, but I suppose their wives were present and many waved their colors and flags.



*(l-r) Fred Cooper, Bob McFarland, and Lonnie Angst  
—photo courtesy of Bob McFarland*

Something that never will be forgotten was that the Immanuel Fearless Four always came in last. Did our team freeze in the heat of competition? Or did they over practice? But wait, not always last! One year, the Golf Committee arranged to have a special trophy for last place, with which they wanted to express their thankfulness to the Immanuel team for always signing up, year after year. But that year, Immanuel came in second to last, and did not receive the trophy.

I asked one of the "Fearless Four," why? The answer was, "Seems one or two of us would drop in a sand trap. Or we'd find ourselves in the woods; now, that was good, that's when we rested from the hot sun. We also did a lot of searching for lost balls. But we enjoyed the fellowship, the laughter at the jokes told, and making new friends from other Lutheran churches. And all that took place in the greens will stay there. Wait 'til next year."

*~Pastor Perez*

## Theology of Worship

Recently our Sunday morning Adult Bible Class has been discussing liturgy and worship. We like to call our Sunday morning church service a “worship service,” but there is so much more happening on Sunday than us just praising our Triune God. That makes it seem as if we are there to do the work, from us to God.

When Jesus walked on earth, He did not do it just so that people would give Him praise and glory. He came to serve and heal people, to give His life for them. So God comes to us on Sunday morning to give us the gifts of His Word and Sacraments. He speaks to us and we respond in faith and devotion. He is acting. We are receiving. He gives us faith as a gift. We do nothing but be there to receive it. So we properly call our service the Divine Service. God serving us again and again.

The rhythm of our Evangelical Lutheran worship is from God to us, and then from us back to God. Do you hear God speaking to you on Sunday morning? I hope so. He speaks through His Word, the Scripture readings. He also is speaking to us through our pastors, Pastor King and Pastor Perez. In Divine Service when we see our pastor facing us, talking to us, it is God speaking through him to us. Then the pastor faces the altar with us as we acknowledge God’s gifts and receive them. Our worship is centered on God, specifically on Jesus Christ (Christocentric). That is the first aspect of worship.

The second aspect of worship is that we are there as members of the body of Christ, the church, the community of saints. We proclaim to each other, and to the world, that the kingdom of God in Jesus Christ is present among us. This happens right now in real time, but also beyond time and space as we join “with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven” (all the saints who have gone before us).

So it matters what I do in my faith life now. I do not live in a vacuum. I do not worship in a vacuum. I am a member of the body of Christ and the community of saints. It matters to those gone before me to keep the faith. And it matters to those who are coming after that I pass on the true faith that the real presence of Christ is moving into the lives of people and changing them through the Gospel. This is what is happening in church on Sunday morning!

*Information for this article was taken from Lutheran Worship: History and Practice, Fred L. Precht, ed. CPH, 1993, and from Pastor King’s Adult Bible Class.*

*~Diane Robinson*

## Running . . .

*(continued from page 1)*

As the weather gets progressively warmer, many of us will be spending more and more time outdoors, but don’t neglect the most important of races: the race to the Day of Resurrection. Join a weekly Bible Study or prayer group, worship REGULARLY on Sundays, pray daily and often. I look forward to seeing you at the finish line.

*~God Bless you,  
Pastor King*

# 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Easter Celebration

The beautiful sunshine started the day off great. Over **40 volunteers** from the Immanuel and Unveil congregations along with Early Childhood staff came together to set up and prepare the parking lot for a morning of fun. The main focus of all the activities was on Jesus with a **(J)**elly Bean Walk, **(E)**ggs Galore, **(S)**nacks, **(U)** and Your Family Foto and **(S)**oil and Seeds. There was a Games Alley, where you rolled either large eggs or rocks in a race.



We had approximately **110 children** register and drop their names in for door prizes. There were former students, neighbors, as well as current students present.

The Easter bunny is always a big hit for pictures. A fun time was had by all.







## Focus on Stewardship

*"It is more blessed to give than to receive,"*  
said St. Paul, quoting our Lord (Acts 20:35).  
How can this be?

Jesus and His disciples withdrew to a mountain by the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The crowds followed them, for the Lord had just showered upon them the gift of His teaching, the gift of His Word. But the day was waning; the sun was setting, and it was getting late. Looking upon the crowds, Jesus had compassion on them and asked, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat" (John 6:5)? Philip said that two hundred denarii (a day's wages for two hundred men) could not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.

But Andrew, Peter's brother, brought a young boy forward, who had five barley loaves and two small fish. "But," Andrew asked, "what are they for so many" (John 6:9). Jesus replied, "Have the people sit down" (John 6:10).

Then Jesus, the Son of God, gave them a second gift, a gift from what only He could give—a gift from above. He took the bread and the fish, gave thanks, blessed them, and distributed them to the crowd. Then came the miracle. As these five loaves and two fish were given out, they multiplied. He fed the hungry

crowd until they were all full. And twelve baskets full were left over.

But Jesus was not the only one who gave that day. There is one person who also gave from what he had. It was the boy with the five loaves and the two fish. All the others, including the boy, received the gift of a miraculous feast. And they would look back on it with wonder. But the boy, when he would look back on it, would look back and remember not just what he received. He would look back with wonder and delight when the Son of God made his gift into something miraculous. For it is more blessed to give than to receive.

This our Lord does for each of us. He presses our gifts, no matter how big or how small, into His service and works wonders with them. He provides through what we give: water for baptism, bread and wine for the Lord's Supper, a man called and sent for the preaching of the Gospel and Absolution. He provides a building in which we can gather as His children, lights so that we might not gather in darkness. He provides funds for the care of the poor and struggling, for missionaries who preach and teach beyond our borders. He makes Christians, disciples of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in our midst by bringing them to faith and nurturing them in that faith. He takes our gifts and turns them into something miraculous.

Indeed, it is more blessed to give than to receive. Thus we give. We give of what we have. And the Lord works His wonders.

*(Stewardship newsletter insert for March 2017, provided on the LCMS website <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4576>)*

*~submitted by Kathy Angst*

# Support Missions

## Alaska

### Rev. Keith Aschenbeck

Donate online at:

<http://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org>

Mail donations to: Alaska Mission for Christ,  
8100 Arctic Blvd., Anchorage AK 99518

Note "Keith Aschenbeck" in the memo section

You can also support the Alaska Mission for Christ via Thrivent Choice Dollars  
<https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-choice/>  
and Amazon.com's Smile program  
<http://smile.amazon.com>

## Dominican Republic

### Rev. Joel Fritsche

To support the Fritsche's ministry in the Dominican Republic, you may send a tax-deductible gift to either of the following:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-6861  
**OR** Mission Central  
40718 Highway E16, Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks

"Support of Joel & Clarion Fritsche."

Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on our online giving page at <http://www.lcms.org/fritsche> or call (888) 930-4438.

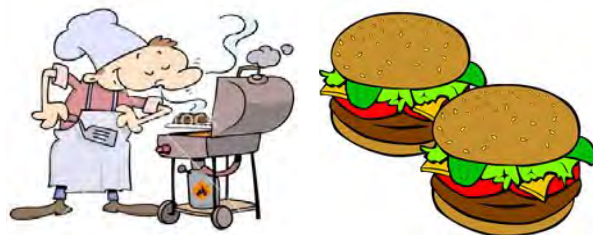
## Puerto Rico

### Rev. Richard Schuller

Tax-deductible gifts can be sent to:

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, PO Box 66861, St. Louis MO 63166-6861 **OR**  
Mission Central-LCMS World, 40718 Highway E16, Mapleton, Iowa 51034-7105

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and include Schuller, Puerto Rico, and A-10898-69376 in the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through their website <http://www.lcms.org/schuller>



## May Hamburger Day

The May HAMBURGER DAY, sponsored by the Naomi Willing Workers, will be on May 18th from 11:00am until 1:00pm.

This month's meal will be for a *free will* offering, with all proceeds going to the Good Samaritan Lutheran Home. Last year we were able to send them \$1,191.70, and hope to meet and exceed that amount this year.

So, mark your calendar and come enjoy the good food and fellowship which is always found at Immanuel. This will be our last Hamburger Day until we resume in September. Have a great summer.

~Martha McFarland



# Immanuel Lutheran Church May 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
MH = Miertschin Hall	1  Young Life Club Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm Evening Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm	2  FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm  All Boards @ 7:00 pm	3  ECE Chapel @ 9:30 am  Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am	4 <b>Bingo</b> @ 1:00–3:00 pm FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm Unveil Lutheran Discipleship @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	5  Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	6
7 Usher Team #4 Worship Service w/Communion @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:15 am	8  Young Life Club Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm	9 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Naomi Meeting @ 10:00 am  Council Meeting @ 7:00 pm	10  ECE Chapel @ 9:30 am	11 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm Unveil Lutheran Discipleship @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	12  Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	13
14 Mother's Day  Usher Team #5 Worship Service @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:15 am	15  Young Life Club Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm Evening Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm	16  FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm	17  ECE Chapel @ 9:30 am  Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00	18 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00 – 1:30 pm Hamburger Fry @ 11:00–1:00 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00 – 9:00 pm Unveil Lutheran Discipleship @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	19  Rich-Anderson Wedding Rehearsal Sanctuary 6:00 pm  Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	20  Rich-Anderson Wedding Sanctuary 7:00 pm
21  Usher Team #1 Worship Service w/Communion @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:15 am	22	23  FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm  Voters Meeting @ 7:00 pm	24  Pre-Kindergarten @ 9:30 am	25  FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm Unveil Lutheran Discipleship @ 6:30–8:00 pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	26  Last Day of School @ 11:30 am Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	27  LHN Graduation Grace Presbyterian Church 3:00 pm
28 Usher Team #2 Worship Service @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:15 am	29  Offices Closed 	30  FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm	31			





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To the Family of:

*Loving God ~ Loving Neighbors ~ Serving Others*



**Tuesday May 23<sup>rd</sup> • 7:00 pm**

**2017-2018 Budget • Election of Officers**