

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights
Celebrating 100 Years • 1919-2019

Vol. 9, No. 3

<http://ImmanuelHouston.org/>

February 2020

Grace, mercy and peace are yours from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

What a wonderful opportunity it is for each of us poor miserable sinners to receive the forgiveness of our Lord Jesus Christ each and every Lord's Day. We receive His forgiveness in His precious Word of Holy Absolution. We receive His forgiveness in His Holy Supper. This is why we are here, and may we never forget this nor forsake these Heavenly Treasures.



As the Epiphany season draws to a close, we look forward to the celebration of the Transfiguration of Our Lord. The Sundays following the Transfiguration are the Gesima Sundays, or Pre-Lent Sundays.

These Sundays provide something of a bridge between the radiance of Epiphany and the more somber season of Lent. It has been observed that the Gospel readings for these three Sundays accent the three *solas* of the Lutheran Reformation.

Septuagesima- by grace alone.

Sexagesima - according to Scripture alone.

Quinquagesima- through faith alone.

Pre-Lent is a signal to the church which announces the proximity of Lent and Easter, a call to gathering and preparation for the penitential journey of Lent. It is in no way an extension of Lent, but it is a reminder to the church that Christians must pass through Lent in order to reach Easter and the empty tomb. In a way, Pre-Lent attaches Lent to Easter and offers the gifts and instruction to insure the enrichment of the lives of those who gather together during the coming spiritual journey.

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A Big Thank You for Volunteers

As I was looking at our church bulletin where the names of some of the elected church officers are listed, I thought about some of our other volunteers, those who step up and fill the gap to do the work needed in other areas:

- Our Acolytes, who light the candles before each Divine Service, symbolically bringing **the light of Christ’s spirit into our midst.**
- The Altar Guild, the women and men who prepare the Table of the Lord for the Divine Service.
- The Ushers who greet us and welcome visitors.
- The Greeters who provide information for and get information from our visitors, and have them sign our guestbook.
- The Counters, who count the offerings received, and record the names and amounts.
- The Baptismal Banner Maker. I am personally very appreciative and thankful for this service. The Baptismal Banner includes the date of Baptism and the dove that symbolizes the Holy Spirit. I baptized one of my granddaughters and her banner hangs on the wall in her bedroom.

These are but a few of the members who volunteer their time, talents, and treasure to **support the work of Christ’s Church. I think it**

would be a good idea to hold a recognition night with a meal and certificates of appreciation for these volunteers and others who do these tasks.

~Pastor Claudio Perez



Lent . . .

(continued from page 1)

Lent is multi-dimensional in that it is a season **shaped by the preaching of the Lord’s passion,** penitential reflection, and catechetical formation (instruction). Holy Week is not so much the last week of Lent; rather Lent is the extension backwards of Holy Week. Lent is **“spring training” for the Christian as we are** tutored in repentance, faith, and holy living.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent. The Ash Wednesday Service gives focus to this time as a holy season of prayerful and penitential reflection in which our attention is especially directed to the holy sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Collects of Lent, which will be the focus of our Midweek Lenten Services, cry **out for God’s help that we might remember and give thanks for our Lord’s Passion and so receive remission** of sins and redemption from everlasting death.

Indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

*Ever in Christ,
✠ Pastor Gaub*

Thank You!



We are excited to announce that the Church and ECE collected \$11,057.00 for Parade Gardens Lutheran School in Kingston, Jamaica. They are only expecting \$4,500.00 – so it will be a great surprise. We'll let you know what they say when they receive the funds. Thank you to all who contributed and who continue to keep this fledgling school in your prayers.

~Winnie McNamara

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Basketball

Feb. 4 - Varsity Boys 7:30 pm

Feb. 7 – Varsity Girls 6:00 pm

Varsity Boys 7:30 pm

Soccer

Feb. 3 - Varsity Boys 6:00 pm

Baseball

Feb. 24 - Varsity Boys 6:00 pm



LHN Celebrates 40 Years!

February 8

10:00 am–4:00 pm

**Join us as we celebrate LHN's
40th Anniversary!
Family Fun, Food, Entertainment
Food Trucks, Live Music, Vendors,
Kids Fun Zone, VIP Alumni Area**

**Entry is FREE, Kids Zone tickets are
\$5.00. To get your tickets, visit
<https://lhncelebrates.eventbrite.com/>**

~Lynn Eickemeyer



As a Sunday School teacher, you often wonder whether or not you are getting through to the children. Are the children learning about Jesus? Then it happens. God uses the children to show the teachers that they understand and get it. On Sunday, January 5th, there was a moment just like that.

Our discussion was on how God knows all but that He chooses not to share the future with us. While we were starting a new year and setting New Year resolutions, the most important thing was to start each day with Jesus. We are never alone. He is always with us. We colored a page "In this World you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the World." *John 16:33*.



Then is when it happened. After coloring the bible passage, Siena (*left*) turned her paper over and continued to color her own picture. When asked what her picture meant, she said "Jesus is above, but we have to stay focused on the target. The target is Jesus." She gets it. As her teacher, my heart melted. Then, without saying anything, her little sister, Colette (*right*), chose to draw her own picture.

God is good and He continues to bless the children of Immanuel through Sunday School. Pray that our Sunday School can grow and continue to reach the hearts of the children of any age.



"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6.

*~Cathleen Chevallier
Sunday School Superintendent*

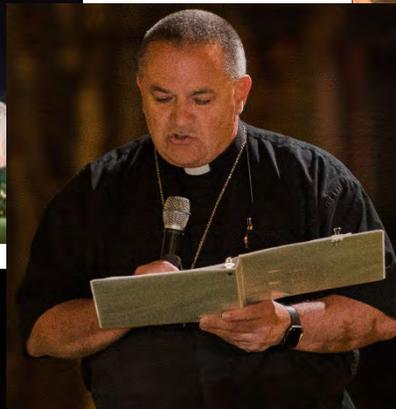
LIVE NATIVITY

On Saturday, December 14, Immanuel shared the story of Christ's birth with our ECE families and neighbors. Approximately 200 people came out to participate. Families and friends alike enjoyed music, singing carols, hot popcorn, wassail, cookies and hot chocolate. We had a magnificent bake sale with beautifully decorated food items that sold out the next day!

We want to thank everyone: our Pastor who delivered the wonderful story, the children who make the event so special, their friends and families who attended, our musicians, our neighbors, everyone that baked or donated goods for the bake sale, and the many volunteers who provided the labor necessary to make this evening possible. You made the event the success that it was.

We hope that you will join us next year as we're already making plans!

~Winnie McNamara & Toyia Evans, Co-Chairs











Focus on Stewardship

Of the three things a person is not to talk about in polite company – religion, politics, and money – the church is called, in one way or another, to talk about all three. Perhaps this is the reason why teaching about stewardship often seems to be an afterthought. It's something that happens only out of necessity when financial constraints are already nipping at the heels.

There is a more excellent way. Stewardship shouldn't be the kind of teaching that comes up only when there is a financial crunch. It should be part and parcel of the ongoing instruction of Christians as they live out their faith in their vocations – members of their family, their society, and their church. This teaching touches upon every facet of our lives; it stakes a claim upon our time, our presence, our prayers, and our possessions.

Stewardship begins with the acknowledgment that we are stewards. A steward is a manager of someone else's possessions. In Christian stewardship, we recognize, according to the Apostles' Creed, that God is the owner of all things as the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And in His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, He gives us what is His to manage here below.

The principal virtue for stewards is faithfulness. As St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth: "Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful." (*1 Cor. 4:2*)

Stewards must manage that which belongs to the owner according to the owner's wishes. That is what it means to be faithful in stewardship.

That raises a question: How are Christian stewards to be faithful in their managing of what God has entrusted to them to manage? In other words, what are the specific duties of a Christian steward?

This depends upon what God has revealed in His Word for each of our vocations in life as those in a family (fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children), society (governors or citizens), and the church (pastors or laity). The Table of Duties from *Luther's Small Catechism* lays this out in helpful and orderly way.

Let's look just at what the laity (hearers as it is labeled in the catechism) owe their pastors: "In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel." (*1 Cor. 9:14*)

"Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." (*Gal. 6:6-7*)

"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer deserves his wages.'" (*1 Tim. 5:17-18*)

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Stewardship . . .

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"We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves." (1 Thess. 5:12–13)

"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you." (Heb. 13:17)

We can see that the Lord commands hearers to support the work of the ministry with the gifts God endowed them – their time, their presence, their prayers, and their possessions. This is the means by which God blesses His people with His gifts: the ministry with the support of those whom they serve, and the hearers with the work of the ministry.

St. Paul expounds upon this further in his letters to the church at Corinth. He instructs them to give regularly (1 Cor. 16:1–2), proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12), and generously (2 Cor. 8:20) of our first-fruits (1 Cor. 16:2) with a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23).

All of this teaching is set forth squarely within the context of stations to which God calls us. This is always appropriate for the church to speak because it instructs God's people in how they are to live out their faith as His stewards under those who are created, redeemed, and sanctified by Him.

~submitted by Kathy Angst

[Stewardship newsletter insert for February 2020, from the LCMS website <https://files.lcms.org/wl/?id=23kG8GeqniEqsdpmcDuD4Ed7hMImFL6W>]



Stress Reliever

Matthew 11:28. (Jesus said) "Come to Me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

There are good days, and days which are, well, you know ... days when

- the alarm doesn't go off and if it did, you shut it off and went back to sleep;

- it's raining and your umbrella is nowhere to be found;
- one child just remembered he is responsible for show-and-tell, and your other child is crying because he has a stomach ache;
- you can't find your keys and when you do, you find one of the tires looks flat.

Stress has a way of taking little things, blowing them out of proportion, and transforming kind-and-gentle you into a touchy, short-tempered grouch.

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Stress . . .

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We know we are not fit to be around, and we know we should curb our temper, but we just can't manage to pull off nice.

Our stress can break free at the most inconvenient times; it can lash out at any unsuspecting soul who crosses our path.

Now I've looked through a few translations of the Bible and the vast majority of them don't have a single reference to the word "stress."

That doesn't mean, however, that stress is confined to our modern age.

- Joseph's string of unfortunate episodes must have put the poor fellow under stress.
- Listening to the continuous complaints of his people must have stressed out Moses.
- In the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus sweat great drops of blood. I can't imagine a more stressful situation than facing an unfair death while you are carrying the sins of the entire world.

Over the centuries humankind has developed many ways to deal with stress. They can be as uncomplicated as "finding your happy place" or as physically taxing as high-temperature yoga. The problem with all these programs is they depend on the individual to bring about his own healing.

And that "Physician, heal thyself" plan of action doesn't always work so well.

No, if we really want to de-stress ourselves, we would do better to go to our Maker and listen

to what He has to say about the matter. If we do, we will be amazed to see the number of times the Lord has dealt with the subject and given us advice. He says we should

- cast all our burdens on the Lord, and He will sustain us (*see Psalm 55:22*);
- not be anxious, since we can make our needs known to the Lord (*see Philippians 4:6*);
- remember He is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble (*see Psalm 9:9*).

God's invitation list shows that our stress has met its match in the Savior's presence.

Dear Lord, a sinful world will produce stress. May I always give thanks for the love of my Savior who asks us to cast our burdens on Him. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

In Christ I remain His servant and yours,

*~Pastor Ken Klaus
Speaker emeritus of The Lutheran Hour®
Lutheran Hour Ministries*

[Lutheran Hour Ministries Daily Devotion for July 22, 2018, <https://www.lhm.org/dailydevotions/default.asp?date=20180722>]

~submitted by Kathy Angst

Correction

On page 3 of the January 2020 issue, the captions for the pictures from the Naomi Christmas gathering incorrectly listed Margaret Beacom as Margaret Beacham. The Editor profoundly regrets this error.



Immanuel Lutheran Church - February 2020



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 HIT's Group (Gym, MH, Youth Room) @ 1:00-6:00 pm
2 Usher Team #2 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am Altar Guild after Bible Class HIT's Group (Gym, MH, Youth Room) @ 1:00-6:00 pm	3 Evening Bible Study 6:30-8:00 pm Young Life (Gym) @ 6:00-9:00 pm	4 All Boards @ 7:00 pm Scottish Dancers (Gym) @ 7:30-9:30 pm	5 Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am HIT's Group (MH) @ 6:00-9:00 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:30-9:00 pm	6 Bingo @ 1:00-3:00 pm NO Choir NO Bells	7 YMCA Youth Group (Gym) @ 6:00-8:00 pm	8 HIT's Group (Gym, MH, Youth Room) @ 1:00-6:00 pm Scottish Dancers (Gym) @ 2:00-5:00 pm
9 Usher Team #3 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am HIT's Group (Gym, MH, Youth Room) @ 1:00-6:00 pm	10 Young Life (Gym) @ 6:00-9:00 pm	11 Scottish Dancers (Gym) @ 7:30-9:30 pm	12 HIT's Group (MH) @ 6:00-9:00 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:30-9:00 pm	13 Choir @ 7:00 pm Bells @ 8:00 pm	14 Valentine's Day YMCA Youth Group (Gym) @ 6:00-8:00 pm	15 Newsletter Deadline HIT's Group (Gym, MH, Youth Room) @ 1:00-6:00 pm
16 Usher Team #4 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am HIT's Group (Gym, MH, Youth Room) @ 1:00-6:00 pm	17 Presidents' Day Office Closed ECE Closed Evening Bible Study 6:30-8:00 pm Young Life (Gym) @ 6:00-9:00 pm	18 Scottish Dancers (Gym) @ 7:30-9:30 pm	19 Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am HIT's Group (MH) @ 6:00-9:00 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:30-9:00 pm	20 Choir @ 7:00 pm Bells @ 8:00 pm	21 YMCA Youth Group (Gym) @ 6:00-8:00 pm	22 McFarland 90 th Birthday Celebration (MH) 1:00-4:00 pm HIT's Group (Gym) @ 1:00-6:00 pm
23 Usher Team #5 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am HIT's Group (Gym, MH, Youth Room) @ 1:00-6:00 pm	24 Young Life (Gym) @ 6:00-9:00 pm	25 Scottish Dancers (Gym) @ 7:30-9:30 pm	26 Ash Wednesday Men's Basketball @ 6:30-9:00 pm Dinner @ 5:30 pm (Hamburgers / ECE) Divine Service 7:00 pm	27 Choir @ 7:00 pm Bells @ 8:00 pm	28 YMCA Youth Group (Gym) @ 6:00-8:00 pm	29 HIT's Group (Gym, MH, Youth Room) @ 1:00-6:00 pm

Serving Immanuel February 2020

	Sunday February 2	Sunday February 9	Sunday February 16	Sunday February 23	Ash Wednesday February 26
Elder	Steve H.				
Acolyte	Nikki B.	Molly H.	Emily H.	Nikki B.	Molly H.
Usher Team	#2 Larry G.	#3 Lonnie A.	#4 John C.	#5 Bill O.	#1 Bill E.
Media	Karen E.	Melissa T.	Jackie A.	Barbara S.	<i>No Media</i>
Audio	Ray T.	Gerald O.	Max B.	Ray T.	Gerald O.
Altar Guild	Bob & Martha M. & Denise G.				
Trustee	Max B.				

If you would like to fill in, trade, or substitute please contact the church office. Thank you.

Serving Immanuel March 2020

	Sunday March 1	Wednesday March 4	Sunday March 8	Wednesday March 11
Elder	Ray T.	Ray T.	Ray T.	Ray T.
Acolyte	Emily H.	<i>Elder</i>	Nikki B.	<i>Elder</i>
Usher Team	#2 Larry G.	#3 Lonnie A.	#4 John C.	#5 Bill O.
Media	Karen E.	<i>No Media</i>	Melissa T.	<i>No Media</i>
Audio	Max B.	Gerald O.	Ray T.	Gerald O.
Altar Guild	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.
Trustee	Karen E.	Karen E.	Karen E.	Karen E.

	Sunday March 15	Wednesday March 18	Sunday March 22	Wednesday March 25	Sunday March 29
Elder	Ray T.	Ray T.	Ray T.	Ray T.	Ray T.
Acolyte	Molly H.	<i>Elder</i>	Emily H.	<i>Elder</i>	Nikki B.
Usher Team	#1 Bill E.	#2 Larry G.	#3 Lonnie A.	#4 John C.	#5 Bill O.
Media	Barbara S.	<i>No Media</i>	Jackie A.	<i>No Media</i>	Karen E.
Audio	Max B.	Ray T.	Gerald O.	Max B.	Ray T.
Altar Guild	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.
Trustee	Karen E.	Karen E.	Karen E.	Karen E.	Karen E.

If you would like to fill in, trade, or substitute please contact the church office. Thank you.



Immanuel Lutheran Church
1440 Cortlandt St
Houston, TX 77008

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TEXAS

To the Family of:

Witness, Mercy, Life Together ✝
In Christ, for the Church and the World



Divine Service with
Imposition of Ashes
& Holy Communion

February 26
7:00 pm

Dinner 5:30-6:30 pm
Hamburgers
prepared by ECE Staff