

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 4, No. 2

January 2015

Remember the Sabbath Day by Keeping it Holy

"What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it." At least that is how Martin Luther explained it almost 500 years ago. The question I pose to you this January, as we have our heaters running and watch the national news and thank God we have no need to own a snow shovel, is this: Is Luther's answer still true and relevant?



My answer to that question is a resounding YES! Even today, in this age of electronics and mass transit, God does COMMAND us to keep this day honored. God gives us seven days every single week. Six of those seven days He would have us give over to supporting our family, loving our neighbor, and enjoying the gifts of His creation. Only one does He set aside. He does this because He knows you NEED it. God does not need your praises. You, on the other hand, need to praise Him. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of your days you need a break. You need a time to put the world at bay. That is Sabbath rest.

Some may say they can get this rest by sleeping in, shopping, or spending it out in the nature of God's creation. My answer to this is NO. You cannot. You may be able to get rest, but not the same kind of rest God knows you need. The rest that pushes back the cares of the world. The rest that calls you to center your life on God. The rest that renews. The rest that forgives. The rest that defeats sin, death, and the power of the devil. That is Sabbath rest.

God did not promise to meet us at the mall, on the television, in the field, or in the bed. Yes, He is in all places at all times. BUT! He has promised to be where two or more are gathered IN HIS NAME. That is, for the purpose of setting aside all other cares to worship Him. He has promised to be there. Can we turn away from that?

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Christmas Fellowship

Naomi Willing Workers held their annual Christmas party on December 7. There were 18 or 19 present for the Christmas fellowship. Earlier in the month at their business meeting, they set the date and divided the dishes or foods they would bring.



The Parish Hall was decorated and the food was laid out. Oh, it was beautiful and mouth-watering. I was given an elf's hat to wear because I would provide the entertainment. We were all hungry so we began with the food. It seemed that everyone enjoyed the meal, because all the talking and laughter died down.



Before the games began, we were reminded that we were celebrating our Lord's birthday

and that the games would be based on the Babe of Bethlehem. The first game was finding the Greatest Treasure. Envelopes were pasted around the Parish Hall and the individual letters J, E, S, U, S were in them. Two teams, red and green, were given the go sign to see which team would have all the letters together. There was confusion on the Red Team, they could not find the letter because inside some envelopes other directions were given out. My job was to point at my elf's cap and say, "I'm a mean elf."



The following game required everyone to use their hands to tear out a manger, a crown and a cross out of newspaper. When both games were completed, we had the name Jesus, the manger, the cross and the King's crown. The party ended by singing Christmas carols and a closing prayer.

The Naomi Willing Workers are a great bunch to entertain.

~Pastor Perez





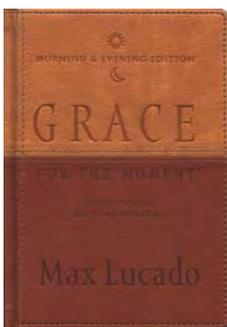
Attention all thinking Christians!

Do you have questions? Have you ever wondered what God has in store for you? If so, our next series in Adult Bible Class is for you. Entitled, "Who am I? What am I doing here?" is an engaging six week Bible study series that helps take on some of those questions from a Biblical perspective. We will begin this series Sunday, January 4th. Each session will have a video portion, a guided discussion with Ken Harvey as facilitator, and time for questions. I hope we see you there.

~Pastor King

Reader Response . . .

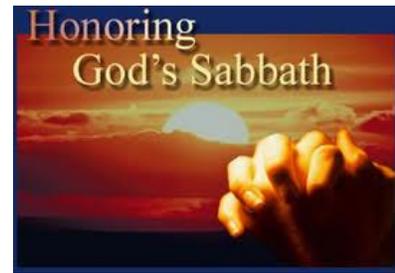
Question: *What book, other than the Bible, has given you help or insight in your faith life?*



In reply to your question on a book that's faith-uplifting and a source of comfort, my grandson gave me a book in 2010 for my birthday that I still read daily and heartily recommend! It is *Grace for the Moment Morning &*

Evening Edition : Inspiration for Each Day of the Year by Max Lucado. He is a gifted writer and I enjoy his way with words! I use this in addition to *Portals in Prayer*, which I have used daily for many years, for guidance in life.

~Nora Lee Froehlich



Sabbath Day . . .

(continued from page 1)

If you are one of those who comes week in and week out, I commend you. Thank you. You will truly have your reward. If you are not... I am concerned for you. It is my duty as shepherd to call the sheep together. I am calling.

Maybe not every sermon inspires you. Maybe not every hymn stirs your soul. Maybe not every hand shaken is the one you would have chosen. Maybe this and more, but this is where the gifts of God are given. This is where the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed and you are given the water of eternal life. God's Word is shared every week. I would love to see you there as often.

~Pastor King

Social Committee

At press time, the dates for the January Parents' Time Off and Social Sunday were yet to be determined. Please watch "News & Notes" in the weekly worship service folders or contact the Church Office about either of these events.



ECE Thanksgiving Food Drive Recap



Thank you Immanuel ECE Families! Our yearly Thanksgiving Food Drive was a huge success! We collected well over 500 canned goods and other non-perishable food items. This has been the most we have collected since we started three years

ago. Thank you so much for doing God's work and for your donations helping feed those who are less fortunate.

*~Audrey Cooper & Connie Meave
Photo by Karen Evans*



Holiday Gift Express Success!

Through our combined efforts, Immanuel Lutheran Church and Early Childhood Education were able to present the Houston Area Women's Center (HAWC) with a check for \$2,239.50 along with six \$25 gift cards, clothing, personal care items and toys.

Additionally, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans purchased more than \$700 worth of toys (*see photograph, right*) that we were able to select for the children at HAWC.

We are most grateful to the ECE, Immanuel members and Thrivent for your generous donations to our community service project. Thank you for making a difference in the life of a child!

~Winnie McNamara



C C C C

- **Cooperate:** to act or work with others for mutual benefit!
- **Communicate:** to make known; to share.
- **Coordinate:** to bring into a common action or condition.
- **Christ:** our Lord and Savior.

Christ is and needs to be at the center of all we do at Immanuel Lutheran Church as well as in our daily life, at home, and where we work and play. Keeping Christ at the center as our compass will enable us to accomplish many things and understand many things that we experience in our life from sadness to being joyful and anything between. By keeping these **C's** in the ministry of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Immanuel ECE and Unveil Church, we will continue to grow in the mission of bringing all that we touch to know Jesus as their Savior.

May your 2015 be filled with Jesus' blessings.

~Bill Eickemeyer

Music Ministry

THANK YOU to our Immanuel musicians for the lovely music throughout the Christmas season. Participating in choir and/or handbells were Jackie Anderson, Margaret Beacom, Fred Cooper, Nora Lee Froehlich, Denise Goehring, Ken Harvey, Virginia Kleb, Joan Luker, Evelyn Marsh, Connie Meave, Philip Nelson, Lauren Neu, Joel Norris, Brenda Paulsel, Tina Petway, Mackenzie Rivera, Joel Robinson, Laura Suffridge, Barbara Szalkowski, Melissa Theis, Bonnie Thomas, Ray Thomas, Carol Whitefield, and Melanie Yochum. Thank you all for your talent, time and commitment. Thanks also to Pastor King for chanting Evening Prayer. You are all a blessing to Immanuel!

~Diane Robinson

Pray About Everything

In Philippians Chapter 4, Paul instructs us regarding the power of prayer. The following was written by a French Roman Catholic priest, Francois Fenelon (1651-1715).

Tell God all that is in your heart, as one unloads one's heart, its pleasures and its pains, to a dear friend. Tell Him your troubles, that He may comfort you; tell Him your joys, that He may sober them; tell Him your longings, that He may purify them; tell Him your dislikes, that He may help you to conquer them; talk to Him of your temptations, that He may shield you from them; lay bare your indifference to

good, your depraved tastes for evil, your instability. Tell Him how self-love makes you unjust to others, how vanity tempts you to be insincere, how pride disguises you to yourself as to others.

If you pour out all your weaknesses, needs, and troubles, there will be no lack of what to say. You will never exhaust the subject. It is continually being renewed. People who have no secrets from each other never want subjects of conversation. They do not weigh their words, for there is nothing to be held back; neither do they seek for something to say. They talk out of the abundance of the heart, without consideration they say what they think. Blessed are they who attain to such familiar, unreserved, conversation with GOD.

~submitted by Toyja Evans



Home games

Girls Basketball - Jan. 6, 17, 20, 24, 30

The Girls basketball team is having a great season. Their record as of printing time is 18-0

Boys Basketball - Jan. 6, 17, 20, 24, 30

Girls Soccer - Jan. 8, 12, 20, 22

Boys Soccer - Jan. 8, 15, 20, 22, 27, 29

January 13, 5:30 pm

Lion Preview Night for prospective students

January 22, 8:30 pm – Lion Look Breakfast for parents of prospective students

January 28 – Academic Quest middle school Competition

~Lynn Eickemeyer

ECE Christmas Program and Advent Service



~Photos by Denise Goehring & Connie Meave



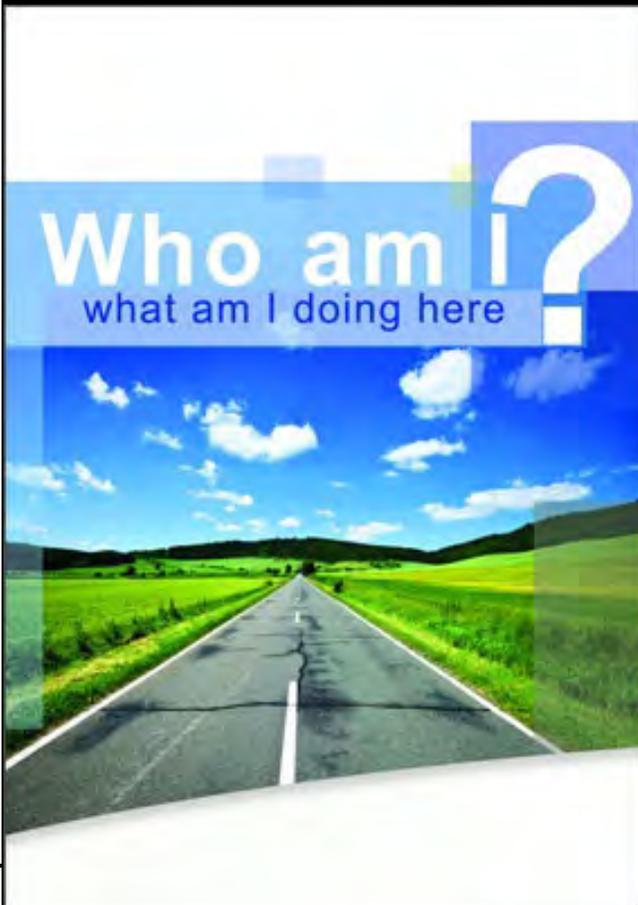
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God with us, transforming and sending



**New Six-Week
Adult Bible Study Series
Beginning
Sunday Morning
January 4th
@10:15 am**