

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 4, No. 9

August 2015

Do Unto Others

You've heard it all your life. You probably heard it first from your parents and then at some later date from your pastor or Sunday school teacher. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." We commonly call this the "Golden Rule." In the Christian tradition, we most commonly refer to it as coming from Jesus in The Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 7:12 "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." I also like the way Moses phrases it in Leviticus 19:18 "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself."



Almost every ethical, moral, or religious tradition has a version of it, but no matter where you trace this axiom to, it is good and godly advice. Loving God ~ Loving neighbors ~ Serving Others, that's Immanuel's mission statement. It should help guide us in our thoughts, our goals, and in our behavior. Loving Neighbors starts right here in our church home. Sometimes, it is not as easy as it sounds. We forget to **actively** reach out with love. We assume it is understood. It is not. That is why God mentions it so many times, so many different places in scripture. We cannot assume others know we love them. We need to share it actively.

I am issuing a challenge. For the month of August, I would like each and every one of you to do something for **every** person at Immanuel to demonstrate your love for them. It can be as simple as a smile or a kind word. You can compliment them or even give them a helping hand. In some way, I would like you each to think about actively loving **all** the people God has put into your life here at Immanuel. By September, let's see if we notice the difference.

*~God's Blessings,
Pastor King*





Fritsche Family News

The Realities of Mission Work

Some people have a rosy picture of how extraordinary it may be serving in overseas mission work. Before I came to the field I probably had that idea. Don't get me wrong. It is extraordinary, but not in the way you'd think. Our church has a dirt floor. Because of the heat, I'm often soaking wet throughout the Divine Service. Electricity can be very unreliable. These are realities. But the ultimate reality, the most extraordinary thing is that God is at work here through Word and Sacrament. We are truly thrilled to be a part of that!



Quick Family Update

We are all doing very well. Joel & Clarion are making progress with Spanish, but still have much more to learn. Clarion has begun teaching a Saturday English class for kids at our language school. She also teaches some of the neighborhood kids at our house.

We had a wonderful Father's Day celebration at Fuddrucker's followed by a family movie. We have been working through the process of getting the boys enrolled for school here in August. Thank you again for your prayers and support! God bless you all!

[Excerpt from the Fritsche Mission Newsletter (June-July 2015), available on the web at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/269850541/June-July-2015>. To receive the newsletter directly, email Pastor Fritsche at joelfritsche@lcmsintl.org. Also on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/lcmsfritsche>

Financial Support

To support our work financially, 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

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**.





Focus on Stewardship

Busyness is the new black. It's stylish. We spend an inordinate amount of time comparing how busy we are with everyone else. We compare our schedules, our kid's schedules, how productive we are and how much we have because of it to everyone around us. And if we don't do or have what the next guy does or has, we just get busier and produce more so that we can.

This consumes our conversations and thoughts. And this should give us pause: Who is consuming whom, here? Are we the consumer or are we those consumed? It's no accident that our adversary the devil is described as a lion prowling around seeking to devour us, to consume us. He gives us the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. For if he can keep us busy in "muchness" and "manyness," he can be satisfied.

And this is why the Lord, after finishing all His work of creation, rested on the seventh day. This is why He established the Sabbath day—to give His people rest from all their work. As they rested, He continued to work for them, to satisfy them, to fill them with His gifts—food from heaven by His Word and Promise.

That day came when from our Lord's cross and in His death, He proclaimed, "It is finished" (John 19:30). And so His work of redemption was complete. And so His body rested in the tomb, the belly of the earth. Though He is the

Lord God who always works, yet as the Lord rested on the original Sabbath, now Jesus kept the Sabbath by resting in the tomb and rising from the dead to live forever. For this is why He came. This is why He became man: to draw all to Himself so that He could give rest and refreshment to the weary and the heavy laden.

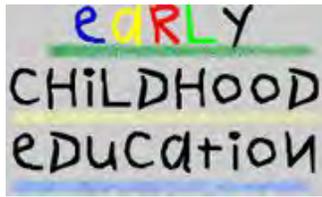
The Sabbath is a gift, not a burden. It is a gift of time free from the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Sabbath is time for rest and refreshment, a time free from anxiety to enjoy the gifts God gives, all of them—His Word, His Promises, His Sacraments, His creation, everything. It is a foretaste of the rest we shall enjoy in heaven.

Sadly for many of us rest has become work. It's become drudgery. We long for it but we aren't able to do it because there's so much to be done and so little time to do it. But really what's the rush? Why are we so hurried and harried? Have we forgotten that Jesus is raised from the dead and lives forever?

Sabbath is God's gift of time free from all of the anxiety and hurry of this world so that we can rest, be refreshed by the gifts God gives. Society won't do it for us. They are addicted to the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Though we are in the world, we are not of it. We are the people of God, His own children by water and Word, joined to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus lives. And so shall we. So rest in the promise of our Savior that sin, death, and time have not hold on you because Jesus is raised from the dead. Jesus lives. And so shall we, forever.

*(Stewardship newsletter insert for July 2015, provided on the LCMS website
<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=3492>)*

~submitted by Kathy Angst



August 18th marks the beginning of the new ECE school year. We are looking forward to having our returning children back in school and we are anxious to meet the ECE newcomers. We have exciting learning activities planned for your child this year. We will share many stories about Jesus and his love for us in the classroom and in our Wednesday chapel services. You are always welcome to attend chapel with your child!



Our Bible verse for the year is John 3:16: *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.*

Save the date! Our first PTL meeting will be held on Thursday, September 3, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. Please join us. More information will be coming to you about this meeting.

*~God's Blessing's,
Cathy Swanstrom, ECE Director*



Dates for Major Events 2015-2016

- Homecoming - October 9
- Golf Tournament - October 12
- Gala - April 16
- Musical - April 28, 29, 30
- Graduation - May 28

~Lynn Eickemeyer

I hope you are all having a relaxing, refreshing summer. I am enjoying time to visit with our elderly parents and grown children and grandchildren. It is also a chance to worship the Lord in other churches (and hear what they are doing musically!).

Our Immanuel Adult Choir and Handbell Choir will be starting up again on Thursday, September 10. I hope to see former members returning, and I pray that some others of you are considering joining us as new members. New members may join choir at any time, but September is a good time to start fresh with everyone else.

There are also openings in our Handbell Choir. We still have bells that are not being rung because we don't have enough ringers. You don't have to know anything about music to join either group. We can teach you along the way. If you would like to just try ringing bells without others watching, talk to Diane Robinson and she can do a one-on-one with you.

Blessings on the rest of your summer, and I hope to see many of you in choir or bells in September!

~Diane Robinson





Heights Interfaith Ministries Food Pantry

3523 Beauchamp St.
Houston, Texas 77009
(713) 861-6155

<http://www.himfoodpantry.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/HIMFoodPantry>

Hours: Thursday 5:00-7:00pm
Saturday 10:00am - 12:00pm

Did you know there is a food pantry right in our own neighborhood?

The Heights Interfaith Ministries Food Pantry opened its doors more than six years ago to serve families in zip codes 77007, 77008, 77009 and 77022. The pantry operates in a small building next to Travis Elementary School. On **August 9, during the Sunday School Hour, HIM Food Pantry Director, Alice Bongers, will talk to us about the services they provide.**

100% funded by donations and 100% volunteer based, the HIM pantry boasts volunteers from the age of 4 to 88. More than 21,000 volunteer hours have been donated by our community and Heights area churches since opening.

They are a "Client Choice" pantry, meaning that their clients choose their own food with the help of a volunteer. Clients can visit the pantry one time per month and are provided with meat, eggs, milk, bread, and fresh produce from the Farmer's Market on Airline. Occasionally, they are able to provide basic toiletries along with diapers and baby food. Ms. Bongers says, *Many of the families serviced are looking for a helping hand not a handout.*

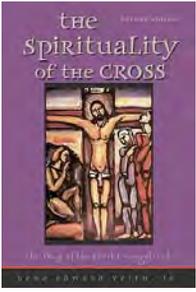
We hope that all will come to hear Ms. Bongers speak about this wonderful ministry and prayerfully consider becoming involved both individually and as a congregation.

~Winnie McNamara



The 2016 LCMS National Youth Gathering is fast approaching. The Gathering is open to those from ages 14-25. If you would like to attend The Gathering or need more information, please contact the church office or check The Gathering website: lcmsgathering.com.

~Winnie McNamara



Monday Night Bible Study

The Monday night Bible study group will finish our study of the book of *James* on August 3, and begin a new study on August 17 centered on *The Spirituality of the Cross : the Way of the First Evangelicals* by Gene Edward Veith, Jr. (Concordia Publishing House, revised edition, 2010). Copies of the book are available from Pastor King.

The author is the Provost and Professor of Literature at Patrick Henry College, the Director of the Cranach Institute at Concordia Theological Seminary, a columnist for *World Magazine* and *TableTalk*, and the author of 18 books on different facets of Christianity & Culture. (Source: <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/geneveith/about/>)

In this book, Veith explores and presents a true understanding of justification by faith, the means of grace, vocation, theology of the cross, the two kingdoms, worship, and the church. This is a revised edition of the original text written in 1999. This revised edition contains an updated bibliography, useful clarifications, and some new material.

Veith goes into greater depth especially relating to the theology of the cross and vocation. More resources including Luther's Catechism, the Book of Concord, the rite of Confession and Absolution, and the writings of Martin Luther are included as invaluable resources for Christians living a life under the cross.

About his book, Veith himself says, "It's still the confessional variety of Lutheranism that I am drawing on, though. But it's not just the theology, conceived as an abstract system of doctrine, but the spirituality—the lived, vital, personal dimension of Christianity that Lutheranism opens up. That is what I am trying to recapture." (Source: *Concordia Publishing House book description*, <http://www.cph.org/p-2262-spirituality-of-the-cross-expanded-revised.aspx>)

The Monday evening Bible study group meets the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month, 6:30-8:00 p.m., and refreshments are usually provided by one of the group. We hope that you will join us!



Sunday Morning Coffee/Donut Team

Every Sunday morning there is hot coffee and fresh Shipley donuts to enhance our time of fellowship. But someone has to make the coffee and someone has to pick up the donuts in order for everyone to enjoy them. So, please, if you enjoy coffee and donuts on Sunday morning, volunteer to make the coffee or pick up the donuts for a month of Sundays.

Sign up on the sheet located on the east wall in Miertschin Hall or call the church office to volunteer. Thank you so much!

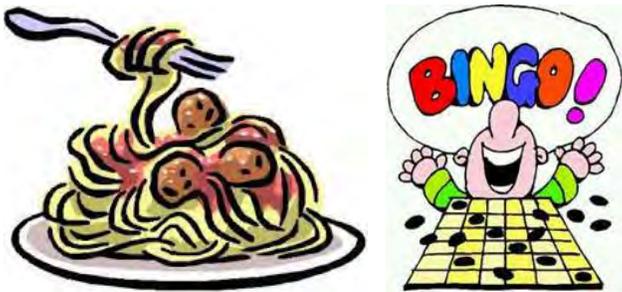


Sunday School RALLY DAY

**Immanuel Lutheran Sunday School
cordially invites you to *Rally Day*
on Sunday, August 30!**

Rally Day is a celebration of the beginning of a new Sunday School Year. Our new Sunday School Superintendent, Julie King, has exciting ideas for the upcoming year, which begins Sunday, September 6, with *Growing in Christ* curriculum. This curriculum will follow the same material presented church-wide. Parents and children will study the same lesson and be able to discuss what they studied together at home.

On *Rally Day* there will be a church-wide luncheon along with games and fun for all ages. See the separate flyer for details.



We hope to see you there!

*~SAY Board
(Sunday School/Adult Bible Study/Youth)
Carolyn Breithaupt, Julie King, Winnie
McNamara and Cathy Swanstrom*

The Oktoberfest Planning Committee has been meeting regularly since April to ensure that this annual event gets better and better each year!



Enclosed is a flyer with details about the event, and a request for sponsorships as well as for volunteers to take on the various necessary tasks before and during the event.

The mission of this event is to become better acquainted with our neighbors, and to demonstrate Immanuel's commitment to *Loving God ~ Loving Neighbors ~ Serving Others* right here in the Heights. We want to be connected with our community and invite them to enjoy some fun and food with us.

See the flyer in this issue for details of the event, sponsorship opportunities, and volunteer information. We want *every* member of Immanuel to be involved with this important event.

Newsletter Staff

Editor.....Barbara Szalkowski
ContributorsKathy Angst
.....Lynn Eickemeyer
.....Karen Evans
.....Pastor Jeffrey King
.....Julie King
.....Winnie McNamara
.....Diane Robinson
.....Cathy Swanstrom
Graphic Design.....Matthew Szalkowski

2015 Immanuel Oktoberfest

Date: October 3, 2015

Time: 10am - 7pm



Traditional German Dinner

Moonwalks and Games

BINGO with Prizes

Artisan Market

**Please Consider Supporting
Our Oktoberfest!
Sponsorships Needed**

**Full and Partial Sponsorships may be made.
Any and all donations are greatly appreciated.
All Major Credit Cards Accepted**

ITEM	DONATION	SPONSOR(S)
Food (Meal)	\$1000	
Promotional Items Cups/Shirts	\$1000	
Tent 30 X 30	\$600	
Decorations	\$300	
Rented Games	\$550	
Moonwalk Activities	\$865	
Face Painting/Balloon Animals	\$500	
Carnival Game Prizes	\$350	
Bingo Prizes	\$250	
Donation of any amount	\$	

Volunteers Needed!!

- Setup or Cleanup - Work a Booth -
 - Help in the kitchen (Preparations or Serving) - Emptying the trash -
- Everyone is needed, please consider signing up
by contacting the church office at (713) 864-2651**

Immanuel Lutheran Sunday School

RALLY DAY

Sunday, August 30th
11:30 am

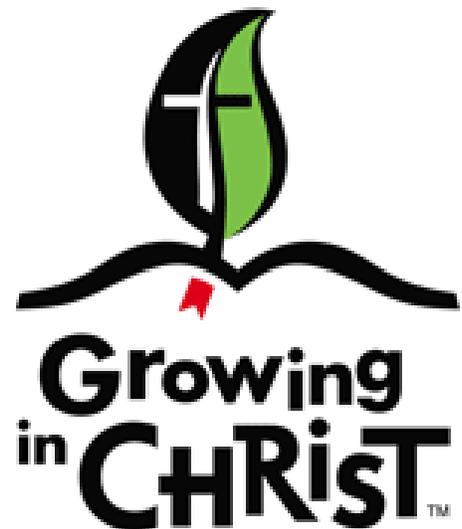


Stay after Sunday School/Bible class to kick off the new year of Sunday School with us!

Church-wide Spaghetti Luncheon starts at 11:30

Bingo (with prizes!)

Games, arts and crafts, and a piñata for the kids!



Immanuel Lutheran Church - August 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
2 Usher Team #3 Worship w/Communion @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	3 Bible Study @ 6:30 – 8:00pm	4 All Boards @ 7:00 pm	5 Women's Bible Study @ 10:00 am	6 Bingo @ 1:00 – 3:00 pm	7 Parents' Time Off 6:30 – 9:30 pm	8 Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
9 Usher Team #4 Worship @ 9:00 am Alice Bongers, Director, Heights Food Pantry, speaker, Adult Bible Class Sunday School, Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	10	11 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am	12	13	14	15 Newsletter Deadline Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
16 Usher Team #5 Worship w/Communion @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	17 Bible Study @ 6:30 – 8:00pm <i>New Study Begins!</i>	18 First Day New ECE Year	19 Women's Bible Study @ 10:00 am	20	21	22 Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
23 Usher Team #1 Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am <i>Altar Guild Meeting after Bible Class</i>	24	25 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am	26	27	28	29 Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
30 Usher Team #2 Worship w/Communion @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am <i>Church-wide Sunday School Rally Day Spaghetti Luncheon & activities @ 11:30 am</i>	31					



Immanuel Lutheran Church
306 E 15th St
Houston, TX 77008

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TEXAS

Return Service Requested

To the Family of:

Loving God ~ Loving Neighbors ~ Serving Others

Immanuel Lutheran Sunday School

RALLY DAY

Sunday, August 30th
11:30 am



Church-Wide Spaghetti Luncheon
starts @ 11:30 am

Bingo (with prizes!)



Games, arts and crafts,
and a piñata for the kids!