

# Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 4, No. 10

September 2015

## The Family that Prays Together...

Watching the first presidential debate of the season got me to thinking. It seems as if every election we hear the familiar refrain, "I support *Family Values!*" I wonder if most people in our nation even stop to think about what that phrase means anymore. Julie and I work very hard at centering our lives and the lives of our children on Christ centered "Family Values". What does that really mean anyway? What does it mean to us as parents? My first thought was of Ephesians 5, where Paul reminds us that the family relationship should be patterned after the relationship of Christ and His church. This should make us all pause. Christ came down, upheld God's law in perfect obedience, and then gave His life on the cross for **our** sake. This is quite a high standard. How can we hope to uphold such a thing? Simply put, we must rely upon Christ.

As a family, we gather around the Word. We attend Divine Service weekly, we read scripture daily, we do daily devotions all as a family. Most importantly, we must remember to come to our Lord in prayer together as a family. We should pray as a couple, and teach our children to pray regularly. There is no substitute for the joy, reassurance, and simple communication which prayer brings. In our family we have a practice of praying out loud, together, and often. As sometimes happens, we will notice we have developed communication gaps. When this happens we begin by examining our prayer life. When you talk to the Lord together and often it is much easier to talk to each other...and to listen.

We bring our cares and worries to God our Father. We give them over to Him. He is the one who created us along with the rest of creation. He has a plan for us and will see it to completion. The prophet Jeremiah wrote, (29:11-12) "<sup>11</sup>For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. <sup>12</sup>Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you." From the Word of scripture, we can rest assured that God will take care of us. So when we worry about how to raise our children and strengthen our family, we know that the greatest "family value" is **trust in the Lord**.

~Pastor King



## School Days

"School Days, School Days, Good Old Golden School Days..." Remember the song? Seems as though society is excited for the coming of school. No more relaxing, sleeping late, or staying up late. We take the list of all the school supplies needed for the new school year. The School supply list given for each grade is a big help.

My mom had or used the same list for five years to have her two boys ready for school. It consisted of 3 pairs of Levis and new shoes. Oh, the shoes were a problem because we wore no shoes in the summer and our feet expanded. Our school supplies were Big Red Chief writing tablets, three round thick pencils, and two erasers.

Our children today must have an Assignment Booklet in which to write down their homework assignment for the following morning. Other supplies are for every subject: pencils and pens. But the new helper is the home computer, where you can find all kinds of information. I suppose the computer takes the place of the Library. That was my excuse for not having my homework done, "The Library was closed."

Oh, don't forget the backpack. Mothers have to check to see if the teacher sent a note home to request permission for a field trip. In my elementary grade years, most Lutheran churches had their own schools. To keep expenses down, we reused our textbooks. Boy,

how I loved running home for lunch! Nowadays, you pay for your lunch or bring your lunch from home. Whenever Grandparents Day is held, and we visit our granddaughter's public school, I can see why some children bring their own lunch. Don't forget the lunch box!

School uniforms are also a big help, some kids don't like them, but mothers do. I attended a public school in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade; it was called a Junior High School for 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders. I still remember P.E. – we wore gym shorts, t-shirts, and tennis shoes. It brings to mind the blue legs of the kids whose mothers did not prewash their blue jeans.

In public school, my eyes were opened. I heard cursing and saw fighting, cheating, and kids copying other people's work. But the Lord was with me. I chose friends who respected and watched over me. Today we have special schools, magnet schools, for the talented or gifted child.

Parents, we can't shelter our children all the time, but we can pray for them and ask that God send their guardian angels to watch over them. We love our children and so does God.

~Pastor Perez

### Newsletter Staff

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Graphic Design.....Matthew Szalkowski



## Mission Sunday

On Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, Rev. Keith Aschenbeck will be our Mission Sunday guest preacher, and he will also lead our Adult Bible class that morning. Keith and his family will share their experiences serving the Denali Lutheran Church LCMS as a missionary family in the Upper Tanana River Valley of Alaska.

Keith was born in Houston and attended Immanuel. He graduated from Immanuel and Lutheran High North. He started his studies at Texas A&M to be a Computer Engineer, but God had other plans. Feeling a pull to enter Pastoral Ministry, Keith changed his Major to Psychology, graduating from Texas A&M in 1995. He served two summers (1993 & 1995) as a camp counselor at Camp Lone Star in LaGrange, TX.

Keith graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1999 with a Master of Divinity. After Ordination he was installed as Assistant Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Walburg, TX where he remained for two years.

Keith married Stacey Chappell of Salem, IL on January 22nd, 2000. Stacey graduated from Greenville College in Greenville, IL in 2002 with a BA in English. She has served many roles

over the years from Adjunct College Professor to running a part-time catering business. As a certified English teacher she has taught high school and middle school classes. However, her most notable experiences come from being a stay-at-home mother caring for their children: Trey (13), Kaleb (10), Micah (9), and Anna (7).

Pastor Aschenbeck served as sole Pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Shobonier, IL from June 2001-August 2009, where he participated with the St. Peter Volunteer Fire Dept. as a Fire Fighter and First-Responder. Keith also served as a Chaplain (CPT) with the Army Reserve and National Guard (IL) for twelve years. The family moved to Giddings, TX in August 2009 where Pastor Keith served as Senior Pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church for five years.

The Aschenbecks' current mission involves several Athabascan Indian Villages including Mentasta, Tetlin, Tanacross, Northway and also the non-native population of Tok. These small communities are physically secluded from much of the world, isolated from regular Christian witness and pastoral care. Native communities in Alaska are frequently steeped in the depths of alcohol and drug addiction as well as issues of domestic abuse and poverty. Keith and Stacey seek to bring a consistent presence to the light of Christ's love, forgiveness and hope to people surrounded by darkness.

To welcome the Aschenbecks, our September Social Sunday lunch will be held after Bible class/Sunday School that morning. The menu will be King Ranch Chicken Casserole, Salad, Vegetable, Bread and Dessert. We hope that everyone will share in this special day!

*~Kathy Angst*



## LWML Sunday

LWML Sunday this year is October 4<sup>th</sup>, so it is time to save your change – pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters – to donate to World Missions.

Please pick up your mite box now to help with this event. If you fill a box before October 4<sup>th</sup>, you can empty it in the acrylic box in the narthex at any time. If you wish, you can do this all year.

LWML Texas District 2014-2016 mite goal is \$348,610.00. Mites received so far through April this year is \$203,031.03. Mission grants paid through April 2015 total \$79,500.00.

The Texas District Mission Grants total for 2014-2016 funded by mites is \$197,700.00.

### Mites Only Goal 2014-2016

1. Scholarships for Seminarians - \$50,000.00
2. Covenant Kids – Spiritual Care for Abused Children - \$20,000.00
3. Sharing the Savior with Muslims: the Arabic Small Catechism - \$15,000.00
4. Ministry of Muslim Women - \$15,000.00
5. Biblically-based Character and Leadership Development for At-Risk Students - \$20,000.00
6. Director of Christian Education Scholarships - \$24,000.00

7. LWML Texas District Short-Term Mission Team - \$9,000.00
8. LINC-Austin – reaching out to the children, families, & homeless in the Austin area - \$20,000.00
9. Vision for Kenya - Opening Eyes to See Jesus - \$17,000.00
10. Hispanic Ministry through ESL Classes, Bible Study & Worship - \$7,700.00  
(Partially funded)

Thank you for contributing to this very worthy Mission Outreach annually.

Immanuel's LWML Chapter, Naomi Willing Workers, will host the LWML White Oak Zone Rally on that Sunday afternoon, October 4<sup>th</sup>. Registration starts at 1:30pm and the Rally will begin at 2:00pm. A light lunch will be served following the Rally.

*~Evelyn Marsh  
Naomi Willing Workers*



On Wednesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 10:00 am, the Women's Bible Class, led by Sylvia Atsinger, will begin a new topic, "Putting on God's Whole Armor." In the face of so many predators of our Christian faith, how shall we live and endure until Jesus returns or calls us to heaven sooner? We meet on the first and third Wednesdays each month, and this series is expected last to December. Please call Sylvia at (713) 686-8018 for more information or to say you'll attend.

*~Sylvia Atsinger*



## Focus on Stewardship

What is most striking about the rich man and Lazarus is not their differences but their similarities (Luke 16:19–31). Both men die because both men are sinners, and the wages of sin is death. Both men are beggars, for all men are beggars. But, here is where the most striking difference between them takes shape. Lazarus knows it and lives it. The rich man, however, does not.

Lazarus was a beggar in thought, word, and deed. But, he was God's beggar. He relied upon God for all that he had and all that he was. He looked to God for all things, in good times and in bad. He went to God in all trouble, sought Him for all help, and trusted in His Word and promises to provide for all that he needed for this life and the next. This is, after all, what his name means: God is my help.

The rich man, too, was a beggar. But he didn't realize it. His status, his wealth, his clothing and his food all came from God's gracious hand. But the rich man didn't recognize it. He thought he had earned it, and that he deserved it. And thus, his trust is not in God, who by His Word and promise gives it, but rather in himself, in what he has done, and in what he has.

And so it is that when death comes to Lazarus and the rich man—as it does for all of us because we have all sinned, and death is no respecter of persons—Lazarus is carried by the

holy angels to Abraham's side; while the rich man is in torment in hell. The rich man forgot God. He despised being a beggar, and thus, despised Lazarus. He despised God and His Word, and refused to have mercy on those whom God placed at his doorstep.

Now, the tables were turned. What the rich man didn't realize or recognize on earth, he now lived out in torment in hell. He knew what it was to beg. But he still didn't see himself as a beggar of God. He still didn't look to His Father in heaven for all good and help in every time of need. He instead appealed to His status as a descendant of Abraham, calling out Father Abraham and not "Abba, Father" (Gal 4:6; Rom 8:15).

We are all beggars. We brought nothing into this world and we will take nothing out of it (1 Tim 6:7). Everything we have and everything we are comes from God's fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us, for He gives everything to us by grace. Thus, we are to love one another and be generous to one another in thought, word, and deed. For you cannot love God and hate your brother. And hating your brother means not to forgive as you've been forgiven, to give as you've been given to, to love as you've been loved.

We are all beggars. This is true. But we, like Lazarus, are God's beggars. He not only gives us what we need for this body and life—food and clothes, house and home, husband, wife, and children—but He also blesses us with His Word and Spirit, so that we will enter into paradise in the life to come. He claims us as His own by water and the Word in Holy

*(continued on page 6)*



The adult choir and handbell choir will be starting out the fall 2015 season with their first rehearsals on Thursday, September 10. Handbells will begin at 6:30pm and adult choir at 7:30pm, both in the music room off of the sanctuary balcony.

We always welcome new members in both groups and you do NOT need to be able to read music to join. All you need is a heart for the Lord and the desire to sing or ring His praises! The groups are open to members of high school age and above.

If you have any questions please contact Diane Robinson at 713-208-3010 (cell). I look forward to seeing returning members as well as new members. Let's make music for the Lord!

~Diane Robinson



### September Events

- 1<sup>st</sup>      Volleyball games – JV 5:00pm,  
                 Varsity 6:00pm
- 4<sup>th</sup>      Football – 7:00pm
- 8<sup>th</sup>      Volleyball – JV 5:00pm, Varsity 6:00pm
- 11<sup>th</sup>     Football – 7:00pm
- 12<sup>th</sup>     Middle school JV Volleyball tournament

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## Stewardship . . .

(continued from page 5)

Baptism. In this washing, rich in grace, He gives to us what His Son, Jesus Christ, won for us on His cross: forgiveness of sins. And where there is the forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation. He puts His own name on us, thereby giving to us the right of children, the right to call Him Father and the right to His inheritance as His beloved sons. He gives us a seat at His table, in His house, in His kingdom, which has no end.

Yes, indeed, we are beggars. This is true. But we are beggars of the God who loves us, the God who created us from His love, the God who redeemed us by His love in the sending of His Son to die so that we would live and have life to the full. This is His promise. It's what Moses and the prophets longed to see and of what they spoke. They see it now, not in a mirror dimly, but face to face, just as you shall on the last day.

And as God's beggars, we have mercy on those who would be beggars of us, who rely upon our giving, even as we rely upon the gracious giving of God. We give to our family, our society, our church. He gives; we receive. Thanks be to God. We give; they receive. Thanks be to God. We count it all a joy to give as He has given to us.

(Stewardship newsletter insert for September 2015,  
provided on the LCMS website  
<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=3571>)

~submitted by Kathy Angst



**Parents' Time Off  
Returns in October**

# Lutheran High . . .

(continued from page 6)

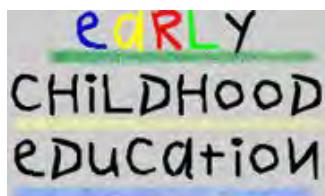
## September Events (continued)

- 18<sup>th</sup> Football – 7:00pm
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Volleyball games – JV 5:00pm,  
Varsity 6:00pm
- 24<sup>th</sup> Volleyball – JV 5:00pm, Varsity 6:00pm

## Coming up in October

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Football – 7:00pm
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Fall Comedy Drama – 7:00pm
- 4<sup>th</sup> Fall Comedy Drama – 3:00pm
- 6<sup>th</sup> Volleyball – JV 5:00pm, Varsity 6:00pm
- 9<sup>th</sup> Homecoming Football game – 7:00pm
- 10<sup>th</sup> Golf Tournament at Tour 18  
Social Event for Alumni, Parents  
& Friends 6:00pm

~Lynn Eickemeyer



Mr. Paul Carr has graciously donated one of his hand-crafted, wooden Playground Cars to Immanuel.



Mr. Carr has a history here at Immanuel, as his daughter attended Immanuel School, and where Mr. and Mrs. Carr served in the concession stand during sporting events. His daughter was also married at Immanuel.



Mr. Carr started his love for carpentry work at the age of 14. He is a member of the Woodworkers Club of Houston, an organization that builds wooden toys to give away to children. He has built 5 playground cars and is currently working on his 6th.



We are so thankful for this donation! Watching the children's excited faces as they saw the new car in its place on our playground was so special. But what was even more special was looking at Mr. Carr's face, as he watched the children's excitement. This is truly one of God's blessings to Immanuel. Thank you, Mr. Carr.

~Connie Meave



ImmanuelHouston@gmail.com

E.15th St. & Arlington  
1st Saturday in October  
2pm-6pm

## German Meal

Dine-In or Carry-Out  
4pm-6pm

Advanced Tickets Available:  
\$15.00 Adult  
\$7.00 Child (12 and under)

Entertainment For  
All Ages  
Invite Your Friends!

Bouncy Houses  
Carnival Games  
Music  
Face Painting  
Balloon Animals  
Sausage on a Stick  
Desserts  
Bavarian Pretzels  
Popcorn  
Snow Cones

# September 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 All Boards @ 7:00 pm	2 Women's Bible Study @ 10:00 am	3 Bingo @ 1:00–3:00 pm	4	5 Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
6 Usher Team #3 Worship w/Communion @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	7 Labor Day  No Bible Study	8 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am Church Council @ 6:00 pm Naomi Meeting @ 7:00 pm	9	10  Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	11	12  Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
13 Usher Team #4 Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	14	15	16 Women's Bible Study @ 10:00 am	17 Hamburger Fry 11:00 – 1:00 pm  Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	18	19 Friends of Down Syndrome “Fiesta Luncheon” Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
20 Usher Team #5 Worship w/Communion @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	21  Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm	22 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am  Voters 7:00 pm	23	24  Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	25	26  Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
27 Usher Team #1 <i>Mission Sunday</i> Keith Aschenbeck, Guest Preacher Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am <i>Social Sunday</i> Lunch @11:30 am	28	29	30			3 Oktoberfest! 2:00-6:00 pm  German Dinner (Eat In or Take Out) 4:00-6:00 pm



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

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ORGANIZATION  
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TEXAS

**Return Service Requested**

To the Family of:

*Loving God ~ Loving Neighbors ~ Serving Others*



**Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Rev. Keith Aschenbeck  
Missionary,  
Upper Tanana River  
Valley, Alaska**

**Guest Preacher, 9:00am  
Bible Class, 10:15am  
Luncheon, 11:30am**

