

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 4, No. 12

November 2015

Home Improvement Pt. 2: Getting Fed

(Non-Members Please Read!)

Last month I wrote to you on the importance of getting true rest in Christ on a regular basis. This month I'd like to continue on that theme but from a different angle. God has much to offer us; rest is one of those things. Food, spiritual food, is also a necessary thing our heavenly Father offers us. I know we've all heard it before: "You should go to church every Sunday!" Yes, it is true, but there is much more to it than that.



Instead of just telling you that you should come to church regularly, I'd like to emphasize the wonderful gifts our Heavenly Father has intended us to receive in worship. It is truly a privilege and for your benefit to get spiritually nourished.

I have a friend who spent some years as a missionary in an area hostile to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In fact, his travel documents could not say that he was a missionary; instead it stated he was a health aid worker. If it had been revealed to the authorities what his true purpose was, he would have been imprisoned or worse. While working in this area, he regularly held secret worship services for new converts to Christ. The worship services had to remain secret because in the area where he was working there was no freedom of religion and the consequences were dire for converting to Christianity. As I talked with him, I voiced that it must have been difficult to get people to come to worship under these circumstances. I remember my astonishment that this was not the case. His main problem was finding places to meet where they could still be kept "secret." He said that much of the time, there was standing room only at the services. People in this area were starving for the Gospel and they had found where to be fed. Worship: where the Word and Sacraments were offered.

It saddens me to see quite the opposite happening in our society. We have the wonderful freedoms to come to worship and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but so many choose to

(continued on page 2)



Son of Immanuel Serving in Alaska

Immanuel's Mission Sunday was held on September 27th, and our guest preacher was Keith Aschenbeck, a son of Immanuel congregation. Keith attended our parochial school, Lutheran High North, Texas A&M, and Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. He is married to Stacey, and they have four children.



Alaska Ministry display – photo by Joel Norris

Missionary Aschenbeck, serving in Alaska, shared the importance of bringing the Gospel to people everywhere. The highlight of his visit was during the Adult Bible class hour. Many of his old friends were present, as well as former and current members who saw Keith as the "little boy" who became a missionary.

Keith, Stacey, and the children added to his report of life in Alaska. The whole family has nothing but praise for their mission. Keith said that a woman approached him about being

(continued on page 3)

Getting Fed . . .

(continued from page 1)

treat worship as if it is not really essential to the life of a Christian. I've heard it said that "You can worship God by taking a walk in nature." Even nowadays, kids' sports activities are being held on Sunday morning. Much of this stems from us trying to fulfill our own selfish desires and convince ourselves that we don't really need that "God" stuff. Many churches have twisted the meaning of worship and think it is God who needs our praise and adoration and that we show up to give Him something. Or even worse, we show up to worship to be entertained by some showy music and a powerful sermon that makes us feel good. But the fact is, we need the gifts that worship gives us: confession and absolution, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and God's Word. As members of the Body of Christ we also need the love, forgiveness, and encouragement of our church family. You can't get all of that from a walk in nature or a Sunday morning soccer game.

As the weather is changing and thoughts begin to aim towards Thanksgiving and Christmas, please do not forget to get fed. If you haven't been, try coming to worship on a regular basis. Encourage your brothers and sisters in Christ to do the same. As a family in Christ, we should care about all of our members being fed as well. Just as good diet and exercise on a regular basis leads to being physically fit, getting fed spiritually and being upheld by other Christians in that practice leads to better spiritual health. God bless you.

~Pastor King



Serving in Alaska . . .

(continued from page 2)



~photo by Joel Norris

baptized, but she asked that he baptize her in the river, as her grandfather was baptized. Keith found himself in 40° water, baptizing the woman. There were other stories about the family becoming accustomed to life in Alaska.

The Aschenbeck's are totally dependent upon financial contributions from individuals and individual congregations, and travel to congregations to share their ministry, to offer the opportunity to financially support their mission work, and to ask for prayers.



*Back: Micah, Stacey and Keith; Middle: Kaleb and Trey;
Front: Anna*

You can support the Aschenbecks' ministry with donations payable to:

Alaska Mission for Christ
8100 Arctic Blvd.
Achorage, AK 99518

Or online at
<http://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org>.

~Pastor Perez

Mission Sunday Celebration

Immanuel's Mission Sunday began by receiving a phone call from Pastor Keith Aschenbeck. He was letting us know that he was coming to Houston and wanted to set up a date to preach and tell the story of his mission in Alaska.

I called Pastor King and he agreed it would be great to have a Mission Sunday and we agreed on a date. I replied back to Pastor Aschenbeck and he provided information to be provided to members in the weeks prior to his preaching.



~photo by Joel Norris

(continued on page 4)

Mission Sunday . . .

(continued from page 3)

Pastor Aschenbeck preached a wonderful sermon about the people he is serving, but he also brought a message to us. He and his family have such a passion for bringing the Gospel message to these people, who are in the United States but far away from modernization and the Word of God.

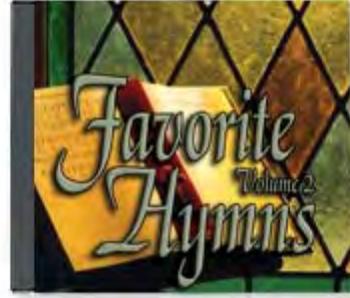
We always think of missionaries in foreign countries where the people are poor. These same conditions exist in Alaska where the Aschenbecks are now living and serving. If you have had an opportunity to visit Alaska, you saw the tourist attractions and the beautiful natural sites of Alaska. Pastor Aschenbeck lives in a village where his children walk around only if he or his wife is with them.

When Pastor, Stacey and their four children accepted God's call to go to Alaska, they sold their home and had garage sales to get rid of most of their belongings. Then they packed up and drove to Alaska. They have been living in a 900 sq. ft. home, but are hoping to move into a larger home before the snow and cold gets too bad.

It is so great when you personally know someone who is a missionary and can hear their story firsthand!

Pastor Aschenbeck and his family need our prayers and support. I hope everyone enjoyed visiting with the family and hearing about the people he is serving. We will keep you informed of how the family is doing.

~ Your friend in Christ, Kathy Angst



These Are a Few of My Favorite "Sings"

Why do we sing the hymns we sing? That is a good question with many answers. Primarily, we sing hymns that align with the specific focus of that Sunday's message. This should be true both for the text and the tune. Another reason we sing a particular hymn is because it emphasizes a particular point in the service, such as Holy Communion. Another valid reason we sing certain hymns is that they are near and dear to our hearts and help us to sing our praises to God with personal enthusiasm and gusto.

Every person, every congregation has "favorite" hymns. I have mine. You have yours. I would like to know what your favorites are. When I pick hymns you undoubtedly will hear a few of my favorites. I would like to also hear a few of yours. Please take the time to write down a few of your favorite hymns that you would like to sing, or maybe just sing more often. Give these to me and I would be so very happy to work your favorite hymns into our weekly worship. Thank you for your help.



~Pastor King

Oktoberfest 2015

After many months of careful and sometimes frantic planning, Oktoberfest took place on Saturday, October 3rd. The decorations were in place, tents were delivered and set up, and the kegs of St. Arnold's root beer were iced down and ready to go!

This year's Oktoberfest featured a German meal complete with sauerbraten, German potato salad, brats, noodles, and of course, sauerkraut. Over 175 meals were served in Miertschin Hall or taken as carry-out meals. This year's festivities also included a game ally between Miertschin Hall and the gym where kids could try to toss balls into milk cans or toss bean bags into a target. The sand art table, where kids could make a wearable sand art keepsake, was especially popular. This year's inflatables included a bouncy-house complete with basketball hoops and a train inflatable geared towards the youngest guests. Kids could also try their arms out at a baseball batting or a football throwing inflatable. Children won game prizes to take home at each of the games.

This year, we had not one, but two outdoor food booths. The first one featured fair foods such as sausage-on-a-stick and Frito pies. The second food booth included warm pretzels and ice cold root beer in a souvenir cup. The root beer was especially popular, with many guests coming back for refills!

Families from around the neighborhood turned out with their kids and strollers for a relaxing time on the green space, enjoying the beautiful weather the Lord provided. Face painting and balloon animal artists were also on hand.

Oktoberfest also included a small artesian market featuring some handmade crafts. The 2015 Oktoberfest Committee, chaired by Pastor King, wishes to thank EVERYONE who turned out to help make this year's festivities a success.

~Julie King

(See Oktoberfest 2015 in photos on pages 6-7)



November Events

Home Games

Boys Basketball – 10th, 12th
Girls Basketball – 3rd, 5th, 6th, 17th
Boys Soccer – 3rd, 5th, 9th, 12th
Girls Soccer – 5th

4th – Lion Preview Night for Prospective Parents and Students - 5:30 pm

7th – LHN Work day – 8:00-11:00 am

Coming up in December

Sunday, Dec. 13 – Christmas concert
– 3:00 pm

For details on any events, see the LHN website, <http://www.lutheranhighnorth.org/>

~Lynn Eickemeyer

Don't Forget!
Daylight Savings Time ENDS
Set Your Clocks Back 1 Hour
Saturday Night, October 31st

Oktoberfest 2015

~photos by Joel Robinson and Joel Norris





Oktoberfest Volunteers – THANK YOU!

This event would NOT have happened without you!

I would like to thank all of the volunteers who made Immanuel's 2015 Oktoberfest a success. Every person who donated funds or contributed their time and talents as part of the setup crews or during the event on Saturday was essential and genuinely appreciated. I pray that the energetic and selfless attitudes exhibited by members of Immanuel, ECE parents and teachers, Unveil and Young Life will build a foundation for future partnerships where we work together to do God's work in His earthly kingdom. I know some volunteers did not check in before jumping in to help, so my apologies if you or anyone you know assisted in any way but are not in the list below.

~Ken Harvey, Volunteer Coordinator

Agnes Dailey	Dora Schulle	Margaret Beacom
Alex Evans	Dorothy Klander	Maria Ortiz
Alicia Tancreti	Elisa Perez	Martha McFarland
Anders Storaune	Elvira Trainl	Matthew Ortiz
Barbara Szalkowski	Estela Machuca	Maxine Arndt
Beatrice Gill	Evelyn - Unveil	Melanie Yochum
Becky Harvey	Evelyn Marsh	Meredith Whitefield
Rev. Ben Gonzales	Jackie Anderson	Mike Rivera
Bill Eickemeyer	Jasmine Adams	Miles Swanstrom
Bob Loera	Jay - Unveil	Nora Lee Froehlich
Bob McFarland	Jeff Allen	Pastor Perez
Bonnie Thomas	Rev. Jeffrey King	Phil Nelson
Carla Faske	Jessie Nelson	Rachel Andrade
Carol Campbell	Joan Luker	Randi Budwit
Carol Whitefield	Jocelyn - Unveil	Ryan Wilinkson
Carolyn Breithaupt	Joel Norris	Sandy Ladner
Cathy Swanstrom	Joel Robinson	Stephanie - Unveil
Cheryl Kramer	Julie King	Stephanie Kasper
Connie Meave	Karen Evans	Tina Petway
Danny Ortiz	Kelli Evans	Toyia Evans
David Altobelli	Laurel Campbell	Tracey Petway
Deloris Quin	Lauren Neu	Tyler Tate
Denise Goehring	Leticia Loera	Virginia Kleb
Denise Stephens	Liz Hewett	Vivian Almendarez
Diane Hartwick	Lynn Eickemyer	Wayland Stephens
Diane Robinson	Maia Rice	Winnie McNamara



Focus on Stewardship

"In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard" (*Genesis 4:2*). Why did the Lord not have regard for Cain and his offering, but did regard Abel and his offering? Was it because Abel's offering was better intrinsically than Cain's? No. The Book of Hebrews tells us: "By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts" (*Hebrews 11:4*). The thing that distinguished Abel's offering from that of Cain's is faith. By faith, Abel offered a more acceptable offering.

Faith and giving are inseparable. They are two sides of the same coin. It is faith in the promises of God that leads us to give. By faith we trust that God will do what He says. By faith, we receive everything God gives as a gift from His divine mercy and goodness. For what do we have that we have not received (*1 Corinthians 4:7*)? Nothing. Everything we have comes from the Lord. By faith we give to others because God has first given to us, and by faith we trust that He will continue to provide for us all that we need for this body and life. And when by faith we give, God accepts our offerings and commends us as

righteous. For by faith we are accounted righteous before God on account of Christ. Giving is a spiritual issue.

But there is a flip side to this two-sided coin: Cain didn't give an offering to God by faith. His offering did not come from faith but from someplace else. And since it didn't originate with faith in God and His promises, it was not regarded by God. And he was not accounted righteous. This is a warning to us. Pay attention to your faith and your offerings, and from where they come.

From where do your offerings come? Like all good works, offerings acceptable in God's sight flow from faith in Christ. They are given in response to the gifts God has given to us, especially the gift of forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ. And since they are given by faith, they will be the target of Satan's attacks to ruin the church, do damage to the gospel of Christ, and to weaken your faith in Him. For sin is crouching at our doors, and the temptation to sin in giving is great because of the fallen world and our sinful flesh. But Jesus is greater than our hearts. Jesus has overcome the world. And by faith, so have we. By faith, we rule over them.

*(Stewardship newsletter insert for November 2015, provided on the LCMS website
<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=3767>)*

~submitted by Kathy Angst



For All the Saints

LSB 677

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sins which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." (*The Lutheran Study Bible, ESV, CPH, 2009*).

The hymn text was written by the priest, William Waltham How (1823-1897), to commemorate All Saints Day (traditionally the first Sunday in November) in the Anglican liturgy. It was originally titled "Saints Day Hymn - Cloud of Witnesses - Hebrews 12:1." It was published in *Hymns for the Saints' Days*, 1864. How was affectionately known as the "people's bishop" in London because of his care and concern for the common people. Among the sixty hymns he wrote are some that we sing regularly – "We Give Thee But Thine Own" (LSB 781) and "O Word of God Incarnate" (LSB 523).

The tune *Sine Nomine* was written by Ralph Vaughan Williams, (1872-1958), the outstanding figure in English church music in the first half of the twentieth century. He was the son of the vicar of Christ Church in Down Ampney. He was also a close friend of Gustav Holst, and a student of Maurice Ravel, among others. He spent a number of years collecting English folksongs and these folksongs influenced all his compositions. They also were a source of tunes for collections he edited: *The English Hymnal, Song of Praise, and Oxford Book of Carols*. He served in Macedonia and France in the First World War. He composed

both sacred and secular music - songs, choral works, operas, and orchestral works.

Sine nomine (literally means "without a name") was composed for the words written by William Walsham How. It was included in *The English Hymnal*, 1906, and marked "Anon." It is interesting to note that Eric Routley, noted English authority on hymnody, reports that at first this tune was rejected by many as being "jazz music." Today, however, it is described as one of the finest hymn tunes written during the twentieth century.

"From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast, Through gates of pearl streams in the countless host, Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: Alleluia! alleluia!" (LSB 677, stanza 8).

[References used to write this article were *Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*, Marilyn K. Stulken, Fortress Press, 1981; and *101 More Hymn Stories*, Kenneth Osbeck, Kregal Publishing, Grand Rapids, 1985.]

~Diane Robinson

Newsletter Staff

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.....	Winnie McNamara
.....	Joel Norris
.....	Pastor Perez
.....	Diane Robinson
.....	Joel Robinson
Graphic Design.....	Matthew Szalkowski

Bean Bash Benefits Heights Interfaith Ministries Food Pantry

On Friday, October 9, some Immanuel members attended the Bean Bash, a dinner of rice and beans, to benefit the Heights Interfaith Ministries Food Pantry. The Salvation Army's Harbor Lights Choir provided the opening entertainment.



Lawrence King joins in the dance. – photo by Julie King

During the evening's meal, Immanuel members had the chance to learn about the food pantry's Senior Meal Delivery Program, which provides meals to homebound seniors who cannot make it to the pantry on their own. The evening also highlighted some of the volunteers for the pantry including various Girl Scout Troops and a wonderful octogenarian, Joe Gonzales, who spoke of what a blessing it was to him to be able to serve others. It was truly an inspirational evening.

The event was graciously hosted by Zion Lutheran Church, an ELCA congregation, in their fellowship hall. We recognize that the LCMS is not in altar or pulpit fellowship with the ELCA, but the evening did not include any worship service or other similar activity; only the rice and beans dinner to benefit the food pantry.

~Julie King & Barbara Szalkowski

Card-Making Workshop

Attention all crafters (and non-crafters too!) Julie King will be hosting a Card Making Workshop on Saturday, November 14th from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. We will create handmade Christmas cards for the shut-in members of Immanuel. There will also be some time for making cards for yourself, so that you can get a jump on those Christmas cards!

The cost for the workshop is \$15 and will cover all supplies plus a light lunch. Join us in Miertschin Hall to help create something nice for our shut-ins and have a little crafty time for you as well! Please contact Julie King by phone (713-816-9908) or email (drjbking@gmail.com) to RSVP. Open to all members of Immanuel, ECE parents, and friends too!

~Julie King



This issue marks the end of my fourth year serving as editor of *Connections*, and also marks the end of another church year. A new church year begins with Advent on Sunday, November 29th. I want to take this opportunity to again thank each and every one who contributes to the content, proofreads the draft issues, and provides support and encouragement to me. I absolutely could not do what I do without each and every one of you – so, this Thanksgiving and always, I am so very grateful to God for all of you!

~Barbara Szalkowski



Immanuel Lutheran Church and Early Childhood Education

4th Annual Houston Area Women's Center (HAWC) Holiday Gift Express Christmas Project October 11 - December 6, 2015

HAWC is in need of new unwrapped toys and gift cards to stock their 2015 Holiday Gift Express Store. Families participating in HAWC programs including those children living in the shelter will be able to shop for their caregiver/parent and the caregiver will be able to shop for their children. ***There is no charge to children and parents "shopping" in the Holiday Store.***

Suggested Items:

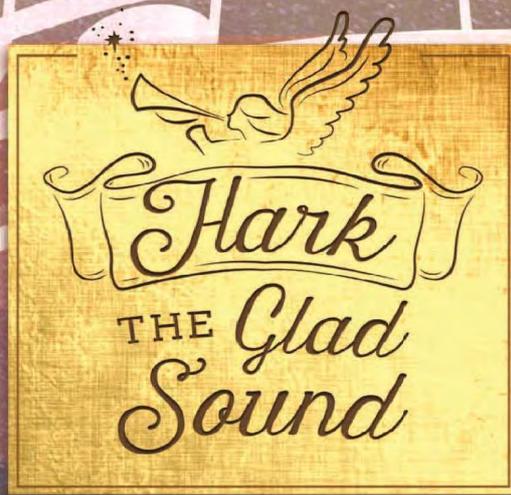
- ◆ New unwrapped toys for all ages.
- ◆ New items of clothing in all sizes, newborn to adult; especially pajamas and outerwear.
- ◆ Gift cards (Academy, Best Buy, Claire's, Target, WalMart). \$25 card value is ideal.
- ◆ Toiletries and small items for ladies' gift baskets (assembled and decorated by church members and ECE Staff). Suggested items include toiletry samples, perfume samples, notepads, pens, earrings, inspirational books, mugs, individually wrapped coffee/hot chocolate/tea - anything you can think of that would fit in a small basket. Gift baskets will be decorated and assembled by church members, ECE staff, and parent volunteers.

Make Your Donation by:

- ◆ Credit/Debit Card
- ◆ Check (payable to Immanuel Lutheran Church)
- ◆ Cash

Donations may be dropped off in the Church/School Office or with your child's teacher through December 6. If you have any questions, please contact PTL Event Co-Chairs Ashley Chain, ashleychain@gmail.com or Ashley Perez, arperez27@gmail.com, or Winnie McNamara/School office at (713) 861-8787.

Please remember these families in your prayers!



Hark
THE Glad
Sound

THE SONG OF

Zechariah



THE SONG OF

Mary



THE SONG OF THE

Angels



THE SONG OF THE

Church

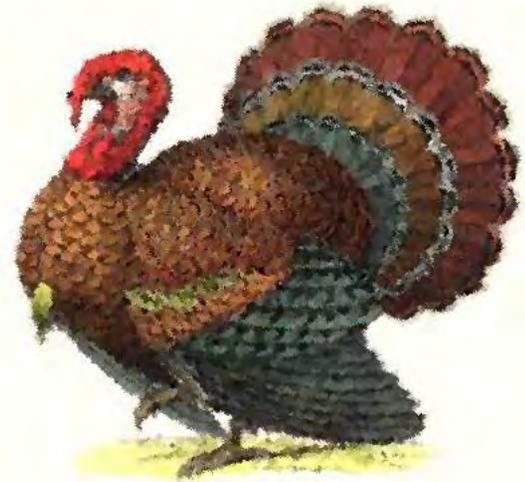


In this season filled with music, this year's weekly Advent series, "Hark the Glad Sound", focuses on the biblical songs of God's people as they awaited the Savior. Each week, we will learn about a song from Scripture that highlights an Advent activity that will prepare us for Christ's coming among us as a baby in Bethlehem. We will be exploring these Glad Sounds of Christmas during our Wednesday Evening Advent Services, in Sunday morning Worship, in our Daily Devotions, and during Adult Bible Class. This series will begin the 1st Sunday in Advent, November 29th, and continue all the way through Christmas Day. Plan on joining us in joyous song for our Savior.

You're Invited!

Turkey Dinner

Turkey, Dressing, Green Beans, Sweet Potatoes,
Cranberry Sauce, Roll, Pie and Tea



Sunday, November 15th, 2015
Serving Time 11:30 am to 1:30 pm
at Immanuel Miertschin Hall

\$ 10.00 Adult

\$ 6.00 Children (Ages 4-13)

Children (Ages 3 and under) FREE

To-Go Orders Available

For Tickets or Reservations,
contact Immanuel Church Office
call 713-864-2651 or email immanuelhouston@gmail.com

306 E. 15th St. Houston, TX 77008



Immanuel Lutheran Church - November 2015



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 FALL BACK TIME Usher Team #1 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	2 Bible Study @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm	3 All Boards @ 7:00 pm	4 Women's Bible Study @ 10:00 am	5 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	6 	7 Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
8 Usher Team #2 Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	9 	10 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am Church Council @ 6:00 pm Naomi Meeting @ 7:00 pm	11 Veterans Day 	12 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	13 	14 Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
15 Usher Team #3 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @10:15am Turkey Dinner @11:30am	16 Bible Study @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm	17 	18 Women's Bible Study @ 10:00 am	19 Hamburger Fry 11:00–1:00pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	20 Decorate for ECE Families Thanksgiving Feast	21 ECE Families Thanksgiving Program & Feast @ 10:00 am Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
22 Usher Team #4 Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am Voters Meeting @11:30 am	23 	24 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am	25 Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service @ 7:00 pm	26 Offices Closed Thanksgiving Day 	27 Offices Closed	28 Decorating Sanctuary for Christmas @ 9:00 am Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
29 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Social Ministry Door Offering Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	30 	Dec. 1 	Dec. 2 Dinner 5:30 pm Advent Service w/Houston Lutheran Chorale 7:00 pm	Parents' Time Off Will Return During the Day on a Saturday in December Details next month	Dec. 5 Holiday Lighting Ceremony 6:00 pm	



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

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Return Service Requested

To the Family of:

Loving God ~ Loving Neighbors ~ Serving Others

Upcoming Events – Mark Your Calendars!

Turkey Dinner • Sunday Nov. 15th • 11:30am

**Thanksgiving Worship Service
Wednesday Nov. 25th • 7:00pm**

**Sanctuary Holiday Decorating
Saturday Nov. 28th • 9:00am**

**Advent Service with Houston Lutheran Chorale
Wednesday Dec. 2nd • 7:00pm (Dinner 5:30pm)**

Holiday Lighting • Saturday Dec. 5th • 6:00pm