

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 5, No. 5

<http://immanuelhouston.org/>

April 2016

Warm and Welcoming

"April showers bring May flowers," so the old song goes. This song is intended to point out how the "rain" or tough times today help to prepare for the better times of tomorrow. Well, we're in Texas and the bluebonnets are here and the mercury is already on the rise. But the saying is still true, sometimes we must endure hardship today to prepare for tomorrow.



What does that mean for us in the Church? In an eternal sense it means we must fight the battle with sin, death, and the devil on a daily basis, knowing that the battle is NOT an eternal one. The battle is only temporary. In eternity we will not have to fight those "evil three", as Luther called them. We will be free of that bondage and revel in the true freedom that Christ has given is in our baptism from the cross.

But, as a congregation, what labors should we engage in today for a better tomorrow? That is THE big question isn't it! Who should we be labor intensive for? Our instinctive answer is, "We should labor for God!" And then we pat ourselves on the back and go on our merry way. Yes, that answer is technically correct, BUT! But how do we actually labor for the Creator and Almighty Powerful King of all creation? Is it our prayers? Our praise? Our attendance in church? Our tithes? ... Actually no. All these things are good, but the best work we can do for God is sharing His love with those around us.

God puts people into each and every one of our lives daily. I strongly advise you to do all you can to share Christ's love with them according to the gifts He has given you. But you've heard this from me before... And often. This month I would like all of us in this congregation, this family we call Immanuel to see what we can do to better to welcome and serve those who come through our doors.

(continued on next page)





Post-Easter Trivia

- ___ 1. Saul was converted while on the way to _____ .
- ___ 2. King Herod put _____ to death, then he arrested Peter to do the same to him.
- ___ 3. _____, a Gentile who lived in Caesarea called on Peter to visit him.
- ___ 4. The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized by _____ .
- ___ 5. Two disciples saw Jesus on Easter morning while travelling to _____ .
- ___ 6. Dorcas, also called Tabitha, believed in Jesus and when she died, _____ raised her from the dead.
- ___ 7. _____ and _____ were met by a lame beggar at the temple, and they cured him.
- ___ 8. Saul, later known as Paul, became blind; _____, a follower of Jesus, was commanded by God and restored Paul's sight.
- ___ 9. The first believer in Jesus to die for his faith was _____ .
- ___ 10. Timothy, whose father was Greek and mother was a Jew, lived in the town of _____ .
- ___ 11. Paul's missionary partner was _____ and Barnabas' missionary partner was _____ .

- ___ 12. Paul, Priscilla, and Aquila became close friends because of their trade; they made _____ .
- ___ 13. The well-known persecutor of Christians in Jerusalem was _____ .
- ___ 14. Paul and Silas were imprisoned at _____ .
- ___ 15. The Jewish believers were upset because the Gentiles were not being _____ .

Answer choices

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| A. Peter and John | I. Damascus |
| B. Cornelius | J. Philippi |
| C. Ananias | K. Saul |
| D. Philip | L. Circumcised |
| E. Tents | M. Peter |
| F. Stephen | N. Emmaus |
| G. Lystra | O. James |
| H. Silas, Mark | |

(Answers on page 3)

Welcoming . . .

(continued from previous page)

Please do not be afraid. I do not intend to change our identity. Our identity is and always will be found in Christ. I'm not even trying to give us a "face-lift." I simply would like for us to have the opportunity to let newcomers more easily see you as the warm and welcoming people that you truly are.

*~In Christ,
Pastor King*



Focus on Stewardship

The greatest surprise about Easter is not that Jesus is alive, risen from the dead, out of the grave, that He conquered death and hell, and comes to meet you as He promised. The greatest surprise is that He did all that and is not angry. There is no fear for us in His return because He is not angry. He bears no grudge. He seeks no vengeance. He comes to give peace, with mercy and forgiveness and salvation.

Jesus lives and is not angry. Imagine that. He is not angry. He doesn't blame those who killed Him. He doesn't blame you. For no one takes His life from Him. He lays it down of His own accord. He gives Himself into death to win us back from sin, death, and hell. He does it willingly without coercion. He does it sacrificially, Him for us. He gave what was His to give. Thus His petition to the Father from the cross, "Forgive them" is granted to you in His resurrection. He comes alive out of death to forgive and to give His life to you.

There is nothing to be afraid of because Jesus is raised from the dead and is not angry. Thus we are free—free from worrying about how to make it up to Him, and free to give as He has given to us. He gave Himself as a gift, His life in exchange for our death, willingly and sacrificially. And so it is that we are now free to give in like manner: willingly, sacrificially, with what we have been given.

We give to the church because it is in the church where our eyes have seen and our ears have heard that Jesus lives and is not angry. It is here where we learn of God's mercy and forgiveness in Christ. It is here where we continually receive that message of life, where He visits us to give peace, with mercy and forgiveness and salvation.

So do not be afraid. Jesus lives, and He is not angry. The sacrifice has been made. The debt is canceled and forgotten. Righteousness is declared. Jesus lives. He lives, and He is not angry. You are restored. You are reconciled to the Father in the Son. Your future is assured: Jesus lives. It is not just death and Hell, the devil and his demons, that are undone. Your sins, your fear are undone. They are gone, forgotten, destroyed. Jesus lives. Hallelujah! Jesus lives. And because He lives, you are just. You are right with God, pleasing and delightful to Him. You are forgiven, clean, pure, holy, and filled with His good works and with His Name. He is not angry. He is glad to have you. He wants you. He loves you. He gave everything that is His to and for you, willingly and sacrificially. In faith and trust in Him, let us do likewise.

*(Stewardship newsletter insert for March 2016, provided on the LCMS website
<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=3998>)*

~submitted by Kathy Angst

Answers to Easter Trivia

1-I, 2-O, 3-B, 4-D, 5-N, 6-M, 7-A,
8-C, 9-F, 10-G, 11-H, 12-E, 13-K,
14-J, 15-L



Our Scholastic Book Fair was an overwhelming success! We exceeded our \$2,800 goal with total sales of **\$4,589**.

This was our best Book Fair in recent years by far! The most popular book sold was *Please, Mr. Panda* followed closely by *Jesus Calling for Little Ones* and *Peanut Butter and Cupcake*.



The Ryan-Dockrill family won the Big Book Basket door prize, the Myers Family the Sunday Shopping book bag, and Margaret Marcus was the winner of the Grandparents' Day door prize.



Thank you to everyone who bought books (Church members, ECE families, and the Heights community), the volunteer workers, and everyone who donated to All for Books. The All for Books program, along with individual new book donations, allowed us to donate almost 50 books to kids in the Houston Area Women's Center Shelter. Your generosity placed over 150 new books in our Immanuel classrooms and daycare program. Thank you again from the entire ECE staff!

~Winnie McNamara

Worship Together

Our worship life together as a congregation is a wonderful thing. Do you have opinions about our worship? Do you have ideas or suggestions on the hymns we sing? Would you be willing to share them? I would love your input.

If you are willing, I would like to form a group to help make contributions to the decisions about our worship. If you think you might enjoy helping in this way, please contact the church office. If you do not feel you have the gifts for this, please continue to keep us in your prayers as we make these worship decisions each week. Thank you and God bless you.

~Pastor King

Newsletter Staff

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Mus N c N o tes

“Awake, My Heart, with Gladness!”

The exuberant Easter hymn, “Awake, My Heart, with Gladness,” is number 467 in our *Lutheran Service Book*. The words are by the prolific German composer, Paul Gerhardt. Gerhardt lived at the time of the 30 Years War. Besides the war he had much trouble in his life. His father, the mayor of the small town south of Wittenberg, died when Paul was very young. His wife died after a long illness, leaving him with a 6 year old son, the only survivor of 5 children. As a pastor he also had difficulties, being dismissed from one congregation, and serving at another that was described as “a rough and unsympathizing people.” A portrait of him in Lubben bears the inscription, “Theologus in cribo Satanae versatus,” which translates as “a theologian strained in the sieve of Satan.”

“Awake, My Heart, with Gladness” was written in the first person, displaying Gerhardt’s very personal, unwavering faith in the face of all troubles. “The world against me rages, its fury I disdain; though bitter war it rages, its work is all in vain.” (stanza 5) “No gloom shall ever shake, no foe shall ever take the hope which God’s own Son in love for me has won.” (stanza 3) “Now I will cling forever to Christ, my Savior true; my Lord will leave me never, what’re He passes through. He rends death’s iron chain; He breaks through sin and pain;

He shatters hell’s grim thrall; I follow Him through all.” (stanza 6)

The tune for this hymn, “Auf, auf mein Herz,” was written by Johann Cruger. It is beautifully crafted and joyfully dances with its 3/4 time and dotted rhythms. The melodic line rises at the end of each of the first two phrases, and climaxes with key changes in the last two lines from D to E to A to D octave. Very unusual for a hymn is that the melody line continues to ascend for the final cadence. Tone painting of Jesus’ resurrection!

“For Christ again is free; in glorious victory He who is strong to save has triumphed o’er the grave.” (stanza 2)

Information for this article was taken from *Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*, Marilyn Kay Stulken, Fortress Press, 1981; and from <http://www.abidingpeace.org/home/140000215/140000215/docs/Lutheran%20Christmas%20Hymns%20Bible%20Study.pdf>. Hymn quotes were taken from *Lutheran Service Book*, CPH, 2007.

~Diane Robinson



ECE students, teachers, and families celebrate Grandparents' Day during Lutheran Schools Week

April Events

- Friday, 1st City-wide band festival concert
6:30 pm
- Tuesday, 5th Baseball 5:30 pm
- Monday, 11th Softball 5:00 pm
- Wednesday, 13th Softball 5:00 pm
- Friday, 15th Softball 6:00 pm
Baseball 5:30 pm
- Saturday, 16th Gala – Boots & Bling II
(auction/dinner) 5:30 pm
Call LHN or see Lynn Eickemeyer for tickets
- Friday, 22nd Softball (TBD)
Baseball 5:30 pm
- Tuesday, 26th Softball 4:30 pm
Baseball 5:30 pm



Thursday 28th
 Matinees 9:00am, 12:30 pm (full)
 Friday 29th 7:00 pm, Saturday 30th 7:00 pm

Coming in May

Saturday, May 7th
 Blue Lion Jazz Café 7:00 pm
 Tuesday, May 9th Spring Concert 7:00 pm
 Saturday, May 28th Graduation
 Trinity Downtown 2:00 pm

~Lynn Eickemeyer



Friday, April 15th
6:30–9:30 pm

Deadline to Sign Up
 Friday, April 8th, 4:00 pm

Open to the community!

Children – Ages 2 thru 9

Fun for the Children
 Games, Crafts, Dinner and a Movie!

Quiet Time for Mom and Dad!

Call the church office
 (713) 864-2651 to register

Social Sunday

Community Picnic
 Saturday, April 30
 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

(See Separate Insert)



**Sunday
 Morning
 Coffee &
 Donut
 Brigade**

Thank you to those who have stepped up and kept the coffee/donuts going. **Volunteers will be needed again starting in July!** A new sign-up sheet will be going up over the next couple months. Please consider helping out.

~Cathleen Chevallier

Alaska Ministry

The Aschenbeck's ministry in Alaska is made possible only by donors like you! Donate online at: <http://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org>

Mail donations to: Alaska Mission for Christ, 8100 Arctic Blvd., Anchorage AK 99518

Note "Keith Aschenbeck" in the memo section and 100% of your donation will go to directly support his ministry. Donations are tax deductible. Statements are sent out after the end of the year. Thank you for your support!

Contact Pastor Keith:

E-mail: revkeithamc@gmail.com

Address: 537 Mushers Way
Tok, AK 99780-0537

Dominican Republic Ministry

To support the Fritsche's 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.



People often say, "You can be anything you want to be! Be a butcher, a sales rep if you like. An ambassador if you really care. You can be anything you want to be—if you work hard enough." But can you? I wonder... if God didn't pack within you the meat sense of a butcher; the people skills of a salesperson; or the world vision of an ambassador; can you be one? An unhappy, dissatisfied one perhaps. But a fulfilled one? No.

Can an acorn become a rose, or a whale fly like a bird? Absolutely not. You cannot be anything you want to be. But you can be everything God wants you to be!

"I make all things new" He declares in Revelation 21:5. He didn't hand you your granddad's bag or your aunt's life. He personally and deliberately packed you. Live out of the bag God gave you!

From *Max on Life*

~Max Lucado

[From *Upwords with Max Lucado*
<http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/max-on-life/read/devotionals/upwords-with-max-lucado/all-things-new-upwords-week-of-mar-11-17-11727479.html>]

COMMUNITY PICNIC

When:

Saturday, April 30, 2016

11:00 am – 3:00 pm

Where:

1440 Cortlandt St.

Houston, TX 77008



Join Us for a Day of Fun!

Fun Activities for All Ages!

Inflatables – Bingo – Games
Contests – Races – Dominos
Loads of Fellowship

ALL YOU CAN EAT

Fried Catfish/Popcorn
Shrimp, Fries,
Hushpuppies, Cole Slaw,
Beans and Sauces

Meal Served: 12:00 – 1:00

Adults (12 & over) \$ 12.00
Children (Ages 5-11) \$ 6.00
Children under 5 FREE

Everyone Invited!



Immanuel Lutheran Church - April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
3 <i>Usher Team #3</i> Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class & Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	4 Bible Study @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm	5 All Boards @ 7:00 pm	6 Women's Bible Study @ 10:30 am Jr. Confirmation @ 4:30 pm	7 Bingo @ 1:00–3:00 pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	8	9 Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
10 <i>Usher Team #4</i> Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	11	12 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am Naomi Meeting @ 7:00 pm	13 Jr. Confirmation @ 4:30 pm	14 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	15 Newsletter Deadline Parents' Time Off 6:30-9:30 pm	16 Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 pm
17 <i>Usher Team #5</i> Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class & Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	18 Bible Study @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm	19	20 Women's Bible Study @ 10:30 am Jr. Confirmation @ 4:30 pm	21  Hamburger Fry @ 11:00-1:00 pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	22	23 Unveil Setup @ 11:00-1:00 pm
24 <i>Usher Team #1</i> Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	25	26 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am	27 Jr. Confirmation @ 4:30 pm	28 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	29	30 Community Picnic 11:00 am-3:00 pm Unveil Setup @ 11:00–1:00 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



Parents' Time Off

**Friday, April 15th
6:30–9:30 pm**

**Open to the
Community!**

Details Inside!