

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

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<http://immanuelhouston.org/>

May 2016

Life Journeys

"Life is a journey that must be traveled no matter how bad the roads and accommodations." – Oliver Goldsmith (18th century poet)

Every life is a journey. Yours, mine, the lives of the Children of Israel. Through our lives God calls us, protects us, and shapes us into His Children. As we begin looking to summer, it can be a good time to reflect where we are on that journey. We can reflect as individuals, as families, and as the community of believers known as Immanuel.

I would encourage each and every one of you to take time to *"Be still, and know that I am God."* – *Psalm 46:10*. We all need that occasional introspection and reflection to see if we are following where Christ is leading. It is a worthy and fruitful exercise.

As we roll on into summer, we will be doing some examining of that journey in Adult Bible class. We will begin a new unit studying the book of Exodus. By walking through Moses' narrative of the shaping of God's people in His rescue of them out of slavery, we will learn more about what it means to be a Child of God and what it means to walk the journey of life with His guidance. Please join us in our journey.

*~ In Christ,
Pastor King*



Immanuel will be hosting a prayer vigil on the National Day of Prayer, Thursday, May 5, 2016, from 2:00 to 8:00 p.m. We would like to have continuous prayer in the sanctuary during these times. Please contact the church office to volunteer for any time not yet covered.

There will be a prayer service from 7:00-7:30 p.m. preceded by a pizza and salad supper. We hope that everyone will take time to participate in this effort.

~ Winnie McNamara



Adios Friend

I'm very sorry I couldn't attend the recent memorial service at Immanuel for Walter Kain. Walter was a dear close friend. I'll miss

the Bible devotions that we had at his home. He was always looking forward to our study from the *Portals of Prayer* for the day and discussion of the previous devotions. His daughter, Suzanne, was also present these last few months while Walter was in the V.A. Hospital, and he knew that the day to see his Lord was drawing near.

I met Walter on the day I was invited to join him and others at a restaurant in his area. I was surprised because I saw members of Immanuel also present. (You know, I believe that this is the best way to get to know church members.) It was at these meetings that I learned that he was sending "Get Well," "Thinking of You," and "We Are Praying for You" cards to the sick or homebound members listed in our church bulletin.

I approached him at church to thank him for this loving service, and asked if I could be of help. He quickly answered, "The postage and cards are costly, and I must cut down on how many I send." I brought this to the Naomi women's group, and they quickly supplied the greeting cards. And I would deliver 15-20 of the cards in my visitations.

How did Walter get into this business? It started in one of his trips to the flea market, and Houston has many. Suzanne, his daughter, who was hunting for antiques, took her son, Andrew, and Walter on weekends to the flea markets. Walter was not too interested, so he

just strolled around, looking. A man about his age approached him once and gave him a small pamphlet titled, "Do you wish to be saved?" Walter read the handout and said, "Why can't I do the same?"

The Holy Spirit must have used him, because that was his joy. He said, "Pastor, a Christian pamphlet is alright, but I see them thrown away. I believe a one-on-one encounter is best." I agreed, because you can hear the other person's concerns and can answer them. Walter also accepted invitations to talk at youth gatherings and many came and offered their thanks afterwards.

Walter was a veteran merchant seaman in World War II, and he had many stories to tell of the typhoon storms in the sea which showed the power of God. God's love was merciful to Walter, and used him to spread salvation and love to many. I can say, "What a friend, and look forward to meeting him again."

~Pastor Perez

Congratulations!



The LWML/Naomi ladies of Immanuel won back the Butterfly Painting "trophy" at the Spring Rally, held at Our Savior Lutheran Church this year. The painting is awarded each rally to the group that, percentagewise, has the most members in attendance. You may view the painting hanging on the wall in the Narthex. It will be up for grabs again at the Fall Rally.

~Martha McFarland

Fritsche Ministry Update

Every year in the states we would receive our shipment of palms the week before Palm Sunday. Wow! It's totally different here! Palm Sunday morning we stepped outside the church and trimmed palms right from the trees for decorating the sanctuary and for the Sunday School children in their processional.



Some of them, along with Clarion and our boys are pictured here just before the service. The "Hosannas" rang out loudly and joyfully as we prepared to follow our Lord from Jerusalem to Golgatha later in the week.

Two little girls were baptized at Amigos de Cristo this past Easter Sunday. We spent time with their families teaching about Baptism beforehand and the need for nourishing that living hope continually by receiving our Lord and His gifts in the Divine Service each week. One of the girls is part of a new family to our church. The other is a newborn whose mother has been a member for some time, but only recently attending regularly.

We've passed our one-year mark in the Dominican Republic. We're here to share that living hope that we have in Jesus through the ministry of the Gospel in Word and Sacrament.

It's such a joy to see that living hope in Christ within the people we are serving. As partners in mission, you are a part of that. I wish you could see it firsthand. Thank you for your support. Thank you for your prayers. God bless you in the living hope that we share in our risen Savior Jesus Christ. He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

A lot has happened since we last wrote. It is amazing the difference a year makes and we can hardly believe how time has flown. We have moved from our house to an incredible apartment with an amazing view of our city, even the ocean. It was a lot of work but we love our new home. The boys celebrated their first DR independence day. Andrei had a blast at school and came home with the Dominican flag painted on his cheek!



The boys and Clarion had a good time planning and doing Sunday school activities for Semana Santa. Viktor and Sergei even got caught up on their confirmation

lessons with Pop since they didn't have school the entire week. We ended Holy Week with a great Easter service and a fun dinner at our home with our missionary team and some Dominican friends. A great end to Semana Santa! Thanks again to all of you for helping us lay the foundation for God's kingdom in the Dominican Republic!

~Pastor Joel & Clarion Fritsche & Family

Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

6th Annual Easter Celebration

The day started out with beautiful sunshine and over **38 volunteers** coming together to share the Good News of the Easter Story to children of all ages. Friends and family came from the neighborhood, the community, the ECE and the congregation.



We had **over 125 children** register for door prizes and fun. The activities

started in Miertschin hall with registration, games, crafts, pictures with the Easter Bunny and Refreshments.



We had so many people that activities moved outside to share the story of Jesus' Resurrection and hand out door prizes.



The Easter Egg Hunt had children running all over. Children under 4 were in the ECE playground. Children over 4 were on the big playground. Praise the Lord!





Focus on Stewardship

Do we Christians really have to tithe? Are we really under a compulsion to give? Aren't we free? Don't we have a freedom from the law that was purchased for us by Jesus Christ's death and resurrection?

The problem is that our sinful flesh uses our freedom for selfishness. Christ did not die and rise so that we could give less and do less good work in the world. He died and rose to free us from the compulsion of the Law, to free us from a burden we could not bear.

We are missing the point completely if we use the freedom from the Law that Christ won by His passion, crucifixion, and resurrection to give less, or to do less of any good work. Christ set us free to live in His image of faithfulness, generosity, and kindness. We are free from the Law's condemnation so that we can walk in the good works the Lord has prepared for us.

Our freedom is not given to indulge our sinful and selfish flesh. Our freedom was purchased and won by Christ so that we could serve our neighbors — our family, our society, our church.

As a result, much of your freedom is not a freedom from, but a freedom *to* and *for*. You are not free *from* serving your neighbor. You are free *for* service toward your neighbor—willingly and without compulsion. You are not free *from* giving to your church; you are freed

to give to your local congregation in joy, willingly, and without compulsion.

The reason you are free to serve, the reason you are free to give is because of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sin He won for you on the cross, which He delivers to you in the Gospel and the sacraments. That is our motivation. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). And since God loves us in this way, by giving us His only-begotten Son so that we do not perish, we also love one another in this way, by giving what we have so that our neighbor does not perish.

If the God who has provided the sacrifice for your eternal salvation, the God who delivers that salvation to you in Holy Baptism, the God who continues to forgive you and show you His faithfulness, if that same God is the one who also promises to give you daily bread and take care of your earthly life, you can trust in Him, even in giving. After all, Jesus Christ is proof that God loves you and will take care of you.

*(Stewardship newsletter insert for March 2016, provided on the LCMS website
<http://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4064>)*

~submitted by Kathy Angst

Bethesda/Good Samaritan Hamburger Fry Benefit

The May 19th Hamburger Fry will benefit the Bethesda/Good Samaritan Home located in Cypress, Texas. All donations and proceeds will go directly to them. It will be a free will offering, so please come and enjoy the great food and fellowship.

~Martha McFarland



Change of Seasons

Having a special day to honor fallen soldiers started during the Civil War. It didn't necessarily start in one place as many different communities had different days and ways that they observed the day. The first time the day was given an official name was in 1868 when Decoration Day was observed on May 30th.

Over time the day became known as Memorial Day. After World War II the day was used to honor soldiers who died in all wars, rather than just the Civil War. In 1967 the name of the holiday was officially changed to Memorial Day. In 1968 a law was passed to change the date of the holiday to the last Monday in May.

This year, Memorial Day is May 30th. Take a moment to remember those who gave their lives in service for their country – offer prayers of thanksgiving for those who served or for comfort and peace for their families.

[Excerpt from http://www.ducksters.com/holidays/memorial_day.php]



Saturday, May 7th Blue Lion Jazz Café
7:00 pm

Tuesday, May 9th Spring Concert 7:00 pm

Saturday, May 28th Graduation 2:00 pm
Trinity Downtown

~Lynn Eickemeyer



Lonnie & Kathy Angst have been draping the cross for the last ten years. Here they are changing out the purple of Lent for the white of Easter. They would love it if someone would step forward so they could retire. If you are willing to help, please contact them, and they'll be happy to show you the ropes!



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What's happenin' at Immanuel ECE?

Lutheran School's Week
"Jesus is our Super Hero!"



Easter Parties

Inside Outside
Rain or Shine
Nothing stood in the way of
the children having fun.



Immanuel Lutheran Church - May 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Usher Team #2 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am <i>Altar Guild meeting after Bible Class</i>	2 Bible Study @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm	3 All Boards @ 7:00 pm	4 Women's Bible Study @ 10:30 am	5 National Day of Prayer 2-8:00 pm Bingo @ 1:00–3:00 pm Pizza/Salad dinner <i>before service</i> Prayer Service 7:00-7:30 pm NO Bells Choir @ 7:30 pm	6	7 Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
8 Mother's Day  Usher Team #3 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 Council 7:00 pm Naomi Meeting @ 7:00 pm	11 Jr. Confirmation @ 4:30 pm	12 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	13	14 Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
15 Usher Team #4 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	16 Bible Study @ 6:30 – 8:00 pm	17	18 Women's Bible Study @ 10:30 am Jr. Confirmation @ 4:30 pm	19  Hamburger Fry @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	20	21 Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
22 Usher Team #5 Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	23	24 Men's Breakfast @ AAA restaurant @ 6:30 am	25	26 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm	27	28 Unveil Setup @ 11:00 – 1:00 pm
29 Usher Team #1 Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	30 Offices Closed 		Voters Meeting TBA			



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To the Family of:

Loving God ~ Loving Neighbors ~ Serving Others



SUMMER FAMILY FELLOWSHIP

Tuesday, June 7th and Thursday, June 9th

Dinner at 6:00 pm

Fellowship with Word, Song and Crafts

Fun for the Whole Family!