

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 5, No. 9

<http://immanuelhouston.org/>

August 2016

"Heaven Can Wait"

We all know the old saying that Heaven can wait. Every one of us knows we are going to die. Eventually. As Christians we look forward to going to Heaven and residing with Jesus, but most of us are in no hurry to get there any time soon. We'd just as soon stick around here for a bit longer.



All kidding aside, somehow we get the idea that Heaven is the ideal. We have succumbed to the thinking that the spiritual is somehow better than the physical. When people talk about shedding their mortal flesh and getting to live in glory we complacently nod our head and move on. That's not right. The spiritual is NOT somehow better than the physical.

God designed us as beings with a body and a soul. We are not just spiritual; we are by our nature physical beings. Yes, our earthly flesh is bound and stuck to sin, but that isn't the eternal picture. God designed us without sin. Sin entered the picture later. Flesh was designed perfect and holy. We should be craving to have that perfect and holy flesh restored, not to get rid of the flesh all together.

That is the truth we confess in the Creed when we say we believe in, "the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." We can look forward to a sin free physical body and world. That is the wonderful gift Jesus Christ has given us.

In our baptism we receive that promise. So every day since our baptism we should be living in that promise, the promise to be free from sin and death. Yes, we have to wait on the fulfillment of that promise until the final judgement day, but we can live in that hope now. Every day we can repent of the sins of yesterday shedding them in the waters of baptism and rise from those waters clean, free, and ALIVE!

As a child of God, you have the ability to live your daily life free. You don't need to fret about what you may have done wrong or what you may have neglected to do in the past. The past

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Good and Faithful Servant

On June 28th, we held a funeral service for “Minnie” Mireles, it was a celebration of her receiving the Crown of Life.

Minnie’s name was Herminia – not many of us knew that, not even me.

I remember Minnie on my family’s first Sunday at Immanuel Church. Minnie was the Greeter that Sunday. With a smile and welcome, she held the door open, and handing out worship folders was the usher on duty, her husband, Santos Mireles, Jr.

My wife and I couldn’t find time to really meet them or have time to speak with them. But whenever it was Hamburger Thursday, they were there and that was the opportunity for a conversation. I found so much in common since my home church was San Pedro, located on Bingham Street. Her family lived on Bingham Street and so did my family. Santos met her at Hawthorn Public School across the street from the San Pedro Parochial School.

Minnie told me she attended the V.B.S. in the summer and made friends at the church. Santos lived in the neighborhood also, and attended Dow Jr. High while Minnie attended Hogg Jr. High. I sat with Santos and got information of the teachers he had at Dow, because I had also attended Dow. But our paths never crossed until we met at Immanuel.

They both married and raised three daughters and cared for two from the Child Protection

agency. What love to reach out to children in need of a family and still raise their own. Minnie and Santos were inseparable and put four of their children through our Immanuel parochial school.

While Santos worked, Minnie attended mid-week afternoon Bible Class at San Pedro, her neighbor invited her to help with Trinity Church members who were holding devotions in a nearby Senior Care Facility.

Minnie’s husband died three years ago and I could see the hurt she had. Her oldest daughter took her in and cared for her. About a year ago she asked to be taken to her house, but the house needed to be repaired and remodeled. You could see the gleam in her eyes about being “back home where my family was born.” She contacted me and asked me to be prepared so that I could have a blessing when she moved in.

That day never happened. In late June, Minnie was taken to the hospital and diagnosed with an incurable brain tumor. She died on June 23rd. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord... *(Rev. 14:13)*

~Pastor Perez

Heaven . . .

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is the past. Today, you are a new and clean child of God. You can look forward with renewed outlook and vigor. You have new life, both now and forever. Don’t be a slave to sin. Be free and rejoice.

*~In Christ,
Pastor King*



Changing Rooms in August!

Sunday School this summer has been fun and exciting meeting all together in the library. Our attendance has been steady with 10-13 children. For this terrific summer attendance, we say, "Praise the Lord!"

After July, we will be moving to the empty classroom in the basement. The Sunday school is working along with the growing ECE to find and work with places that are beneficial to both ministries.

Our teachers, Ray Thomas, Max Bolen, Carolyn Breithaupt and Maria Ortiz are doing a great job. On Sunday morning when you see one of these people, please let them know how much they are appreciated for using their talents to share the Word of God with the children.

The youth will continue to meet in their newly renovated classroom #4 in Miertschin Hall. Also, thank Philip and Jessi Nelson for teaching and working with the Youth.

*"Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."
(Proverbs 22:6)*

*~Cathleen Chevallier
Sunday School Superintendent*

Summer is speeding by! Joel and I have appreciated the time to visit his parents and now my parents. Both sets of parents are experiencing unwelcome changes in their living arrangements and we appreciate all your prayers for them and for us. Every Sunday when we sit in church I desperately miss playing organ for you all at Immanuel!

Now I just want to remind you that September will be upon us soon and that means the return of choir and handbells! The first rehearsal for both will be Thursday, September 8, with handbells at 6:30 pm and adult choir at 7:30 pm, both in the music room off of the sanctuary balcony.

We are friendly groups and enthusiastically welcome new members. No previous experience with music is needed. No auditions! Just come and join us! I also look forward to seeing returning members!

God bless the rest of your summer and keep you safe in His care.

~Diane Robinson, Director of Music



Friday, Aug. 26 Football game – 7:00 pm

<http://www.lutheranhighnorth.org>
(713) 880-3131

~Lynn Eickemeyer



Focus on Stewardship

"Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift" (2 Cor. 9:15)! This is St. Paul's exclamation upon hearing the Corinthian church's response to the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his request for support for the Church in Jerusalem. The Christians in Corinth heard and received God's mercy in Christ, and they responded to St. Paul's call to support Christians in Jerusalem with a collection. The Corinthian's joy filled Jerusalem's need.

This is the reality of stewardship. Because of God's generosity in the giving of His Son to die on the cross for us, we are to be generous with all that we receive from Him. What do we receive? Everything. All that we are and all that we have is the Lord's. He is the creator and the giver. We are His creatures and those who receive what He gives.

It sounds easy. And it is. But then again it isn't. Stewardship is easy because it God's work. Through what God gives, we give to others. Through what God gives, we support the work of the church for the life of the world. He gives; we receive. And like our generous Father in Heaven, we, as His children, use what He gives to us to love and serve others.

But stewardship is also difficult. That is because it goes against our natural inclination to think that what I have is mine to do what I

want with. This is our sinful nature. It is our selfishness and our greed. How can we who have been given everything—life, food, clothing, house, home, forgiveness, divine sonship, an eternal inheritance—be so stingy with what we give to the church, the place where we hear about and receive all that God gives us and does for us? We are all guilty of this kind of thinking. And the only godly response is to repent and trust in the Gospel.

For if God has given you His own Son, will He not give you all things? Yes. He will. This is His sure and certain promise. God provides for His people. He provides everything we need for this body and life and for the life that is to come.

The church is a mercy place. It's a place where God's mercy in the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ, is given and received. For we who believe in Christ, it means forgiveness, life, and salvation in the face of sin, death, and the power of the devil. Here in the church we inhale God's mercy in Word and Sacrament, and exhale this same mercy in love and service to our neighbor. And that is an enduring, joyful thing to do. Our joy fills our neighbor's need because His joy filled ours (Heb. 12:2). Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift!

(Stewardship newsletter insert for August 2016, provided on the LCMS website <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4207>)

~submitted by Kathy Angst



ECE Summer Fun



~photos submitted by Connie Meave



Playdate for Parents and Children

Saturday, August 13, 2016, 9 - 11 a.m.

**Immanuel Playgrounds
306 E. 15th St
Houston, TX 77008**

Please join us for a Saturday playdate before the new school year begins! Come by to meet our new ECE families and to greet old friends. Popcorn, watermelon slices and water will be provided by Immanuel members.





“Generation to Generation”
Devotion, Song and Activities
For Everyone

SUNDAY, AUGUST 28TH, 2016
10:15 a.m. in Miertschin Hall

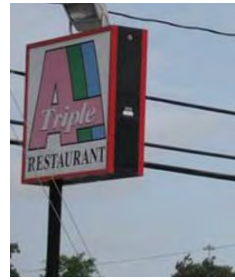
Followed by Lunch at 11:30 a.m.
King Ranch Chicken Casserole, Salad, Veggie and Dessert

Join Us for a
Sunday Morning of
Inspiration and Fellowship!



Immanuel Lutheran Church - August 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Evening Bible Study @ 6:30-8:00 pm	2 All Boards @ 7:00 pm	3 Women's Bible Study @ 10:30 am	4 Bingo @ 1:00-3:00 pm	5 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00-8:00 pm	6
7 <i>Usher Team #1</i> Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	8	9	10	11	12 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00-8:00 pm	13 ECE Meet & Greet @ ILS playground 9:00-11:00 am
14 <i>Usher Team #2</i> Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	15 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i> Evening Bible Study @ 6:30-8:00 pm	16	17 <i>ECE</i> <i>1st Day of School</i> Women's Bible Study @ 10:30 am	18	19 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00-8:00 pm	20
21 <i>Usher Team #3</i> Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am <i>Altar Guild Meeting</i> <i>after Bible Class</i>	22	23	24	25	26 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00-8:00 pm	27
28 <i>Usher Team #4</i> Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class, Sunday School & Unveil Church <i>Rally Day</i> @ 10:15 am <i>Lunch</i> @ 11:30 am	29	30	31			



Triple A Restaurant No More

Imagine a Divine Service with no flowers in the chancel area. Not a good picture is it?

You may have never given it much thought, but if members do not donate directly by purchasing bouquets, the expense comes out of the general fund. So please take the opportunity to dedicate flowers for a service or two, to the remembrance of a loved one, the celebration of a birthday or anniversary, or to the Glory of God for blessings received.

It's easy: Sign up on the calendar at the foot of the stairs to the sanctuary balcony. Don't forget to put a check for \$35.00/bouquet marked "flowers" in the collection plate before the Sunday you're sponsoring. Please fill out the card with the date and occasion and put it in the collection plate with your check or turn into the church office. Or, call the office with the information.

After that service you can take the bouquets home or donate them to another cause. Watered, they keep for up to a week or so.

If you already buy flowers, we thank you for that. If you never have, we encourage you to do so. You'll be glad you did.

*~Ray Thomas
Chair, Elders*

In May, the members of the men's semi-monthly morning Bible study were shocked to discover that the Triple A Restaurant was permanently closed for business. They have not yet found a new place to meet for their Bible study at 6:00 or 6:30 in the morning.

Triple A had a long history – many were disappointed and walked away sad. Some Immanuel members would have breakfast there after the Sunday service. Members of St. Luke Lutheran Church at Aldine Westfield and Little York held meetings and devotions at the restaurant as well.

The nearby Farmer's Market with fresh produce and bargains was also very popular with patrons of the restaurant. St. John Lutheran, my former congregation, would buy their apples, oranges, and nuts for the Christmas bags from that market.

I will miss getting up and getting together with the men and, over a cup of coffee, discussing the Bible text for that morning. I remember seeing the men studying God's Word. As the years continued, the group of ten lessened to seven, and then to five, due to transfers, age, and death. Many members will miss Triple A and the convenient market next door.

~Pastor Perez

Alaska Mission Update

(Excerpts from July 2016 email and newsletter)

We are excited to have mission teams from Illinois, Idaho, and Wisconsin in our area to help us with proclaiming Christ to these isolated parts of Alaska.

We have also been able to begin using our house as a sort of "mission building," hosting teams who come through our area, or more importantly to host youth from the villages. We have a large yard and basement living room which they use to hang out or just play games.

Stacey has easily become the greatest asset to the ministry here. Her teaching abilities have opened doors for mission to the youth. Her hospitable nature has opened doors in ministry to the women.

Physical labor has become a regular part of my ministry as I assist people in the village with a variety of tasks. Through these tasks I have been able to show love and care as well as respect for the villagers. More and more we are being invited into the regular life of the villages. In those moments I hear about struggles they are going through and have the opportunity to pray with and for them. And, every once in awhile, a new face will show up at church. I cannot tell you the joy we feel when we see that. God is doing great and amazing things here, and we are humbled to be a part of it.

Know that you too are a part of this ministry. It would not be possible without your prayer and financial support. Thank you so much!

*~In Christ,
Keith Aschenbeck and family*

Dominican Republic Mission News

(Excerpt from June 2016 newsletter)

As we approach the end of June, we are full swing into the summer. Our busiest ministry days are Thursday through Sunday when our entire team is present in the capital. Joel is still teaching Exodus to the Las Americas youth.

Clarion is teaching Sunday School, but handing more and more over to our capable women in the congregation. We are now offering weekly worship at our Ozama mission, in hopes of establishing a regular routine of worship with our little flock. In addition to the two Baptisms there, we had two confirmations at Las Americas. Viktor and Sergei Fritsche were confirmed and received the Sacrament of the Altar for the first time.

Summer also means time for travel. As we speak, Clarion, Sergei and Andrei are in Texas visiting family. Viktor and Joel head to the states in a few days and will attend a Higher Things youth conference in Nashville, Tennessee. We will all spend time together visiting family in Texas before heading back to Santo Domingo.

We are tentatively planning Home Service, the time where we spend a couple of months in the states reconnecting with supporters, for next summer, approximately one year from now. We won't be able to visit all of our supporters, but will do our best to reconnect and share with as many of you as possible. Thank you again for the amazing support! God continues to bless our daily and our mission work here through your love, prayers and support!

~Pastor Joel & Clarion Fritsche & Family



Immanuel Lutheran Church
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Houston, TX 77008

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Saturday August 13th
9:00-11:00 am

**(See full page flyers
inside for details!)**



Sunday August 28th
10:15 am
(Lunch @ 11:30 am)