

# Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

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<http://immanuelhouston.org/>

September 2016

## Gospel Message Is No Secret



*John 3:16. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.*



It's September! For some, that means time to break out our team colors, put on our favorite jersey, yell ourselves hoarse, and wonder why that guy is waving the John 3:16 sign. It seems a familiar sight at virtually any football game to see

someone holding up a banner with that sacred secret code.

Why John 3:16? Why not Jeremiah 17:7, or 2 Peter 2:2, or even John 11:39? Well it's actually pretty simple. All those other verses have their message, and those messages are important. But John 3:16 is commonly called the "Gospel in a nutshell." In other words, this particular verse does an excellent job of reaching out with the message that God has provided a path to salvation free to all.

Sometimes we get relaxed about our mission to spread the Good News. We tend to forget that there are many people out in the world, and in our lives that do not have that path as part of their lives. It's easy to get complacent and forget the urgency of our special message. God is a god filled with love for His creation. He urgently desires all people to be saved from sin, death, and the power of the devil. He did not come up with an elaborate set of rules or conditions that we must fulfill to attain this safety. Instead, He Himself stepped into time and space and took on the burden of our debt of brokenness so that we may be free.

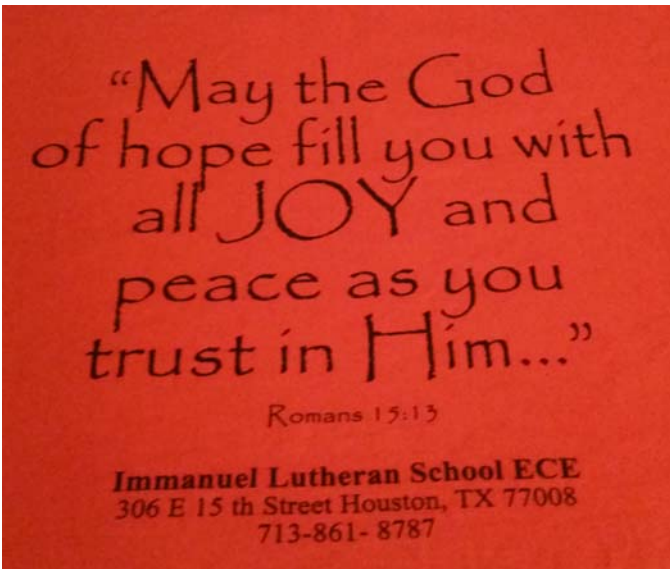
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## Immanuel Hosts ECE Meet & Greet

Immanuel held a "Meet and Greet" Saturday morning, August 13<sup>th</sup>, for ECE families to meet each other, ECE staff, and congregation members, and for congregation members to meet the families and ECE staff.

My wife and I attended and enjoyed meeting the parents and their beautiful children. As a former school teacher, I could see these children were excited at being with other children their own age, and the teachers and aides showed excitement toward the coming year. Everyone was treated to watermelon, popcorn, and ice cold bottled water.



During those days before the first day of school, you could meet teachers and aides readying their school rooms with decorations and learning what their schedules would be. You should see the t-shirts the teachers and

aides were wearing (*left, below*), with their 2016-2017 theme verse – wow! What a powerful statement.

Please keep the ECE families, both parents and children, in your prayers for the 2016-2017 school year, as well as all of the ECE staff and our Church staff – may we all work together so that our ministry is a blessing to all.

*~Pastor Perez*

## No Secret . . .

*(continued from page 1)*

In a few short words, John 3:16 explains that God sent Jesus because of His great love for all, and that the salvation He brings is free for the taking. All one must do is trust. Do you trust in Jesus for life, salvation, and everything? Does the person next to you? Maybe this fall as some stranger halfway across the world tunes in to see the big game they will see that little sign and be led to delve into the code that translates into eternal life. You might be holding the sign, or possibly even have the opportunity to explain what that coded message means.

*~God Bless, Pastor King*



## Upcoming Events

Friday, Sept. 30, 7:00 pm  
Homecoming Football game

Saturday, Oct. 1, 6:00 pm  
Social Event for Alumni, Parents & Friends

*~Lynn Eickemeyer*



## Where do I go for Bible class and Sunday school on Sunday morning?

Some locations have changed and some have not:

The **adult Bible class** remains in Miertschin Hall and is currently working through the book of Exodus.

The **high school youth** are meeting in Room #4 across from the restrooms in Miertschin Hall. This room is now the "Youth" room. The room has been redone to include tables, chairs, sofas, a projector and screen, along with a refrigerator and games.

The biggest change in location is the **elementary group, ages 3 thru 12**. We have moved downstairs beneath the gym, to the middle room on the right side of the hallway. With the help of SAY Board, the room is being transformed into a place where learning about Jesus can be fun and exciting.

Immanuel is purchasing tables, chairs, rug, iPad and projector in an effort to create a welcoming environment. The technology allows the Sunday school department to have more choices in curriculum format as well as delivering the Word of Jesus in a medium the

children relate to. We are evaluating different curriculums to follow the summer topic "Cooking with Jesus" which used different snack foods to learn about Jesus.

Age change! Immanuel wishes to extend an invitation to all **children under the age of 3** when accompanied by an adult to join us downstairs for Sunday school.

Please keep the Sunday school and Bible classes in your prayers, that we may continue to grow to share the Word of God with people of all ages. Help everyone find their place on Sunday mornings.

*"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*



The first rehearsal for both handbells and choir 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!

*~Diane Robinson*



## Focus on Stewardship

The devil, though defeated by the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, remains a very capable and clever foe. He is smarter than we are. He's been watching us and taking notes for a very long time. He knows what we want, and he knows how to lure us away. And he does this by telling us what we want to hear. That's what makes it so difficult.

To us who are greedy, he says: "You are not greedy. You are prudent. You are frugal. You are a good steward with your money. God doesn't want you not to have all the things you want. He wants you to be happy. He wants you to have the latest and greatest toys for both young and old." So if you consider yourself to be wise in the way of money and finances, beware of who just might be telling you these things.

Satan is a liar. He tells us what we want to hear. He lures us away from repentance and confession and faith, so that we harden our consciences and place our souls in peril. We must not underestimate the enemy. We have all taken his bait. We have all failed in this. None of us can say that we have fought this temptation to hold back with everything we have and won.

And we must repent. Yes, God wants us to be happy. But this happiness is never at the

expense of faithfulness. We have a calling. We are a member of His family, the church. That relationship places a duty upon us: to give a generous proportion of the first fruits of the income He provides.

Only God is true to His Word. Only God is true to His promises. His promises never fail. His Word endures forever. His mercies are new every morning. He is faithful. He provides everything that we need. He provides food and clothes, house and home, everything that we pray for in the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer.

There are a whole host of things that we have that we do not need. The question that we need to ask ourselves is whether these have come at the expense of our faithful, generous proportion of the first fruits of our income. If they have, then we must repent, turning away from our selfishness to Him who is faithful by giving His Son into death so that we are reconciled to Him and justified in His sight.

The devil will always tell you what you want to hear. But God tells us and gives us what we need to hear. With law and gospel, he cuts us to the heart, so that we will repent and believe His Word and promises. He is faithful. He is good. He will not forsake you, or leave you destitute. So believe and trust in Him. And you will not only be happy. You will be blessed.

*(Stewardship newsletter insert for September 2016, provided on the LCMS website <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4262>)*

*~submitted by Kathy Angst*



# early CHILDHOOD education

The 2016-2017 school year is well under way! School began on August 17<sup>th</sup> with our largest ECE enrollment ever. We would like to welcome all our new and returning families to Immanuel. We look forward to providing an enriching environment for the children to learn and grow in.

Our teachers this year are: Randi Budwit, Audrey Cooper, Elizabeth Cooper, Ashlee Froehlich, Stephanie Kasper, Heidi Luker, Joan Luker, Estela Machuca, Winnie McNamara, Megan Moynagh, and Tyler Tate.

Our teacher aides are April Cagle, Naomi Davis, Judy McNeil, and Tori Tate. Naomi Davis, Heidi Luker, and Megan Moynagh are new to our staff this year.

Information will be coming to our families about two of our community service projects, which benefit the Houston Area Women's Center and the Heights Interfaith Ministries Food Pantry.

*~Cathy Swanstrom  
Immanuel ECE Director*

## First Day Photos



*~photos submitted by Connie Meave*

# Do I Have A Word For You!

*Thus says the Lord, "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so is My Word that goes out from My mouth: it will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:10-11*

Do you remember a time in your life when you were waiting for an important word from an important person or group? It may have been waiting for that letter from the university you hoped accepted you. It may have been that call from the person who interviewed you for that job or that promotion you really hoped to get. Or, even more importantly, it may have been waiting for that moment when you popped the question, and you were hoping for that "Yes, I'll marry you!" word. Wow! The power of a good word can really change our lives.

Well, that kind of joy is merely a glimpse of what we were talking about in this text from Isaiah. The Bible, you see, is a word that will not only change your life for the moment, it will transform your life eternally. The Bible isn't just a good word from a fellow human being; it is literally God's Word that goes out from God Himself to bring His blessing, His forgiveness, His power, and His peace to all who believe.

There is no other Word like it.

In fact, no human being could have ever cooked up a story like the Bible. It is God's Word *to* the world about God's work *for* the

world. The Bible says, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not counting our sins against us" (*2 Corinthians 5:19a*). It's a Word of God-earned reconciliation.

But the most important thing to remember today is that this transforming Word was *literally* meant for you. It was meant for you to read it, to know it, and to believe in its message.

That's the word I have for you! And wow, what a word it is! Isaiah reminds us that God has a purpose for His Word to work in your life. In fact, right now, God's Word can reach into the innermost recesses of your being and mine! No heart is too tough; no soul is too dark.

When God wills it, His Word can pierce anyone, anywhere, anytime. Have you heard about the Hellfire Club? It was a particularly nasty club in 18th-century Bristol, one that especially loved to make fun of the Bible and the church. One of its members, a Mr. Thorpe, was especially good at mocking and ridiculing the work of the famed evangelist, George Whitefield, and the message of God's Word. On one occasion, the Hellfire Club gathered at a pub for such mockery. Mr. Thorpe offered his brilliant imitation of Whitefield, whom he and his friends called "Mr. Squintum" because of Whitefield's eyes. He delivered his sermon with brilliant accuracy, perfectly imitating his tone and facial expressions as he quoted Scripture and Whitefield's exposition. Suddenly, amidst the laughter he had to sit down, for even he was pierced through by the very Word he was citing, and he was converted on the spot.

*(continued on page 7)*



# LWML Sunday

LWML Sunday this year is October 2<sup>nd</sup>, so it is time to save your pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and dollars to donate to World Missions.

The mite boxes will be handed out in September, one per family. Please bring it back with your donation by October 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you wish, you can save coins all year.

The LWML Texas District 2016-2018 Mission Grant mite goal is \$206,800.00.

### 2016-2018 Mission Grants Adopted

1. Scholarships for Seminarians - \$40,000.00
2. DCE Scholarships – Concordia University Texas – \$24,000.00
3. Apartment Ministry to Muslim Women – Disciples of the Way – \$15,000.00
4. Mission team – (We Is Greater Than I) – LINC Austin – \$15,000.00
5. Disaster Relief Ministry – Holy Smokers – \$16,000.00
6. Equip Youth to Witness for Life – Lutherans for Life – \$10,000.00
7. Building Hope in Bufuula, Uganda – Hope, Lubbock – \$24,000.00
8. Meeting Room Media – Camp Lone Star, La Grange – \$12,000.00
9. International Student Ministry – UT Arlington – \$25,000.00
10. Hispanic Ministry – Southeast Texas – \$25,000.00

11. Outreach & Media Ministry – Apostles Antiochian Church (Arab-speaking LCMS congregation) – \$800.00 (Partial funding)

Thank you so much for donating to this very worthy mission outreach annual event.

*~Evelyn Marsh  
Naomi Willing Workers*

## The Word . . .

*(continued from page 6)*

Mr. Thorpe was a thoroughly nasty man, engaged in a nasty action, yet the Word of God pierced his heart and changed him. Incredibly, Thorpe went on to be a prominent Christian leader in the very city of Bristol, from that moment on. So remember today, news articles may inform us. Novels may inspire us. Poetry may enrapture us. But only the living, active Word of God can transform us.

**THE PRAYER:** Dear Jesus, give me courage to read Your Word and not only to hear the wonderful message of Your Good News, but to believe it for myself! Amen!

*~Pastor King*

### Newsletter Staff

Editor.....Barbara Szalkowski

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Carrie & Jackie Anderson, Kathy Angst, Cathleen Chevallier, Lynn Eickemeyer, Karen Evans, Ken & Becky Harvey, Pastor Jeffrey King, Evelyn Marsh, Winnie McNamara, Connie Meave, Pastor Claudio Perez, Diane Robinson, Cathy Swanstrom

Graphic Design.....Matthew Szalkowski



Immanuel Lutheran Church was well represented at the 2016 LCMS National Youth Gathering in New Orleans, Louisiana, July 16–20. Our group included adult leaders Pastor Ben Gonzales and Lauren Eickemeyer and youth participants Nathan Chevallier, Alex Evans, Toby Gonzales, and Jessi Morrison.



*(Left to Right: Jessi Morrison, Lauren Eickemeyer, Alex Evans, Toby Gonzales, Nathan Chevallier – photo submitted by Winnie McNamara)*

These participants and the SAY Board thank you for your generous financial support of our envelope fundraiser, which enabled this group to enjoy the fellowship of more than 25,000 other LCMS youth participants. It was an amazing experience for them.

Again, we thank you!

Immanuel SAY Board

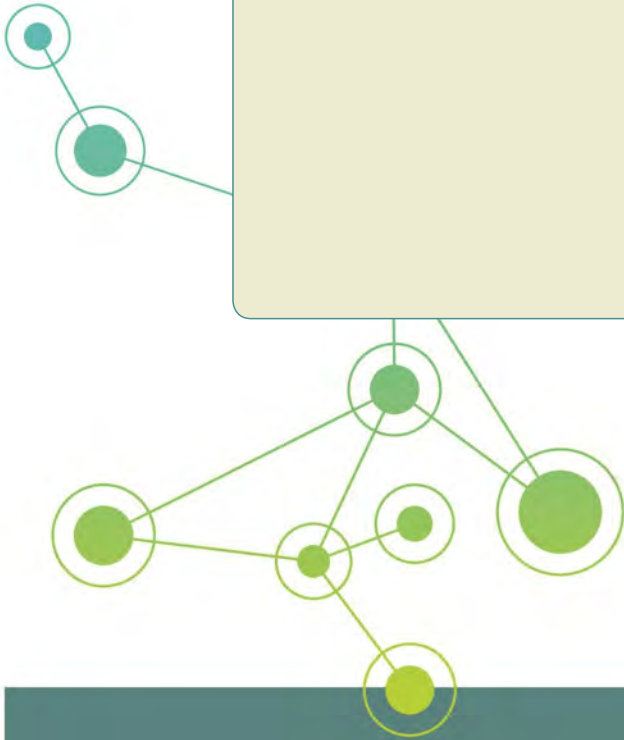
Carolyn Breithaupt, Julie King, Winnie McNamara, Cathy Swanstrom



# GODCONNECTS™

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[IMMANUELHOUSTON.ORG/GODCONNECTS](http://IMMANUELHOUSTON.ORG/GODCONNECTS)

## Trinity-Baton Rouge Flood Relief

Immanuel will take two collections, on Sunday, September 4<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, for Trinity Lutheran Church, Baton Rouge – they have over 100 member and school staff and student families who have been affected by the recent catastrophic flooding.

In general, 40,000 homes have been devastated and 200 LCMS members have been evacuated in Louisiana. Most of the area was not in a flood plain, so many do not have flood insurance.

Make checks out to Immanuel; a single check will be sent from Immanuel to Trinity-Baton Rouge. For more information, see the Trinity web site <http://tlcbr.org/how-can-i-help>

Donations are also being accepted on the Texas District web site <http://txlcms.org/donate/> and on the LCMS web site <https://www.lcms.org/givenow/disaster>

## Village of the Heights Outing

A tour of Village of the Heights senior living community, located at 1407 Studewood, will be held on

**Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, at 10:30 am.**

Lunch will be served at the community following the tour.

The outing is open to anyone – you are welcome to bring friends!

Please contact the church office at (713) 864-2651 with your RSVP (we will need a head count for the Village staff) or if you have any questions or need any additional information.

# 2016 Head For The Cure, Houston

## Run For Rod



My family and I are excited to be a part of the 4th annual Head for the Cure in Pearland on Saturday, October 8, 2016. Our team participates in honor of my father, Rodney Anderson. My Dad was treated at MD Anderson and 40% of the funds raised go back to MD Anderson through the Brain Tumor Trials Collaborative. The staff at MD Anderson was always caring, and supportive. We had ups and downs throughout Dad's illness but he fought hard and the caring people at MD Anderson did everything in their power to treat his disease and ensure his quality of life. We were blessed by the extra time his care team was able to provide us with him. We are so thankful to them.

We will also remember our Aunt Jill, Grandma Joanie, and Grandpa Darrell that have also passed from cancer. We love and miss all of them!

The cause is extremely close to us and we wanted friends and family to be able to celebrate Dad's memory. Head for the Cure is dedicated to raising funds and awareness for brain cancer research.

Head for the Cure works to inspire hope for the community of brain cancer patients, their families, friends, caregivers, and other supporters, while celebrating their courage, spirit and energy. Every Head for the Cure event marks a day of celebration where those diagnosed with brain cancer are honored and celebrated by their friends and families, those who have lost their battles are remembered, and we are all inspired to carry on the fight.

Please consider joining our team, **RUN FOR ROD**, by walking or running with us, or by making a donation today to help us reach our goal and to help Head for the Cure defeat brain cancer, step by step!

Love to all,  
Carrie (Team Captain), Jackie, Chris, and Claire Anderson

Join our team: [www.headforthecure.org](http://www.headforthecure.org) Search Team: **RUN FOR ROD**

Make sure you sign up as a "*team walker*" or "*team runner*." Use discount code: **HFTCFB** to receive a discounted registration fee.

To Donate: Checks written out to **Head for the Cure** and please put **Run for Rod** in the Memo field. Mail to: 2020 Baltimore, Ste 201, Kansas City, MO 64108 or bring them into the Church/School Office and leave with Connie Meave. Thank You!

# Immanuel Lutheran Church - September 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Flood Relief Collections for Trinity Lutheran Church-Baton Rouge Sept. 4 and Sept. 11			1 Bingo @ 1:00–3:00 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	2 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	3
4 <i>Usher Team #5</i> Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	5 <i>Offices Closed</i>  <i>No Bible Study</i>	6 All Boards @ 7:00 pm  RSCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	7 Women's Bible Study @ 10:30 am	8 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm  Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	9 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	10  FOD Labor Day Dance @ 4:00–9:00 pm
11 <i>Usher Team #1</i> Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	12	13 Church Council @ 7:00 pm  RSCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	14	15 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i> Hamburger Fry @ 11:00–1:00 pm Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	16 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	17  FOD Fiesta Luncheon @ 10:00–2:00 pm
18 <i>Usher Team #2</i> Worship @ 9:00 am w/Communion Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	19 Evening Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm	20  RSCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	21 <i>No Women's Bible Study</i>  Tour & Lunch at Village of the Heights All Welcome! @ 10:30 am	22 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm  Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	23 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	24
25 <i>Usher Team #3</i> Worship @ 9:00 am Adult Bible Class and Sunday School Unveil Church @ 10:15 am	26	27 Voters Meeting @ 7:00 pm RSCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	28	29 Bells @ 6:30 pm Choir @ 7:30 pm  Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	30 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	



Immanuel Lutheran Church  
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Houston, TX 77008

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**Return Service Requested**

To the Family of:

*Loving God ~ Loving Neighbors ~ Serving Others*

**Hamburger Fry**  
**Thursday**  
**September 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**11:00 am – 1:00 pm**

