

# Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 6, No. 10

<http://ImmanuelHouston.org/>

September 2017

## Gifts for the Kingdom

In St. Matthew 25:14-30, Jesus tells us the Parable of the Talents. Hearing Jesus' words should cause us to pause and ask ourselves how we daily utilize the resources God has given us as we think about the harvest to come. The foolish servant was afraid of losing his investment and acted only out of fear. He did not invest, he did not grow, and he did not take any risk whatsoever. When the owner of the property returned he said, "I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours." As a result his master was not pleased and he was punished.



Each and every one of us has been gifted with gifts of some kind. Some have been given money, some the gift of hospitality, others mercy and concern, some intellect, some musical talent, and we have all been given the gift of time. The list goes on and on. All talents and resources belong to God and are given to each of us to bring glory to His kingdom by serving one another. Do you fearfully guard your "talents" or do you make use of them, looking forward to the day of His harvest to come?

*~Pastor King*



LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) Sunday will be celebrated on Sunday, September 24, 2017 during the service. Your mite boxes will be collected that day. Monies collected from the mighty little mite boxes go a long way to fund worthwhile projects. If you still need a mite box, they are available in the Narthex or ask a member of Naomi to help you.



*~Martha McFarland*

# Youth Kick-off

Immanuel held its Youth Kick-off meeting on Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The youth began the night creating personal pizzas from ingredients supplied by our Youth Leaders, Phil and Jessalyn Nelson.



After enjoying their creations, the youth, along with their parents, played a hilarious game of fishbowl where participants had to guess a Bible word after being given clues. Successive rounds were played where the Bible word had to be guessed with only a one word hint. The final round was a charade game where participants could only use hand signs to give clues about the Bible word.

The Youth will meet every other Tuesday evenings, 6:30-8:30 pm (this month, Sept. 12 and Sept. 26). If you would like for your high school aged youth to be involved in the Immanuel Youth group, please contact the church office or Pastor King. We'd love to see you at our next event!

*~Julie King*



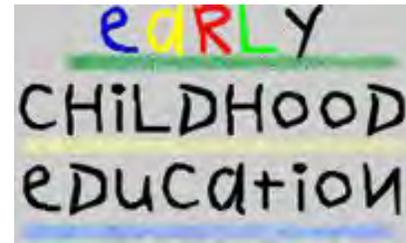
Join us every Sunday morning downstairs!  
10:30 – 11:30 am

By Google's definition, Sunday School is a class held on Sundays to teach children about their religion. Going back to school is important to learning how to read, write, do math or understand science. Going to Sunday School is more important for a child to learn what Jesus has done and continues to do for them. Children learn how much their heavenly Father loves us and how He is always there in good and bad times. Sunday School is a time set aside for children of all ages to grow spiritually in their faith, to have a better understanding of their faith and to learn more about the Bible.

See you Sunday mornings!  
To learn! To grow! To have fun and fellowship!

*"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 ECE designated all weekly Chapel offerings through the end of last school year (May 2017) to the 500Forward Mission Challenge, totaling approximately \$1800.00.



~Winnie McNamara



Sept. 27-29: Little Lions Cheer Camp for middle school students. Three practices and cheering at the LHN Friday night game.

Fall athletic events are football, volleyball, and cross country.

Coming up in October:

- Oct. 13: Homecoming
- Oct. 21, 22: Fall drama

For additional information see the website <http://www.lutheranhighnorth.org> or call (713) 880-3131.

~Lynn Eickemeyer

# Wright Words

## Why do we sit on the back pew when there are plenty of open seats at the front?

*[Excerpt from posting <http://www.deseretnews.com/article/865604156/Is-it-time-to-get-off-the-back-pew.html> May 30, 2014. Originally posted on author's website <http://jasonfwright.com/column/is-it-time-to-get-off-the-back-pew.html> May 29, 2014.]*

"Jason, you never struck me as a back pew kind of guy."

The observation came from a good friend and church leader who visited my congregation last year. When the service ended, he approached me with a handshake and a wide smile, saying the words I still hear today.

We'd known each other for some time and he had visited before, but on the Sundays he'd passed through, I was traveling or attending elsewhere.

I knew he didn't mean them as a personal criticism or jab. He's a man without guile who only wanted me to know he was genuinely surprised to see me and my family occupying the last row of the chapel, especially when so many pews were available closer to the front.

Since that Sunday encounter, I've been paying more attention to where I sit and how so many of our church meetings fill from the back to the front rather than the front to the back. While attending church out of state recently, I was surprised to see that the back half of the chapel was so full, they opened the overflow into the cultural hall for the latecomers. This despite there being enough room in the first six rows for twice as many as streamed in.

There may, of course, be perfectly good reasons to sit near the back: a fidgety baby, a legitimate need to slip out early before the meeting ends, wheelchair access, etc.

I wonder about my own motives. Had the desire to sit near the back become an outward reflection of an inward commitment? Did it demonstrate an unwillingness to be called on? A disinterest in the topic or speaker? Apathy about attending in the first place?

If my habit of sitting near the back sent a message, what does the practice of sitting up front suggest? An excitement to learn? A willingness to be called on? A public demonstration of faith that the speaker and the presentation will have value to my life?

If you've also been a physical or spiritual back-row regular, moving from the last pew to the front can be a daunting jump. So what's the best way to take a few steps to move up a row or two at a time? Being on time, even early? Always having scriptures in hand? Engaging in the lessons or talks from start to finish?

If we ever find ourselves in the same congregation, I can't guarantee I'll always be on the front row. But I promise to move in that direction. And if you get there first, save me a seat.

*~Jason Wright  
(submitted by Pastor King)*



# ECE Back to School



# ECE Back to School



~photos by Connie Meave



## Focus on Stewardship

*"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (Eccl. 9:10).*

God bids us to be faithful in the tasks He calls us to do. He calls us to be members of a family (husbands and wives; fathers and mothers; sons and daughters). He calls us to be members of society (those who govern and those who are governed). And He calls us to be members of His family, the Church (those who preach and teach and those who hear and learn). Each of these callings from God places a duty on us.

As members of a family, husbands are given the duty to die for their wives as Christ gave His life for His bride, the Church; while wives

are given the duty to respect their husbands and submit themselves to them as the Church does to Christ. Fathers and mothers are to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, teaching them the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Scriptures concerning Baptism, Confession, the Office of the Keys, and the Lord's Supper. Children are to honor their parents throughout their lives, and even when their parents are no longer alive, serving and obeying them, loving and cherishing them, and speaking well of them.

As members of society, God calls those who govern to bear the sword, that is, to punish those who do evil—those who live contrary to God's will—and to reward those who do good—those whose lives are lived in conformity with God's will. Those who are governed are to obey their leaders as to the Lord Himself, for

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# Stewardship . . .

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their leaders bear the sword of God's temporal justice for a purpose.

As members of God's own family, the Church, He calls those who preach and teach to do so in faithfulness to His holy Word. To preach and teach the Law of God to convict the hearts of hearers of their sin and to encourage, admonish, and exhort them to do good works in accordance with God's will. They are to preach and teach the Gospel, the full forgiveness of their sins accomplished by Christ and received through faith, not by works. They are to administer the means of grace in accordance with the Gospel and the Word of God. They do all this for the young and old alike, for those who are near and far off. Those who hear and learn are to submit themselves to their preachers and teachers. They are to support them by their prayers and their gifts.

Each of these callings from God places a duty on us. They make a claim on our presence, our prayers, and on our time, talents, and treasures. So, *"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might"* (Eccl 9:10). Pray for your family, for your government, and your church. Give of yourself by means of your time, your talents, and your treasures to your family, your government, and your Church. That is what it means to be faithful in the tasks that God has given us. That is what it means to do it with all your might.

*(Stewardship newsletter insert for September 2017, from the LCMS website <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4736>)*

*~submitted by Kathy Angst*



*[This is Pastor Aschenbeck's column from the Mission's August 2017 newsletter. You can read the entire issue and other issues on the Mission website <https://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org/newsletters/>]*

## Messy Mission

Ministry can be a very messy job. Dirty, rotten, sinful people make it especially challenging. But, those are the folks God sends from the Lower 48 to do ministry in Alaska. (FYI – I am one of those.) We are all in good company as far as that goes. Most of Jesus' disciples were fishermen. Having been around the fishing industry a time or two, I know that it's hard to get away from the dirty rotten smell that accompanies a port city and the folks who work there. The rest of the disciples were considered young and immature, tax collectors, cheats, etc. God chose the disciples for the very reason that they carried with them a stigma as sinners unworthy of God's attention and deserving of his wrath.

As partners with Alaska Mission for Christ, we are all dirty rotten sinful people seeking to share the news that God sent his son to take the rotten stench of sin from us and wash us clean.

Being Christian doesn't make us "better" people, rather it simply makes us people who recognize how lost we are. Displaying that honesty about ourselves gives witness to the greatness of God's grace.

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# Alaska Mission . . .

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This was the case for one young man. He came up to be part of a basketball camp in a village. As is the case in many villages, basketball reigns as the competitive sport of choice and the village residents can often try to push buttons on the young folk who visit their communities. One such test, resulted in the young ministry team member "losing his cool", making some comments and walking out.

Events like this rarely go unnoticed, and one village high schooler commented under her breath, "and he is supposed to be Christian!" The young man would later, without any prompting from the adults, seek out the boys he had the confrontation with and offer an apology for his poor behavior.

In an act of humility and repentance, he demonstrated an attribute of what it means to be a Christian: recognizing one's sinfulness and seeking forgiveness. In this instance, the community kids witnessed a very different attitude toward sinfulness than they are normally exposed to. The shock of the young men's faces was evident, as was their confusion on how to handle his confession. They floundered for a moment and then offered their forgiveness, after which the relationships and fun of the camp took on a whole new meaning. I pray the impact of that moment continues to take root in their hearts that they would grow in the depth and knowledge of a Lord and Savior who willingly gave His life for theirs.



*[Accompanying email with news of the family.]*

Greetings to All,

We have had one busy summer this year. Stacey and the kids spent a month in the lower 48 traveling from Kansas City, KS to Salem, IL and from Florida to Effingham, IL. They visited a few churches as well as family and even did a little vacationing.

I, on the other hand, had to stay in Alaska. And while I missed spending time with my kids and wife I was privileged to spend time with several mission teams who came to the Tanana valley to share the love of Christ.

The school year is now about to begin. Stacey took on the job of being the Reach Academy Principal/Teacher for the Alaska Gateway School District. It's not a traditional type of principal/teacher job as she works with home school families and with students who are not in a traditional school setting.

Trey will be headed back to boarding school at Mt. Edgecumbe in Sitka, AK for his second year. We are still waiting to hear if he will be in the "honor dorm". If so, he will have fewer roommates who are more academically focused. We keep telling him that he is welcome to stay home, but he has really enjoyed and excelled in that environment.

Kaleb begins the school year as an eighth grader. He qualified for and was approved at the end of last year to skip seventh grade. Stacey and I are excited to see him excelling academically but also nervous about him moving ahead. He continues to spend much of his time focused on his eight sled dogs along with hunting and trapping.

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# Aschenbeck News . . .

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Micah, as always, has mixed feelings about school. He gets to spend more time with his best friend, but isn't thrilled about classes, especially with the changes that come from moving into middle school and multiple teachers. Micah thrives on consistency and predictability, so his anxiety has been increasing with the approach of a new school year.

Anna continues to be one of the tallest kids in her class and is even challenging Micah and Kaleb for our second tallest child. She is the one likely most excited about school, and even moreso since Stacey's office is located inside the Tok School building. For while Anna is our most social child, she is also the one who gets the most homesick.

For myself, I wish I could say the rush of the year was over, but the fall brings with it numerous conferences to attend along with the need to gather meat and harvest vegetables from the garden as well as collect firewood that should have probably been collected in the Spring. Church attendance at St. Timothy's in Tanacross had been growing strong in the late Spring, but with the end of summer and onset of fishing and now hunting season we have seen our usual lull. Looking forward to everyone's return as winter sets in. Which will likely come sooner than later... we have already had temps in the low 30s at night.

One thing that has been amazing is to see how the new AMC Van we received has been a ministry multiplier in the short few weeks that we have used it. Thank you again to all of you for helping make that possible.

We continue to miss all our friends and family and we hope to get down and see you all again as soon as possible. You are all welcome to come and visit us in Tok. We would love to host you in our home. Thank you all for your continued support and prayers for it is through you that God has made it possible for us to share the love of Christ in the "Great land."

~Rev. Keith Aschenbeck

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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.

Donate via Thrivent Choice Dollars:  
<https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-choice/>

Donate via Amazon.com's Smile program  
<http://smile.amazon.com>

Contact Pastor Keith:  
Via e-mail: [revkeithamc@gmail.com](mailto:revkeithamc@gmail.com)

Mailing Address: 537 Musers Way  
Tok, AK 99780-0537



# **500FORWARD**

**Celebrating the 500th anniversary  
of the Lutheran Reformation**

**IT'S STILL ALL ABOUT JESUS  
OCTOBER 28-29      HOUSTON, TEXAS**

**It's not often we get the chance to experience the  
500th anniversary of something--so let's celebrate!**

## **500FORWARD Festival**

**October 28 // 10 am - 3 pm**

**St. Mark Lutheran Church**

**1515 Hillendahl 77055**

## **500FORWARD Concert**

**October 29 // 2:30 pm**

**Trinity Lutheran Church**

**800 Houston Avenue 77007**

## **FESTIVAL FEATURES**

- + Musical Performances**
- + Art Displays**
- + Worship Opportunities**
- + Interactive Stations for Kids**
- + Food Vendors**
- + Lutheran Ministry Booths**

## **CLOSING CONCERT**

**In addition to highlighting the musical heritage of the Lutheran  
church over the centuries, this event will present the results  
of the 500Forward challenge as part of the offering.**

**500FORWARD.ORG**



# September 2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
(MH) Miertschin Hall					1 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	2
3 <b>Usher Team #1</b> Worship Service w/Communion @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am	4 <b>Labor Day</b>  Offices Closed ECE Closed	5 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm All Boards @ 7:00 pm  RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	6  Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am	7 <b>Bingo</b> @ 1:00–3:00 pm  FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm  Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	8  Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	9
10 <b>Usher Team #2</b> Worship Service @ 9:00 am Staff Installation Reception following in MH Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am	11 Jr Confirmation 4:45-6:00 pm  Young Life Club In Gym @ 6:00–9:00  Evening Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm	12 Naomi Meeting @ 10:00 am (MH) FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Youth 6:30-8:30 pm Church Council @ 7:00 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	13	14  FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm  Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	15  Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	16  FOD Fiesta Luncheon @ 10:00 am–2:00 pm
17 <b>Usher Team #3</b> Worship Service w/Communion @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am	18 Jr Confirmation 4:45-6:00 pm  Young Life Club In Gym @ 6:00–9:00  Evening Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm	19 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm  RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	20  Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am	21 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm  Hamburger Fry @ 11:00–1:00 pm  Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	22  Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	23
24 LWML Sunday <b>Usher Team #4</b> Worship Service @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am	25 Jr Confirmation 4:45-6:00 pm  Young Life Club In Gym @ 6:00–9:00 pm	26 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00 – 1:30 pm Youth 6:30-8:30 pm Voters meeting @ 7:00pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	27	28  FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm  Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	29  Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	30



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

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TEXAS

**Return Service Requested**

To the Family of:

*Loving God ~ Loving Neighbors ~ Serving Others*



**CALLING ALL  
YOUTH**

**Youth  
Fellowship  
Tuesdays  
September  
12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>**