

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 7, No. 3

<http://ImmanuelHouston.org/>

February 2018

"All You Need is Love..."

Back in 1967 The Beatles sang us a tune about love; many people would agree with their idea that love is the most important thing in life. February 14th is known as a day for lovers. On Valentine's Day many of us will buy chocolates, flowers, or some sparkly object for the object of our love. We do this in an effort to show them how much we care and how much they mean to us. I know I have something special in mind as a special token to my wonderful wife, and I'm sure many of you might have something special planned as well.



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."*



This February 14th holds the opportunity for us to experience an even deeper love because this year Valentine's Day is also Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Season of Lent. God's love song to you is found in His action to save you. He loves you so very much. So much, in fact, that He was willing to come and take your sin upon Himself trading you His righteousness, and then giving you eternal life in paradise and in exchange undergoing the death sentence for your sin. God loves you.

On Ash Wednesday you have the opportunity to reflect on God's love for you and what it means to you. What it means both in your eternal life, but also how we live this life here and now in response to His loving action. God didn't get you flowers, chocolates, or even jewelry... instead He gives you Himself.

*~God Bless,
Pastor King*





ECE Classroom Visits

I waited for favorable weather to visit two teachers at our ECE School. January 11th was a beautiful day, but then rain followed. In the basement under the Gym, there are two classrooms, both for pre-K children and the teachers are Mrs. Kasper and Mrs. Luker. I met Margie Alnes, the Aide to Mrs. Luker. The hallway that leads to the classroom is full of playthings, paints, and craft materials. I suppose this is for both classes to use when weather is bad.



I entered Mrs. Kasper's room, introduced myself and asked if I could visit and observe, and she said I could. I counted 10 boys and only 2 girls. I walked around the classroom and stepped

around a rug that I thought was too pretty for me to step on. Education charts have really improved compared to what they were like when I taught school. Charts for the months, days of the week, weather, shapes, and sounds of letters, along with artwork by the children were hanging all around the room. There were also two religious pictures posted where every visitor would see them. Each year, a Bible passage is adopted as the theme for the year, and poster with the passage are hung in all the classrooms and common areas of the ECE so that all the children can read and learn it.



I stepped over to Mrs. Luker's room. At the entrance was a letter for the parents, a reminder for the 100 days celebration on January 24th. I thought it was a good idea for parents,

children, and teachers. Mrs. Luker also had charts as teaching tools, and live plants on the window sills. Both teachers kept the season of winter in the minds of the children, their drawings were of ice bergs, penguins, and other winter images. I liked the charts in both classrooms of the children's birthdays. Each child also has their own cubby box for their personal items and assignments for the day.

The two classes share activities, including exercise and play time in the Gym. Next year's Kindergarten teachers will find Immanuel's children ready for their next year in school.

~Pastor Perez

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Thanks to all of the member volunteers who helped formulate the Serving Schedules and others who provided Calendar information!





Focus on Stewardship

"I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (*2 Corinthians 8:8-9*).

Without commands or even arm-twisting, St. Paul encourages, even challenges, the Church in Corinth to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith by their generosity in giving. He does this because giving generously is a gift of the Spirit given to us through the Gospel.

St. Paul wrote: "But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving" (*2 Corinthians 8:7*). In other words, just as we grow in faith and speech and knowledge of eternal things by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, so also do we grow in giving from the same Spirit through the same Word.

The problem is that the grace of generosity often grows cold in us. It's not so much that we stop giving, but we don't put it first. We treat it like all the other bills that must be paid. It becomes a chore, just one more thing to check off a list of things to do. That empties it

of its spiritual power and robs us of the joy that Christ and the Scriptures assign to it.

On top of that, since this generosity is linked to faith and knowledge of divine things, a lack of excelling in giving is a sure sign that our faith and knowledge of God are under attack as well.

Thus St. Paul points to the foundation of generosity: the generosity of Christ Himself. Even though He was rich, He became poor so that we who are poor might become rich. Thus, the incarnation, suffering, and death of our Lord on the cross is the reason, source, and driving force for our generosity in giving to the church.

And since Christ who was rich became poor so that we might be rich in His grace—of which generous giving is part—so we also who are rich in His grace can excel in pressing His grace into service toward the gracious work of the church.

Pay attention to what you give to the church so that you may excel at it. And if you find that your heart has grown cold or indifferent toward it, immerse yourself in God's Word. Read it at home. Attend Bible Class. Hear and listen to it preached in the Divine Service.

Be reminded of what Christ has done for you in His incarnation, suffering, and death. For this will strengthen your faith and knowledge. And where that excels, so will the grace of giving excel also.

(Stewardship newsletter insert for January 2018, from the LCMS website <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=4964>)

~submitted by Kathy Angst



Sunday School Needs Children!



The year 2018 has not gotten off to a very good start. Our holiday and January attendance has ranged from 1 to 4 students a Sunday. Without children, Sunday school doesn't happen. The joy of sharing the great news of Jesus to the children doesn't happen. The Spiritual growth of our Christian children doesn't happen. As Sunday School Superintendent, I would like to ask for help from parents. The children cannot come unless you bring them. My prayer is that all our families make a new year's resolution to make Church and Sunday School a priority.

We have plenty of room and would love to have all the children from ages 12 and under to join us for an hour of fun and excitement learning about Jesus. Children under 3 are welcome to join us when they bring along their parent or an adult. Your friends are welcome to join us.

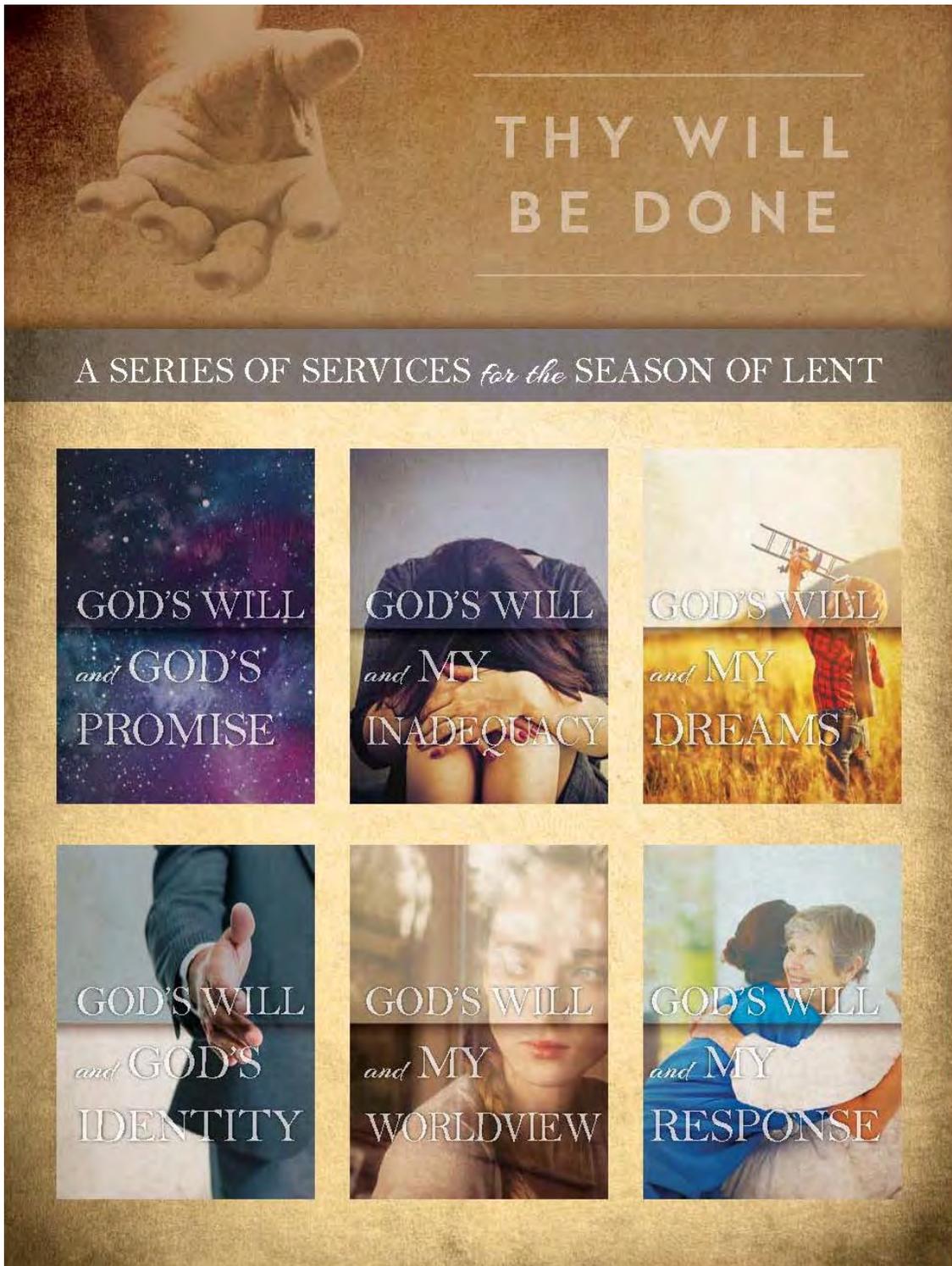
February is a month of Love. We will be having a Valentine party on Sunday, February 11th. The Lenten season starts in February and continues into March. During this time, we will focus on the pain and suffering that Jesus took to the cross for us before rising victorious on that glorious Easter morning.

We ask that you keep our children's ministry in your prayers. We have a very loyal group of teachers and would like to have a growing class of children. Our continued prayer is that everyone will make a commitment to spend time on Sunday morning learning and growing in Christ.

"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*





“Not as I will, but as you will,” Jesus prayed to his Father the night before he went to the cross for our salvation. And that is our prayer as well this Lent as we seek to do God’s will in our lives, as we draw near to the observance of Christ’s suffering, death and resurrection during Holy Week. Each service in the series focuses on a different aspect of God’s will at work among us. Biblical characters are used as insightful reference points each week to guide us in following our Lord more nearly day by day. We invite everyone to join us on Wednesdays during Lent beginning with Ash Wednesday, February 14, for dinner at 5:30 pm and worship service at 7:00 pm.

Polar Express Comes to Immanuel ECE

ECE children enjoyed "Polar Express Day" on Tuesday, December 19th. Children were invited to wear their pajamas to school. Several activities were planned with Hot Chocolate, Popcorn and Candy Canes to enjoy!



~Connie Meave



Winter Weather Learning & Fun

On Friday, January 5, 2018, Ms. Audrey's and Ms. Hayley's classes participated in a snowball fight. The students are learning about Winter weather and got to see firsthand what happens to condensation during a hard freeze, with the ice on the playground slide.



~Audrey Cooper

What To Do If Someone Is Following You

Originally published in Pamela Efferson's real estate newsletter in 2017

The feeling that someone might be following you is terrifying. Though it's not likely, what would you do if the feeling became reality? Being aware of your surroundings is the best way to tell if someone is actually following you. Whether you're on foot or in a vehicle, here's how to know if someone's tailing you and then how to handle the situation:

How to Tell

- Try not to act as if you're looking for the person following you. Keep walking or driving at the same speed, and try not to look over your shoulder.
- Notice small details. Is the car behind you taking all of the same turns? Does the suspicious person take a turn away from you but reappear minutes later?
- Walk or drive more slowly. If you're in a car, move to the right lane and drive a few miles under the speed limit. If you're walking, stop for a moment and notice if people around you stop as well.

What to Do

1. Stay calm. Don't speed or panic because you'll be more likely to cause an accident.
2. Be confusing. Change your route, stop, retrace your steps, take a quick exit or enter a store unexpectedly.
3. Call the police. It's better to let the professionals handle the situation. Let them know exactly where you are and describe the suspect person or vehicle in detail.
4. If you're being followed, don't drive home in case it's a criminal with bad intentions. You don't want them to know where you live. Instead, drive to the nearest police station or busy public area.

~submitted by A. B. Kleb

2018 Voters' Meetings Schedule

Sundays after Bible Class/Sunday School

February 4th

July 22nd

March 18th

September 23rd

June 3rd

December 2nd

Valentines' Day Match

Can you join these couples from the Bible, matching the man's number to the woman's letter? *Answers on page 10*

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| ___ ♥ 1. David | A. Zipporah |
| ___ ♥ 2. Ahab | B. Mary |
| ___ ♥ 3. Abraham | C. Jezebel |
| ___ ♥ 4. Elimelek | D. Esther |
| ___ ♥ 5. Xeres | E. Drusilla |
| ___ ♥ 6. Jacob | F. Sarah |
| ___ ♥ 7. Hosea | G. Gomer |
| ___ ♥ 8. Zachariah | H. Bernice |
| ___ ♥ 9. Joseph | I. Elizabeth |
| ___ ♥ 10. Agrippa | J. Eve |
| ___ ♥ 11. Adam | K. Ruth |
| ___ ♥ 12. Moses | L. Naomi |
| ___ ♥ 13. Boaz | M. Rachel |
| ___ ♥ 14. Felix | N. Bathsheba |

Paper Goods Drive



Naomi Willing Workers is sponsoring a Congregational Paper Goods Drive, on Sundays February 4 and 11.

The collection will benefit the Good Samaritan Group Home located in Cypress, Texas. Please show your support by bringing Toilet Tissue, Paper Towels, and/or Facial Tissues. There will be a box in the Church Narthex for these donations. Thank you for your support!

~Martha McFarland

Mission Report

The Fritsche Family: A La Republica Dominicana

[Excerpt, November-December 2017 newsletter]

It's been a full couple of months since you last heard from us. When is it not busy? Ha! In November we resumed our monthly pre-seminary Bible study now being held in our new mercy center and seminary building. We also took the seminary students and their families to the beach to spend a well-deserved (for them!) day off. One of the dear ladies from our congregation in Las Americas, Doña Maritza, fell and broke her leg a few weeks ago. She spent over two weeks in the hospital, but is now doing well. For me, it meant numerous hospital visits, including a couple of trips wandering the halls of the hospital to actually find her. That's an experience!

Just after Thanksgiving, we completed our first trimester of classes at the seminary. Clarion and I entrusted the three boys to the care of various missionary families and set off on a trip for several days to Panama. Clarion was born and raised there. Her family left Panama in 1999 when ownership and administration of the canal was transferred to Panama. Almost 19 years later, Clarion was the first in her family to return and see how things have changed. It was a pleasure trip for us, but also a bit of work as I did some seminary relations along the way. I had the privilege to preach in two churches while there, one being the very church in which Clarion was baptized and confirmed.

(continued on page 10)

Fritsche Family . . .

(continued from page 9)

We were graciously hosted by LCMS missionaries Rev. Brian and Amanda Gauthier. It was a nostalgic, whirlwind trip, but so wonderful to use our Spanish in another country and meet some dear saints of the Lutheran Church in Panama.

The new trimester has begun. I am teaching only one class so that I can devote myself to more administrative tasks, especially promoting the seminary in our Latin American field. But I am teaching what I love, Hebrew! It's a bit of a challenge as my brain still wants to go from Hebrew to English, but so far so good. The month of December also saw the completion of our solar panel project at the seminary. Thanks be to God, we now have clean, reliable, 24/7 energy at our facility.

Thank you to the many generous donors who have made this possible. This is a huge blessing for us and our students for years to come!

I continue to serve Thursdays through Sundays at Amigos de Cristo in Las Americas, Santo Domingo. I'm so grateful for our Vicar, Paul Flo, who keeps things going there during the week while I'm occupied with seminary responsibilities. One of the constants we are trying to keep going on Saturdays is a time for visits in the community. Every Saturday afternoon, two or three members, a seminary student or two, and I head out to make visits. We spend a couple hours going from house to house, visiting, sharing Scripture, a prayer and blessing with people in our community. It's incredible to see how open people are to sit

and visit, have coffee, hear God's Word and pray with us. Please pray that our visits will be fruitful and open up new relationships. We had our congregational Christmas lunch last Sunday after Divine Service. God blessed us with a number of visitors that day. In the New Year we have a lot of new visits to make!

Thank you for your prayers, love and support as we labor in the Lord here in the DR.



Fritsche Family December 2017 (l-r): Clarion, Sergei, Joel, Andrei, Viktor

*~ In Christ,
Rev. Joel Fritsche*



Valentine's Day Match Answers

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

Support Our Sponsored Missionaries

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Rev. Keith Aschenbeck & Family

Donate online at:

<http://www.alaskamissionforchrist.org>

Mail donations to:

Alaska Mission for Christ, 8100 Arctic Blvd.,
Anchorage AK 99518
(Memo: "Keith Aschenbeck")

Donate via Thrivent Choice Dollars:

<https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-choice/>

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Send a tax deductible gift to:

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OR

Mission Central-LCMS World, 40718 Highway
E16, Mapleton, Iowa 51034-7105

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church-
Missouri Synod, and include Schuller, Puerto
Rico, and A-10898-69376 in the memo line.

Gifts can also be given securely online through
their website <http://www.lcms.org/schuller>

Dominican Republic Ministry Rev. Joel Fritsche & Family

Seminary Support

You can donate online through the following
link: <https://www.lcms.org/givenow/seminary-support>.

By mail, make a check payable to Lutheran
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"Dominican Republic Seminary" in the memo
line. Mail to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Mission Advancement
PO Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

General Support

Support/prayer card:

http://prayercards.lcms.org/Fritsche_DR_April%202017.pdf

To support the Fritsche's ministry, 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

OR

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.



Immanuel Lutheran Church - February 2018



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	MH = Miertschin Hall			1 Bingo @ 1:00–3:00 pm FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00-9:00 pm Bells @ 7:00 pm	2 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	3 Unveil Worship Service (Gym) @ 10:30 am
4 Usher Team #4 Worship Service w/Communion @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am Voters meeting @11:30 am	5 ECE 2018-19 Open Registration Jr. Confirmation @ 4:45 pm Young Life Club Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm	6 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00 am–1:30 pm All Boards @ 7:00 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	7 ECE Chapel @ 9:30 am Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am	8 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00-9:00 pm Bells @ 7:00 pm	9 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	10 Unveil Worship Service (Gym) @ 10:30 am
11 Usher Team #5 Worship Service @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am	12 Jr. Confirmation @ 4:45 pm Young Life Club Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm	13 Naomi Meeting @ 10:00 am FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00 am–1:30 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm ILC Youth Night @ 6:30 pm	14 Valentines Day Ash Wednesday Dinner @5:30-6:30 pm Usher Team #1 Worship Service w/ Imposition of Ashes & Communion 7:00 pm	15 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Hamburger Fry @ 11:00–1:00 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00-9:00 pm Bells @ 7:00 pm	16 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	17 Unveil Worship Service (Gym) @ 10:30 am
18 Usher Team #2 Worship Service w/Communion @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am	19 President's Day Offices/ECE Closed Jr. Confirmation @ 4:45 pm Young Life Club Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm	20 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00 – 1:30 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	21 ECE Chapel @ 9:30 am Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am Dinner @ 5:30–6:30 pm Usher Team #3 Worship Service @ 7:00 pm	22 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00-9:00 pm Bells @ 7:00 pm	23 Unveil Lutheran Church Gym Setup 6:00–8:00 pm	24 Unveil Worship Service (Gym) @ 10:30 am
25 Usher Team #4 Worship Service @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am	26 Jr. Confirmation @ 4:45 pm Young Life Club Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm	27 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm ILC Youth Night @ 6:30 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	28 ECE Chapel @ 9:30 am Dinner @ 5:30–6:30 pm Usher Team #5 Worship Service @ 7:00 pm			



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Return Service Requested

To the Family of:

Love God ~ Care for Others



Ash Wednesday
February 14
Worship Service
with
Imposition of Ashes
and
Holy Communion
7:00 pm
(Dinner 5:30-6:30 pm)