

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 7, No. 5

<http://ImmanuelHouston.org/>

April 2018

Christ is risen! *He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!*

...and so shall you. Alleluia! That is what sets Christians apart, the belief of the resurrection of the body.

Many people believe in life after death, but what does that life look like? Do they believe that we continue on in some separate "spiritual" realm? Maybe they have some misguided picture of us living on clouds, playing harps, having donned wings like angels? What about ghosts, are we doomed to roam forever semi-exiled from the world we know today? I have known more than one who espoused a belief in some sort or another of reincarnation, not to mention those who feel that in the afterlife we eventually get the privilege of losing our individuality and getting to join into some collective cosmic spirit.



The Christian does not need to wonder or fear what comes next. We have been given promise and proof. God has told us in His Holy Word that He will give us a full bodily resurrection from death. To show proof of our future resurrection, He raised Jesus as first-fruits from the dead. God intends us to love life. He intends us to desire to go on living forever! Death is only a temporary enemy caused by sin. Death is an enemy that Jesus Christ has beaten once, and for all!

Jesus came to buy you back from sin, death, and the power of the devil. He didn't just come to redeem your spirit. He has come to deliver the WHOLE you, body and soul. We are promised that on that last day, as followers of Christ that our body and soul will be reunited in glorified form, like the resurrected Christ, to full lives forever.

Easter is the celebration of Jesus rising victorious over death back to life in His physical body. But it is more than that. Easter is the celebration of your future victory over death, and your resurrection as well.

Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

-Pastor King



ECE Visit

The first Tuesday of March, I continued my visits with the E.C.E. teachers of Immanuel. This would finish up my goal of meeting them, observing them with the children, and being able to greet them by name, including the teachers' aides.

In my teaching years, I had experience with K-8th grade, never toddlers or pre-K age. Immanuel's staff is a blessing from God to have the patience and wisdom to do the job. Our Director has her hands full with teachers, children, parents, and the State and Lutheran school guidelines. The Director, Pastors, and Teachers work together to present a devotional, "Chapel," in the sanctuary each Wednesday morning. Each school year a Bible passage is chosen for the year's theme, and every member of the E.C.E. staff and all the children memorize it.

This particular Tuesday, my visit was to one of the classrooms across from Miertschin Hall; the teacher is Hayley Huckleberry. She is a good teacher, and had command of the classroom.

Another teacher, Audrey Cooper, was absent, and her ten students were combined with Ms Huckleberry's class of twenty children. Ms Huckleberry had the assistance of an aide, Estela Tristan. The classroom was full of posters used for teaching and reviewing.



The lesson for the day was the letter "S"; the teacher used pictures and other objects at home or seen by the children to illustrate the letter.

The children had just come in from playtime and the teacher kept watch on one child who had very red cheeks, and left with the child to check for fever. While the teacher was out of the classroom, Ms Tristan, the aide, continued the lesson. After the lesson, the children had some play time. After play time, the children reviewed the days of the week, the months, the weather, and numbers. The Health lesson that followed was the best: teeth care, healthy food, and the best food selections for healthy teeth.

Then it was time for lunch. I went home to have my lunch, and on the way home, I found myself humming the A-B-C song. I encourage all Immanuel congregation members to visit the E.C.E, volunteer to read to the children, and introduce themselves to the teachers.

~Pastor Perez

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Spring is Kite Season!

It's kite time! Kites have a long history; they were originally invented in China. San Antonio has an outdoor celebration every year on the first of March. The City of Houston also has a Kite Festival at Hermann Park every spring. It is quite a show with many kites and families gathered on that day.

I was introduced to kites by my grandmother. I never paid much attention on how to make a kite, but I enjoyed flying them. She would get them off the ground and then let me hold them. The first time I flew one, I ran home excited and told my mother what I did. My mother said, "Oh, your grandmother loves to make and fly kites, she wanted me to also enjoy them, but I'd let the string go; it was boring standing there alone."

Eventually, I began making my own kites. We made small ones and large ones. Our field would be full of boys and girls flying kites. We also had battles with our kites. We would tie razor blades to the outside sticks and try to cut the strings on other kites. I learned how to make a star kite, and two kinds of stick kites. Today very few make their own kites. March and April typically have the most windy days that are good for flying kites.

I love to make small, toothpick-size kites, using heavy sewing thread instead of kite string. And don't forget to add a tail to your kites – it stabilizes the kite so it can catch the wind better. Immanuel member, Henry Dietrich, is also a kite lover. He and his friends made a large kite that was so strong it would drag the holder of the string. I wonder if there are any other kite lovers at Immanuel.

~Pastor Perez



April Events

Home Baseball Games - Apr. 6, 10, 18
@ 6:30 pm

Choir Concert. Sunday, Apr. 8th at 3:00 pm



Gala Auction.
Friday, April 13, 2018
@ 5:30 pm

<http://gala.lutheranhightnorth.org> for tickets



**Lutheran High
North's
36th Annual
Spring Musical**

Friday and Saturday, April 27 & 28, @ 7:00 pm
General admission available at the door for evening performances

Reserved seats

<http://www.lutheranhightnorth.net/musical2018>

Grade School & Senior Citizen Matinees

Thursday, April 26, at 9:00 am & 12:30 pm

Seats need to be requested in advance

2 hour show, drinks and snacks included, freewill donation

Come see all of the talented students, including Immanuel's own Nikki Bolen.

~Lynn Eickemeyer



March 2018

Dear Pastors and Congregations of the Texas District,

Greetings in the name of our risen and victorious Savior, Jesus!

On behalf of the Texas District, thank you for your generosity in 2017. After Hurricane Harvey, we experienced a decrease in giving by a number of congregations in the Houston area. Through December, the Texas District was behind in its overall anticipated congregational giving. However, January 2018 receipts were abundant—the largest ever received for this month. Your tremendous outpouring of generosity has allowed the district to end the fiscal year with a balanced budget. With your support, the district can continue to reach the lost, disciple the saved and care for people.

Over my 12 years as president of the Texas District, I have been encouraged by your ongoing support of a very aggressive mission movement in our district. Throughout its history, the Texas District has responded to the need for mission and God has blessed our faithfulness in sharing the Gospel with many new people moving to Texas.

Thank you again for your tremendous generosity and for your continued support of our mission in Texas.

Your partner in mission,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Hennings". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Ken" on the first line and "Hennings" on the second line.

Rev. Ken Hennings
President

March 9, 2018

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the Joy of the Resurrection hold you fast until the day of Life Everlasting!

Our Lord God tells us that His ways our not our ways and His thoughts our not our thoughts. When God called me and my family to serve in Alaska we did so anticipating that we would do so for many years, possibly even through retirement. But the only thing certain about our future is that we will spend eternity in the presence of the Almighty Father because of the blessed grace of Christ.

God's will for our life in this world, on the other hand, can and does often take many turns. Several weeks ago I received a Divine Call to serve as the Pastor for the body of Christ at Grace Lutheran Church in Victoria, TX. Over these past weeks I visited with the folks at Grace Lutheran, discussed the Call with folks here in Alaska, and have spent hours in prayer by myself and with my family.

After much consideration we have accepted with peace the Call that God has placed before us through prayers and the work of the Holy Spirit to serve the people of Grace Lutheran Church as their shepherd.

What the near future holds is still a bit of a question as the logistics of moving from Alaska are not simple. Over the next couple of weeks I will be in conversation with both the leadership of Grace Lutheran and Alaska Mission for Christ to determine the next steps that best cares for all involved.

Please continue to keep the people of the Upper Tanana Valley, Denali Lutheran Church, and the Alaska Mission for Christ in your prayers as they now enter into a situation which leaves them absent of a shepherd to serve in their midst. Pray also for my family who, while eagerly looking forward to the move, will have many challenges ahead throughout this transition.

The need for the Gospel has not wavered. Your past support will continue to be used to proclaim the Gospel in Alaska as AMC seeks to reach every community with the Grace of God. If you have any questions about prior or current support that you have given, or where you might desire to see it directed please contact Rev. Todd Roeske, AMC Coordinator at (907) 259-5115 or toddroeske@amclcms.org.

*Keeping you in prayer,
Rev. Keith Aschenbeck
Missionary - Upper Tanana Valley, AK*



ECE GOES TEXAN!





-submitted by Connie Meave



Focus on Stewardship

Our Father in heaven sent His Son, Jesus, to be our savior. His atoning sacrifice is the firstfruits of all the dead, a pleasing aroma to His Father – and ours – so that His perfect life and death count for all who believe in Him.

He claimed us as His own children in Holy Baptism. He sustains and strengthens our faith with His Holy Word and His Body and Blood. As new creatures, who have put on Christ, we bear good fruit. We do the good works prepared for us, which He makes known to us in His Word.

By faith then, trusting in the Word of God, we do what he says because He does not lie and always keeps His promises. For “without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.” (*Heb. 11:6*).

And so the Lord promises: “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.” (*Prov. 3:9-10*).

How do we honor the Lord with the wealth that God has given us in His generosity? By giving it generously to those whom the Lord has called us to love and support: your family, your society, and your church. And His promise is that in so doing, you will never lack.

I can almost hear it now: “But that’s from the Old Testament!” But our Lord Jesus Himself gives us similar promises in the New Testament. He says, at the conclusion of the parable of the talents, “For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance.” (*Matt. 25:29*).

And then at the end of the parable of the dishonest manager, he says: “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.” (*Luke 16:10-13*).

And in His sermon on the mount, he says: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” (*Matt. 6:19-21*).

We have become conditioned against these promises because of their misuse by the peddlers of the prosperity gospel – the guys on TV who say you get rich by putting God in your debt. And thus, we miss out on the fact that God does reward temporal faithfulness in temporal matters with temporal blessings.

(continued on page 9)

Stewardship . . .

(continued from page 8)

It's no quid pro quo. It's all from God's grace, His fatherly divine goodness and mercy. But those Bible passages just quoted do in fact say what they say! It's not the Old Testament's problem. It's ours. It is almost as if we have become so jaded against this that we think it a virtue to be stingy with our offerings.

But our Father in heaven still loves to bless those who bless others. He loves to give to those who give freely and generously. In fact, he challenges us to challenge Him: "Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need." (*Mal. 3:10*).

And so, while we don't give so that we would get, we do receive from the Lord in order to give, and He will bless your giving with more receiving. For "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things" (*Rom. 8:32*)?

(*Stewardship newsletter insert for January 2018, from the LCMS website <https://www.lcms.org/Document.fdoc?src=lcm&id=5053>*)

**Sunday Morning
Adult Bible Class**
The Book of Jonah
Beginning April 22nd



ECE getting in the spirit of a Dr. Seuss birthday celebration.
--photo submitted by Connie Meave



Thank you to everyone who assisted in any way with our Wednesday evening Lenten dinners. The food was delicious and the fellowship a blessing!

~Winnie McNamara

Mission Report

The Fritzsche Family: A La Republica Dominicana

[Excerpt, January-February 2018 newsletter. For the complete issue, see the link from their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/lcmsfritzsche/>]

At Las Americas, after Christmas we jumped back into our routine of visits on Saturdays. We've been very intentional in who we visit on Saturdays. We visit inactive members, the sick and the elderly, but we've also targeted extended family and friends of members. Through recent such visits, we have two baptisms scheduled for Easter and we have opportunity for more teaching, baptisms, and catechism instruction.

We just finished our bi-annual FORO, where our mission partners come for several days of meetings that include reports on our work, strategic planning, overviews of our budget and finances. We also worship and study together AND they spend a Sunday worshipping at one of our missions.

During the FORO, we also dedicated a new sanctuary for our mission in Licey and installed Pr. Sergio Fritzler from Argentina to be the missionary pastor of that congregation. Our Dominican Vicar, Yban Navarro, serves there and, we pray, 1½ years from now that he will be the Dominican pastor of that church plant.

All in all, the Lord continues to provide us opportunities for preaching the Gospel of Jesus. God bless you for being our partners and may He bless your Lenten journey to Calvary. We'll report back in after Easter!

~Pastor Joel Fritzsche

Updates from the Missionary Wife

We have been very blessed as we begin our Lenten journey to the cross. School continues to go well. The boys continue to grow in their use of the Spanish language and we grow more adept at our routine of travel to and from Santiago. Believe it or not, even living in two cities can become routine. Amidst the routine, there are the things we look forward to and enjoy:

Viktor is looking forward to enrolling in an online high school next year. We have enjoyed looking at and discussing options for him. He really enjoys practicing his Spanish with the seminarians and his good friends Martin and Enzo Fritzler.

Sergei is going to begin seeing a new psychologist this month to help him with some of his challenges. He also is looking forward to the study of *The Hobbit* with his older brother. He continues to amaze everyone with his Spanish skills. The Dominican suits him perfectly!

Andrei is extremely excited to finally begin growth hormone treatment. He has been counting down the days to March. We see the doctor today and are anxious to begin the process. How fascinating it will be to see our "pequeño" grow and grow!

As for Mom, she just tries to keep up and keep the routine going. I want to thank you for continuing to follow our missionary journey and supporting us with your prayers and gifts.

~Clarion Fritzsche

Support Our Sponsored Missionaries

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 Church—Missouri Synod and specify "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.

Puerto Rico Ministry Rev. Richard & Gema Schuller

Send a tax deductible gift to:

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

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>



“Bring Your Parents to Sunday School”

Sunday

(All Adults welcome)



When: Sundays, April 8th and 15th

Time: 10:30 - 11:30 am

Where: Downstairs

(Assistance will be provided down the ramps)

*Join Us for Songs,
Devotion and Crafts*



Immanuel Lutheran Church - April 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Easter <i>Usher Team #5</i> Worship Service w/Communion @ 8:00 am <i>Light Breakfast after Service</i>	2 NO Jr. Confirmation Young Life Club In Gym @ 5:30–9:00 <i>NO Evening Bible Study</i>	3 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm <i>All Boards @ 7:00 pm</i>	4 ECE Chapel @ 9:30 <i>Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am</i>	5 Bingo @ 1:00–3:00 pm FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	6	7
8 <i>Usher Team #1</i> Worship Service @ 9:00 am Sunday School- Children & Adults @ 10:30 am ECE Accreditation Dinner	9 ECE Accreditation Jr. Confirmation @ 4:45 Young Life Club In Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm	10 ECE Accreditation Naomi @ 10:00 am FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm ILC Youth Night @ 6:30 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	11 ECE Chapel @ 9:30	12 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	13	14
15 <i>Usher Team #2</i> Worship Service w/Communion @ 9:00 am Sunday School- Children & Adults @ 10:30 am <i>Blood Drive</i> 11:30am-3:30pm	16 Jr. Confirmation @ 4:45 Young Life Club In Gym @ 5:30–9:00 <i>Evening Bible Study @ 6:30–8:00 pm</i>	17 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	18 ECE Chapel @ 9:30 <i>Ladies Bible Study @ 10:00 am</i>	19 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Hamburger Fry @ 11:30–1:00 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	20	21
22 <i>Usher Team #3</i> Worship Service @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am	23 Jr. Confirmation @ 4:45 Young Life Club In Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm	24 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm ILC Youth Night @ 6:30 pm RDCDS @ 7:30–9:30 pm	25 ECE Grandparents' Day ECE Chapel @ 9:30	26 FOD Work Day (MH) @ 10:00–1:30 pm Men's Basketball @ 6:00–9:00 pm	27	28
29 <i>Usher Team #4</i> Worship Service w/Communion @ 9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School @ 10:30 am <i>Social Ministry Door Offering</i>	30 Jr. Confirmation @ 4:45 Young Life Club In Gym @ 5:30–9:00 pm					

Serving Immanuel in April & May 2018

	Easter Sunday April 1	Sunday April 8	Sunday April 15	Wednesday April 22	Sunday April 29
Elder	Mike R.	Mike R.	Mike R.	Mike R.	Mike R.
Acolyte	Emily H.	Lawrence K.	Cameron W.	Lane H.	Jacob K.
Usher Team	#5 Bill O.	#1 Bill E.	#2 Larry G.	#3 Ralph E.	#4 John C.
Media	<i>No Media</i>	<i>No Media</i>	<i>No Media</i>	Karen E.	Jackie A.
Audio	Max B.	<i>No Sound</i>	<i>No Sound</i>	Max B.	Ray T.
Altar Guild	Denise G. Delores Q.	Denise G. Delores Q.	Denise G. Delores Q.	Denise G. Delores Q.	Denise G. Delores Q.

	Sunday May 6	Sunday May 13 (Mothers' Day)	Pentecost Sunday May 20	Trinity Sunday Sunday May 27 (Memorial Day weekend)
Elder	Lonnie A.	Lonnie A.	Lonnie A.	Lonnie A.
Acolyte	Emily H.	Lawrence K.	Cameron W.	Lane H.
Usher Team	#5 Bill O.	#1 Bill E.	#2 Larry G.	#3 Ralph E.
Media	Barbara S.	Karen E.	Jackie A.	Barbara S.
Audio	Gerald O.	Max B.	Ray T.	Gerald O.
Altar Guild	Bob & Martha M.	Bob & Martha M.	Bob & Martha M.	Bob & Martha M.

If you would like to fill in, trade, or substitute please contact the church office. Thank you.



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

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TEXAS

Return Service Requested

To the Family of:

Love God ~ Care for Others



**Gulf Coast Regional
Blood Center**
Commit for Life.[®]

Immanuel Blood Drive

**Sunday April 15th
11:30 am-3:30 pm**

**Contact Church Office to Sign Up
(713) 864-2651 • immanuelhouston.org**