

Connections

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Houston Heights

Vol. 11, No. 7/8

<http://ImmanuelHouston.org/>

June-July 2022

It Is To Your Advantage That I Go Away

It was during the conversation in the upper room on the night when Jesus was betrayed that our Lord makes the shocking statement: "it is to your advantage that I go away."



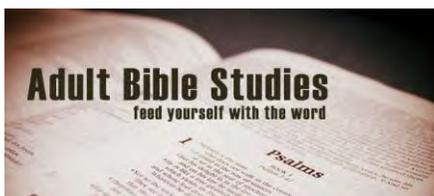
At this point, the disciples did not yet know that Jesus was about to be betrayed, arrested, condemned, and crucified for our sins. They also did not know that Jesus **would rise from the dead having conquered death by his own death. Jesus' words of going away and it being to their advantage were not and could not be understood.**

Even after the resurrection of Jesus, the idea of Jesus returning to the Father is hard to recognize as something good. With Jesus you have the one who was crucified, the one who rose, the one who bears the wounds of the cross. Surely, people seeing Jesus and the wounds **of the cross would believe. Seeing would surely cause believing. Except it doesn't. The issue of belief in God is not an evidence problem. It is a sin problem.**

When Jesus returns to his Father having accomplished all things necessary for our salvation, he sends to us the Holy Spirit who, working through the means of grace, causes to us recognize our sins and also causes us to look to Christ alone for our salvation.

We can neither offer the sacrifice for or sins, nor generate the faith necessary to receive forgiveness. God does both through the work of the Son and the Spirit.

~Pastor Pacey



The evening adult Bible study will resume on Wednesdays every week, beginning on August 3. All are invited!

There are also plans to begin a midday adult Bible study on Wednesdays as well. If you are interested in attending this study, please talk to Pastor Pacey or contact the church office.

The Time Has Come . . .

“For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” (Eccl. 3:1)

At the October 2011 Council meeting, it was suggested that “some sort of regular membership mailing as part of the Outreach Committee” be created. I volunteered to create a new newsletter, tentatively titled, *Connections*, with the first issue to go out at the end of November. And so began this journey.

Now that Immanuel has a weekly emailed newsletter, an updated website, and an increased presence on social media, this monthly printed and mailed newsletter will be discontinued – this will be the last issue.

I leave this task with mixed feelings – I have truly loved being of service to you all in this endeavor, and hope that the newsletter was of actual service. However, I will not miss the almost monthly trips out to the north Houston post office near the airport, many times in late afternoon traffic.

I thank all the members who have faithfully submitted material, proofread issues, and helped prepare the mailings over the years. I also thank all of you who have given me encouragement and support over the years – your kind words have meant so very much to me!

In the future, please send your news and other items to the church office to be included in the weekly email newsletter. May God continue to bless Immanuel with deep and abiding connections in the Word and with each other.

~Barbara Szalkowski, Editor

Lutheran High North News

In December of 2021, the Board of Lutheran Education Association of Houston (LEAH) approved the addition of grades 6-8 at Lutheran High North, which will also transition to LEAH Schools North Academy beginning in the 2022-2023 school year.

If you or a family you know are interested in learning more about this new opportunity and scholarship offerings, please reach out to our Director of Admissions and Marketing at LEAH Schools North Academy, Courtney Adkinson at admissions@lhnliions.org.

For more information about LEAH North Academy, see their website https://www.lutheranhighnorth.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=99365&type=d&pREC_ID=2297214



LEAH SCHOOLS NORTH ACADEMY

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Focus on Stewardship

What Do You Have That You Have Not Received?

Some of the disciples of John the Baptist were questioning him about the baptism and preaching of Jesus. John the Baptist replies to their **questions in this way: "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven"** (*John 3:27*).

Now, John the Baptist says this to show that Jesus, His teaching, and His baptism are from heaven. But this statement is true of everything – everything that we have and are in body and soul. In fact, this is what we are **taught in the meaning of the Apostles' Creed in *Luther's Small Catechism***.

In the explanation of the Creed's First Article, we learn that God has made us and everything in the universe. Luther says:

"He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is

my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him."

In the Second Article of the Creed, we learn that God sent His Son, Jesus, to humble Himself, taking the form of a servant. Luther writes:

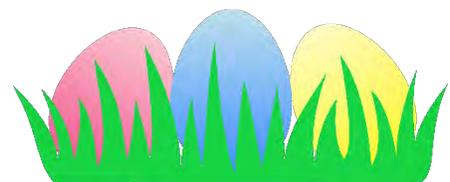
"(Jesus) has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity."

In the Third Article of the Creed, we learn that the fruits of what Jesus Christ, the Son of God, did are given to us through the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Luther explains:

"That I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all **believers in Christ."**

Indeed, a person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. But how easy is this for us to forget about this?

(continued on page 7)



Mother's Day in the Little Lambs Class



Sunday School

We are continuing the Enduring Faith curriculum in Bible Class finishing Unit 2 – *God Redeems His People* and beginning Unit 3 – *Jesus Teaches His Church* in June



Youth Bible Class



First Bible Class with Pastor Pacey

The law of the LORD is perfect,
reviving the soul;
the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple.

Psalms 19:7

Dominican Republic Lutheran Mission News

[Excerpts from the 2nd Quarter Newsletter, for the full issue, see <https://mailchi.mp/865b72bc13cc/news-from-the-dominican-republic-15351457?e=f48f2bf44d>]

Spotlight: Missions

In Las Américas, 10 Baptisms and three confirmations took place on one of the final Sundays of Lent, while three congregations added new members into Christ's family and into His Church on Easter Sunday! In Palmar, 10 people were washed in water and the Word in Holy Baptism, while six confessed their faith in the rite of confirmation. Two individuals were confirmed in Pueblo Nuevo. And in the capital, two men were confirmed in Ozama, one of whom, a scout leader who has been an integral contact in a new community (*pictured below, right*) was also baptized. Praise God for how He is daily adding to the number of those being saved (*c.f. Acts 2:47*)!



Spotlight: Education

The faculty and staff of Concordia the Reformer Seminary held their annual end-of-year meeting the weekend of April 16-17. This is an intentional time together to debrief and evaluate the academic year that is drawing to a close, as well as prayerfully and strategically look ahead. A

stunning statistic emerged as a result of this year's conversations: the academic circle identified some 48 "collaborators" from 16 countries that play some role in helping form future pastors and deaconesses, across all programs!

(continued on page 8)



Stewardship . . .

(continued from page 3)

How easy is it for us to think that what we have in this life is because we have earned it? How easy is it for us to forget that even all our skills, the abilities of our hands and minds – the very ethic to work diligently and to seek to get better at these skills – is given to us from heaven, just as John the Baptist said? How easy is it for us to forget that it is Christ alone – and the work of the Holy Spirit – that reveals His salvation to us, delivers it to us, and not our doing?

Sure, we have responsibility for coming to church, for delving **into God's Holy Word**, and for praying without ceasing. But even these responsibilities are given to us from heaven, not to earn anything but in response to what He has accomplished for us.

A person cannot receive one thing unless it is given to him from heaven. Everything we have, and everything we are – in both body and soul – are gifts from God in heaven. Let us then respond in thanksgiving and give back to Him as He asks us to – with a first-fruits, generous proportion offering of what He has given to us.

[Stewardship newsletter insert for June 2022, from the LCMS website <https://files.lcms.org/dl/f/441BD077-4BF8-4E1E-82C7-7EDC88E2A52B>]



Mission Report Cayman Islands Rev. Dr. Gerald and Heidi Paul

[Excerpt from the May 2022 newsletter, for the entire issue see <https://tinyurl.com/Caymans202205>]



Safe Harbour is back in the South Sound Community Centre
This is where Safe Harbour had had their Sunday services for years – in pre-Covid times. Then the Caymanian government had closed the Centre to the public to use it as a Covid testing facility during the lockdown and beyond. May 1st, 2022, was the first Sunday Safe Harbour was able to have a Divine Service here again, thanks be to God! The first ever for the two of us.

Such joy on the day of the resurrection of our Lord! We had lots of visitors celebrate with us – family of members, visitors back for the first **time after the island’s reopening**, first-time visitors, and our daughter Angelika! How uplifting to have many voices say “Christ is risen. He is risen indeed!”



Heidi completes the second banners! Thanks be to God the second set of banners were completed for Easter Sunday. They boldly proclaim the joyous Easter

acclamation, “CHRIST IS RISEN. ALLELUIA”. These banners help to transform the secular space into a sacred space every Sunday.

~Your Partners in Mission,
Rev. Gerald and Heidi Paul



Mission News . . .

(continued from page 7)

Spotlight: Mercy

Concordia the Reformer Seminary's first deaconess graduation took place in Mexico in May as 23 ladies were consecrated in service to their Lord! Here in the Dominican Republic, we eagerly await the same for 12 women who, having studied and prepared for the past two years, are ready to assume this special role in the Church. They participated in their final intensive course earlier this month (pictured) and will graduate at the end of May alongside two residential pastoral graduates.



~Erin Mackenzie
LAC regional Volunteer Coordinator

Thank you Mrs. Luker for your 18 years of service to Immanuel. Enjoy your retirement!



IMMANUEL PRE-K GRADUATION 2021-2022



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June 6 - July 1 & July 18 - 29

- Around the World
- American Sign Language
- Band
- Basketball
- Cheer
- Drill
- Dance
- Drama
- Softball
- Technology
- Volleyball

Registration: LutheranHighNorth.org

Serving Immanuel June-July 2022

	Pentecost Sunday June 5	Trinity Sunday June 12	Sunday June 19	Sunday June 26
Elder	Phil N.	Phil N.	Phil N.	Phil N.
Usher Team	#1 Larry G. Gerald O. Max B.	#2 Steve H. Lane H. Robert B.	#3 Ray T. Cory S. Joe M.	#1 Larry G. Gerald O. Max B.
Media	<i>No Media</i>	<i>No Media</i>	Jackie A.	Melissa T.
Audio	Ray T.	Max B.	Gerald O.	Ray T.
Altar Guild	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.	Evelyn M. & Bonnie T.

	Sunday July 3	Sunday July 10	Sunday July 17	Sunday July 24	Sunday July 31
Elder	Steve H.	Steve H.	Steve H.	Steve H.	Steve H.
Usher Team	#2 Steve H. Lane H. Robert B.	#3 Ray T. Cory S. Joe M.	#1 Larry G. Gerald O. Max B.	#2 Steve H. Lane H. Robert B.	#3 Ray T. Cory S. Joe M.
Media	Barbara S.	Melissa T.	Jackie A.	Jackie A.	Barbara S.
Audio	Max B.	Gerald O.	Ray T.	Max B.	Gerald O.
Altar Guild	Margaret B. & Melissa T.	Margaret B. & Melissa T.	Margaret B. & Melissa T.	Margaret B. & Melissa T.	Margaret B. & Melissa T.

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



Immanuel Lutheran Church

June 2022



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
			1	2 6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)	3	4	
<i>Pentecost</i> <i>Usher Team #1</i> 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
		7:00pm All Boards 7:30pm Facility Usage (Gym)		6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)			
<i>Holy Trinity</i> <i>Usher Team #2</i> 9:00am Divine Service 10:15am Voter's Assembly 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		7:30pm Facility Usage (Gym)		6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)			
<i>Fathers' Day</i> <i>Usher Team #3</i> 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
		7:30pm Facility Usage (Gym)		6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)			
<i>Usher Team #1</i> 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School	26	27	28	29	30		
		7:30pm Facility Usage (Gym)		6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)			



Immanuel Lutheran Church

July 2022



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
<i>Usher Team #2</i> 3 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School	4 	5 7:00pm All Boards	6	7 6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)	8	9
<i>Usher Team #3</i> 10 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School	11	12 7:00pm Church Council	13	14 6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)	15	16
<i>Usher Team #1</i> 17 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School	18	19	20	21 6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)	22	23
<i>Usher Team #2</i> 24 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School	25	26	27	28 6:00pm Facility Usage (Gym)	29	30
<i>Usher Team #3</i> 31 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Adult Bible Class & Sunday School <i>Social Ministry</i> <i>Door Offering</i>						



Immanuel Lutheran Church
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Sunday June 12

immediately after Divine Service