

GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

FEBRUARY 2019



Living Within God's Means



*"Loving, Sharing, Serving
Jesus with you."*

Immanuel Lutheran Church
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*Keep your life free
from love of money,
and be content with
what you have, for He
has said, "I will never
leave you or forsake
you."*

- Hebrews 13:5

As I was watching stories on the news about the government shutdown, one thing in particular caught my attention. Over and over again I heard stories about people who, after missing one paycheck, couldn't pay their bills or buy food. Are there that many people who live paycheck to paycheck? *CareerBuilders*, an online employment agency, says Yes. 78% of Americans say they live paycheck to paycheck. How sad, especially in one of the world's wealthiest nations!

How could this be? I think that one could come up with a variety of reasons including low wages, high taxes, single-parent households, health coverage, and the economic recession, but not least of these is a materialistic culture that gives us a drive to spend on unnecessary things. I'm dumbfounded when I hear about the cruises or Disney vacations some people make when they can't pay their mortgage and credit card bills. Or that some see cable TV and a high-end phone as a necessary expense while they aren't sure how to afford seeing a doctor.

None of us are immune from this mindset and I suspect that we all could reflect on our recent Christmas expenses and find that we went a bit overboard (Some of you are probably still paying Christmas off!). We get wrapped up in all the outings and gift-giving around the holidays and don't live within our means. I think we would all do well with a little financial planning so that we can have things like an emergency savings and college fund and still be able to give first to those in need. Does that sound impossible? It's probably more possible than you might think. Consider

prioritizing your expenses and make a budget and include setting a little aside in your savings each month. And unless debt is absolutely necessary, avoid it. Do not spend more with your credit card than you have available at the moment.

Why is this topic mentioned in a church gazette? - Because all your wealth is from God and He would like it put to good use (Matthew 25:14ff). He wants us neither to store up all our wealth without using it like the Rich Fool (Luke 12:18-19) nor to squander it like the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11ff). Wealth can easily become an idol (Luke 12:15) and can quickly be lost, to a person's despair (Ecclesiastes 5:13ff). Striving after wealth is meaningless (Ecclesiastes 2:11), but using it for good and being content in what we receive is a gift from God (Ecclesiastes 3:13).

And for those of you who struggle to get by from day to day, remember God's promise to care for you (Matthew 6:30ff) and do not be anxious. Seek first God's kingdom. The riches that are imperishable Christ has purchased for you by His blood. Hear His Word and receive His Sacrament, which are worth more than riches can buy and yet are given to you absolutely free. Don't ever avoid church when you can't put any offering in the plate! We would rather have you come and be filled with the peace of God and the forgiveness, life, and salvation He gives. If God cares so much that He has given you His eternal kingdom through Christ His Son, you can expect that He will take care of your journey through this earthly life too.

Pastor

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .

The season of Epiphany focuses on how God was made manifest in the flesh of Jesus. The church spends time hearing of the miracles, the signs and wonders, of Jesus in the world.

And this made plain to all that Jesus was who He said He was: He was the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only-begotten Son of the Father, in the flesh. For "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

It is no different for us. We are called not just to believe in God in hearts, but also to trust in God in word and deed.

Our faith is lived out in works for our neighbor. Our trust in the Word and will of God is lived out not in word only, but also in deed and in truth.

In other words, the Epiphany of the Lord creates in us an epiphany of our faith in our works of obedience to God who commanded them. By this, our faith is made manifest to the world. It is, as Luther wrote of faith:

"Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1). It kills the old Adam and makes altogether different people, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit.

"Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. And so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises, it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them.

"He who does not these works is a faithless man. He gropes and looks about after faith and good works and knows neither what faith is nor what good works are, though he talks and talks, with many words about faith and good works.

"Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. This confidence in God's grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all His creatures.

"And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith. Hence a man is ready and glad, without compulsion, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, in love and praise to God, who has shown him this grace.

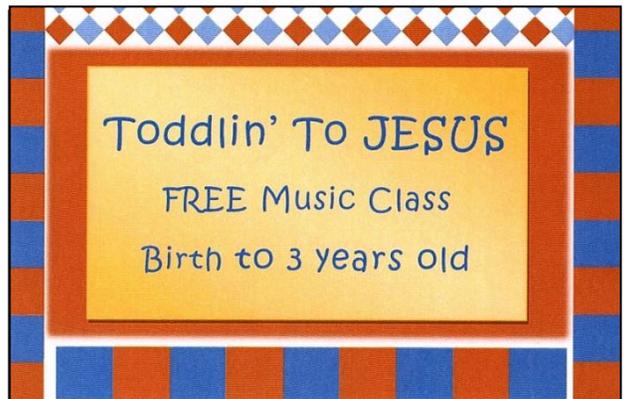
"And thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, quite as impossible as to separate burning and

shining from fire. Beware, therefore, of your own false notions and of the idle talkers, who would be wise enough to make decisions about faith and good works, and yet are the greatest fools." (*Preface to the Book of Romans*)

So, then, let our faith be active by God's power in the Word through the Holy Spirit. And let then our faith be made manifest to the world by what this faith does: serving our neighbor — in church, in the family, and society — with the works of faith in time, talents, and treasures.

- taken from

LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, February 2019



Toddlin' to Jesus is a FREE music class for kids and their parents. Come learn new songs and make new friends. We teach about God's love and grace through stories, songs, and movement. Please call (219) 872-4419 for more information and to sign up!

***Tuesdays at 10:00 a.m. at
Immanuel Lutheran Church
1237 E. Coolspring Ave.
Michigan City, IN 46360***

Next class begins on February 5th



Thanks to all who served in leadership positions for our congregation during 2018. The offering you gave of your time and talents has been greatly appreciated by us all.

Celebrating Baptisms

On Sunday, Jan. 13, Immanuel celebrated the baptisms that took place here last year.



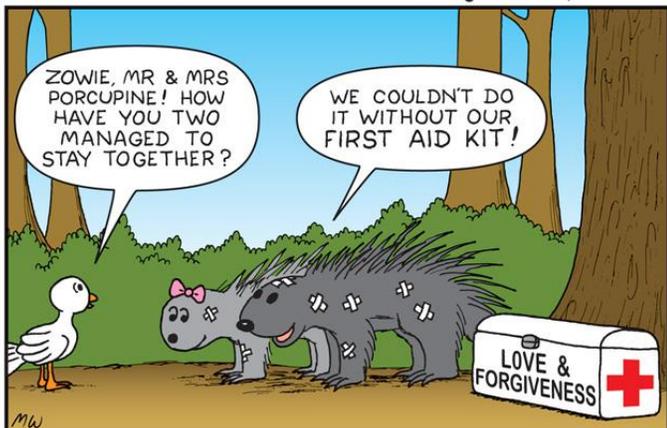
At a noon potluck meal, we honored the 4 children that were baptized here in 2018.

How wonderful to be able to welcome so many into God's family! All present were encouraged to celebrate their baptism birthdays each year in some special way. A pamphlet with suggested ways to observe your special day is available in the Gathering Place. Baptism birthdays are printed on the back page of Gabriel's Gazette, along with birthdays and anniversaries. Please remember to keep the celebrants in your prayers of thankfulness.

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" 1 John 3:1

PORCUPINES

A Joyful Toon by Mike Waters



Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.
- 1 PETER 4:8 NIV



A VALENTINE TEA

is being held
for all high school girls of Immanuel
on
Sunday, Feb. 10, at 3:30 p.m.
at
the home of Janet Solum.
Please come – and bring a friend!
RSVP to Janet Solum, 324-9602.

YOU CAN CHANGE A LIFE!



American Red Cross

**The need is constant.
The gratification is instant.
Give blood.**

BLOOD DRIVE THURSDAY, FEB. 21

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall
1237 E. Coolspring Ave. – Michigan City

3 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Please contact the church at 872-4419, call 1-800-RED CROSS or go to redcrossblood.org to schedule your blood donation appointment.



Shepherds & Lambs

The Sunday School Newsletter

February 2019



HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

As the New Year comes in, we have a tendency to relive the previous year as we look forward to another year. I listened to a very good talk by Dr. James Dobson on the radio yesterday. It made me think! As he was looking toward this New Year, he prayed that parents make their top priority leading their children to Christ. It made me think of what a special job we have as parents to bring them to the Lord. Who our children are in Christ is what matters! It's God's plan for us as parents. Do you feel that it is important that your children go to Sunday School? Do you worship together as a family? Do you show God in your everyday life? Do you show your children that God is your top priority? Unfortunately, we just have a small window of years to accomplish this before they are on their own. When you get to the end of your life, what matters most...the amount of money you've earned, the job that you have, the number of houses you own? Those things shouldn't matter. Who you love, who loved you, and what you've done in the service of the Lord, should be what's most important. If you believe that way, live that way! Our children need to be shown our love, guidance, and character shaping. We need to be involved in our children's lives. Give it your best. At the end of 2019, will you have been found faithful to this Christian job as a parent? God's blessings on your endeavor!!

We had a very meaningful Christmas Children's Service.

If you missed it, you missed a very good telling of the birth of our Savior by our students. Almost all of our students were involved and all did a great job!



We welcome a new student to our 3rd grade class. She was brought by a friend and was in our Christmas service. We're glad you're with us!

Twelve students had Perfect Attendance for December!

Great job students!



We are going through the last quarter of our 3-year study through the Bible. It has been a very interesting study from Genesis through Revelation. We have learned some of the well-known stories of the Bible and also some of the stories that the children may not have remembered. Ask your children what their lesson was about and discuss the lesson with them and how it applies to their lives.

In my absence this winter, Jill Palmer and Chelsea Romero will be leading our Sunday School. You may see them for any questions you may have. *See you in the Spring!!!*

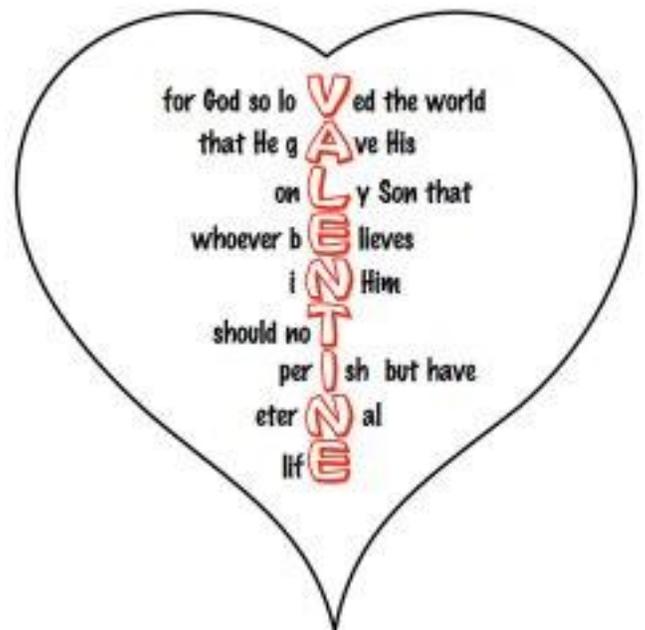


*** Happy New Year to you all! ***



Lynette Johnston-Martin
-- Superintendent

John 3:16





CAN YOU HELP?

Lent is quickly approaching and we will need some help with our traditions. We need 6 groups to call the office and sign up to prepare a meal for our Lenten Suppers on March 6, 13, 20, 27; April 3, 10.

We also need someone who could be the chairperson for the Easter Egg Hunt this year. It is traditionally held the day before Easter at 9:30 a.m. at Creek Ridge County Park. It's not difficult, you collect the candy that is donated to the church office and put the eggs together. Then on Saturday morning, you head to the park, put them out, and enjoy watching the children eagerly gathering them up!



Gabriel's Gazette is published

throughout the year, except for the months of January, July, and August. Officers, board chairpersons, and other members or friends of Immanuel are encouraged to submit articles on upcoming events, updates on congregation activities, and items of interest for our members and friends. Deadline for submission of articles and calendar items is the first Monday of the prior month at 5 p.m. (If that is a holiday, the deadline is the following day.)



MARK YOUR CALENDARS !



The dates have been set for this year's Vacation Bible School:

July 8 -12

Program details will be shared as they develop, but mark it on your calendar now and save the dates. You won't want to miss it!



PLEASE NOTE: The deadline for submitting items for the March *Gabriel's Gazette* is **Monday, Feb. 4.**

