

# GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

JUNE 2021



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

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## Longing for Rest

Most of us yearn for the summer months, not necessarily because we wish to be freed from the long, dark, cold days of winter, but because we see in it opportunities for rest. We've endured many days, weeks, and months at work. For families with children, the school year has been tedious with all its homework and afterschool commitments. Summer offers the opportunity to break the toilsome trend.

Ironically, though, what we end up really doing is planning every waking moment of summer (outside of our jobs) with so many activities, camps, sports, projects, and so forth, that, before we know it summer is over and we wonder what happened! Where was the rest and relaxation? Not only so, but when we do have a moment of nothing-to-do, we have the habit of doing what is least relaxing according to every study: turning on the flickering screens of our TVs, tablets, and phones (sometimes even all at the same time!). Thus, we waste every quiet moment with things that agitate the brain and prevent relaxation.

What does the Bible say about rest? Mankind has had trouble finding rest since the very first man and woman fell into sin. "Cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you...By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground" (Genesis 3:17-19). The curse of sin is that we will literally work ourselves to death! That's why God had to give us a command to rest! "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, [nor any person nor animal nor sojourner in your house]. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested

on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy" (Exodus 20). And in Deuteronomy 5: "Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy... "You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commands you to keep the Sabbath day."

There is a twofold aspect to the Biblical understanding of rest: one physical and the other spiritual. First, our bodies need to stop their slavish activity. We cannot physically work continuously without rest. We will burn out. Christ has redeemed us from such slavery! Yes, work is necessary, but we cannot save ourselves by it. We trust that God graciously provides what we need "without any merit or worthiness in us," as the Catechism says. Instead, we work because we *love*. Our work is an offering of love for our neighbor to the glory of God.

Secondly, our minds and hearts need rest. The Israelites used the Sabbath as a remembrance of God's salvation in the Exodus. We find our Sabbath in Christ's salvation on the cross. For true and lasting rest, even while we are working, we need peace in Christ's work for us. Thus, we need time for Scripture and prayer in the home, and Word and Sacrament in church, so that we keep a peaceful conscience to endure the hardships of this life and the temptations of the devil.

Back before the days that screens ruled our lives and deprived us of what little time we had to rest (and conditioned our attention spans to never really want it), when I was of early elementary school age, I used to spend quite a bit of my summer going to work with my mother who was a secretary

*(continued on pg. 2)*

## Longing for Rest (continued from pg.1)

at my church. I spent much of my days wandering the church campus looking for things to do. This would sound utterly boring and awful to most children these days, and I admit I had long periods of boredom. But that boredom did something for me. Instead of feeling the need to be constantly entertained, I spent long periods of time in the most fascinating space I could find: the sanctuary. At times I sat there in quiet contemplation of deep, theological thoughts (for a child anyway). I looked at the stain-glassed windows, the altar, the paraments, and banners, wondering at their meaning. And I prayed, because although I was taught that God is everywhere, I knew He had a special presence there. I also spent time helping Mom with various chores and talking to the homeless people who slept on our church's front steps, learning the joy of serving and showing mercy and having compassion for people very different from myself. In other words, I learned to find true rest.

I pray that you will find such rest this summer. The big irony of this Gazette article is that I am writing this at 3:30 in the morning! Such is the curse of this life, that we sometimes cannot find such peaceful contemplation at any other hour! Thanks be to God we have Jesus Christ who labored for us and rested in the tomb so that we'd be forgiven for our endless pursuit of work without rest. Christ has redeemed us in order to have true and eternal rest. We have it now in His Word and Sacraments, and we will see it in its fulness when the toils of this life are ended. Amen.

*Pastor*



## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

**JULY 26-30**

**8:30 – 11:30 AM**

**For children ages 4-11  
(or just finished 5<sup>th</sup> grade)**

*"He has done marvelous things!" –Psalm 98:1*

**OUR GOD CAN MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE  
POSSIBLE!**

**He does marvelous things!**

A science lab conducts experiments that explain how things are possible. In Jesus' ministry, He did things that are impossible. His greatest miracle of all was dying on the cross and rising from the dead for our salvation. At *God's Wonder Lab*, discover that Jesus does the impossible for us.

Our enrollment is limited to 50 students this year so that we can follow pandemic safety guidelines, and pre-registration is required. Forms are available in the Gathering Place, or you can register online at [immanuelmc.com](http://immanuelmc.com) and click on the VBS box. One form is needed for EACH child.

### **VBS NEEDS LIST – CAN YOU HELP? PLEASE VISIT THE VBS TABLE TO LET US KNOW**



#### **PROPS & DECORATING NEEDS**

Our decorating theme is a science lab.

- ♦ Large pictures or 3D figures of beakers, microscopes, atoms, clipboard, lab goggles, lab coat, periodic table
- ♦ Scotch tape, masking tape, duct tape
- ♦ 1 or 2 lab coats

#### **CRAFT NEEDS**

- ♦ Suncatcher paints 8-color-pot strips (10 strips needed)
- ♦ Craft sand – purple, neon orange, neon green
- ♦ Small suction cup hooks (50 needed)
- ♦ Assorted color **permanent** markers

#### **ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

- ♦ Hand sanitizer – enough to place throughout the building
- ♦ Sanitizing spray for tabletops, fixtures, and door handles
- ♦ Paper Towels
- ♦ Painters Tape to mark floor positions throughout the building
- ♦ Plastic containers with lids – shoe box size

*Plans are still in development, so watch the weekly bulletin for updates, or check the VBS table in the Gathering Place. If you can lend us an item, please put your name on it and we will return it when VBS is over.*



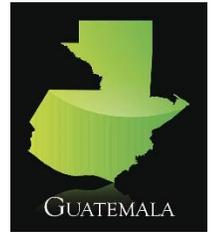
Immanuel's next  
**QUARTERLY  
 VOTERS' MEETING**

will be on  
**TUESDAY, JUNE 8<sup>th</sup>**  
 at 7:00 PM

Congregational  
**MEETING**

All members are encouraged to attend.

**Short-Term  
 Mission Team  
 Will Serve in Guatemala**



*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

*Matthew 28: 18-20.*



**WORSHIP SERVICE IN THE PARK 2021**

**Sunday, July 25, at 10:00 a.m.**

We will be having an in-the-park worship service with communion, followed by our church picnic, at:

**Creek Ridge County Park, located at  
 7943 W. 400 N. in Michigan City.**

The service is set for 10:00 a.m.,  
 with a picnic at 12 Noon.

We will continue to use the safety precautions at the park as we do at the church, and there is plenty of space for us to spread out while still enjoying worship and fellowship with each other, so bring your lawn chairs.

We will have burgers and hot dogs on the grill along with a potluck of picnic items. Please bring a salad or dessert to share, your own drinks, and table service.

Creek Ridge County Park is **very accessible** with a flat terrain and plenty of parking.



This park service will be our Sunday service, so there will **NOT** be a service at the church that day. There will also be a worship service with communion on Saturday evening at 6:00 p.m. at the church.

This event is being hosted by Deb Topolski, Mary Hoppe, and Gary & Laurie Rockensuess. Watch the weekly bulletin for any additional information, or contact the church office.

With prayerful consideration, Dale Huhnke of Immanuel with his sister Linda Cook, and others from Grace Lutheran in Muncie, have committed to do a short-term mission trip to Guatemala in August. Members of this team will work in an eyeglass clinic. They will distribute eyeglasses to those in need. During the daily clinics, team members will test vision, fit, and distribute eyeglasses, all while sharing the Gospel through words and actions. Depending on the number of team members, 100-300 people can be served daily.

The team will be part of *Mission Opportunities Short Term* (MOST Ministries) which is a Christian non-profit organization that connects, trains, and sends short-term mission teams throughout the world, in response to requests from missionaries and church bodies.

MOST Ministries provides for the physical and spiritual needs of more than 10,000 people each year. It is a commitment to the Great Commission that has compelled MOST Ministries to go far and near for the sake of the Gospel since 1989.

Each year MOST Ministries receives numerous team requests from across the globe. Their teams serve in rural and urban settings and locations ranging from coastal plains to mountainous regions from Detroit to Thailand.

MOST Ministries is a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS), a member of the Association of Lutheran Mission Agencies (ALMA), and an Accredited Member of the U.S. Standards of Excellence in Short Term Missions (SOE).

The cost of the trip for Dale will be \$2,500. If you would like to help Dale cover some of his expenses, we will have special goodwill offerings. Please watch your bulletin for upcoming information on giving. Please pray for Dale and his team members as they prepare for their upcoming mission trip. If you want more information you can email Dale at [dalehuhnke@yahoo.com](mailto:dalehuhnke@yahoo.com).



# Shepherds & Lambs

## The Sunday School Newsletter

### June 2021

**FINALLY, summer is here!** During the summer we have lots of extra time to spend together as a family. However, sometimes togetherness poses some problems. Siblings sometimes don't want so much togetherness.



Frictions develop and tempers rise. Sometimes teasing and playing around can be amusing, but usually one person wants to stop before the other. Angry words and tears often bring an end to what started out as fun.

Incorporating a "Stop Rule" in your family will help children, and parents for that matter, know when to quit. The Stop Rule is simple: When a child wants to be done with a teasing or the tickling game, that child just says, "Stop" and the other child must stop the game. Even parents need to stop when a child doesn't want to be teased anymore. A parent must be available to enforce the rule, especially at the initial introduction of the "rule". The Stop Rule teaches children the value of their words. When someone is relentlessly teasing, your child will know that personal boundaries are being violated and want to seek help. This is a helpful rule for creating boundaries in relationships between siblings or playmates and it teaches children adult solutions for solving their childhood problems. Here's to a happy, fun, stress-free summer!!

**I love interjecting God's wonder and commands to our children as Deuteronomy 6:4-9 says.** "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates."



Speaking of summer, it's a GREAT time to walk and talk with your children about the wonderful world God made for us to enjoy . . . lakes for swimming, warm breezes and floating clouds to enjoy, picnics, fresh vegetables,

an array of God's nature, birds, flowers, and loads of other things to enjoy during the summer. "Talk about these things when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." Impress these things, our salvation in Jesus, and our eternal home in Heaven on the hearts of your children!!



**ENJOY YOUR SUMMER AND GOD'S GIFTS TO US!!**

*Lynette Johnston*  
Superintendent



**FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .**

"There are three conversions necessary to every man: the head, the heart, and the purse." Attributed to Luther, though yet to be located in his vast writings, this statement echoes what Jesus taught about hearts and treasures. He said, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6:21; Luke 12:34)

But which conversion comes first? I submit that the order is this: first the head, then the purse, then the heart. Let's explore this topic.

Our Lord Jesus Christ dwelt among us to save us. He took on our flesh, fulfilled the demands of the law in our place, became sin for us, and suffered torture and death on our behalf. He did this in order that we would be free from sin, death, and hell. He gives us what He accomplished through Baptism, Absolution, and the Lord's Supper. And so, He doesn't just do it for us but gives it to us. He makes what He did ours by making us His. Thus, we are called by His name: Christians. We have a new life in Him.

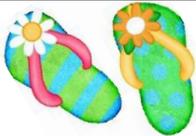
Through the preaching of Law and Gospel, God grants us repentance, a changing of our minds. It is a conversion of the mind. We are called to turn away from our sins and turn toward Him for forgiveness, life, and salvation. For when God calls us away from something, He is, at the same time, calling us to something.

And thus, He calls us to a new life, with new deeds. This is the conversion of the purse. Jesus said that "it is easier for a camel to enter through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God." (Matthew 19:24) "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Notice that our hearts follow our treasures, not the other way around. As Christians, God calls us to invest our treasures in His Kingdom to ensure that the gospel is preached and the sacraments are administered. He calls us to share all good things with the one who teaches us the doctrines of Christ. He calls us to be generous in giving to the church, for it is more blessed to give than to receive.

So where is your treasure? If it is not invested in the kingdom of God, then the only response is repentance – a conversion of the heart – and to begin doing just that. And as our Lord promised, where your treasure is there your heart will be also.

This is not to say that you earn your way into heaven. It is simply to say that as Christians, those who have been made to be temples of the Holy Spirit, who have been given a new life in Christ, who are dead to sin and now alive in Him, we are actually to live – think (conversion of the mind), do (conversion of the purse), and be (conversion of the heart) – a new life in Him. And when you fail, know that God in Christ loves and forgives you and still calls you away from that and to Himself.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, June 2021



**PLEASE NOTE:** There will **NOT** be a newsletter in July or August. The next regular issue of *Gabriel's Gazette*, the September issue, will be mailed out at the end of August. The deadline to submit your articles will be **Monday, August 2.**

