

GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

SEPTEMBER 2021



Home: The First Line of Defense

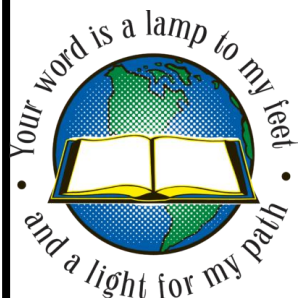


*"Loving, Sharing, Serving
Jesus with you."*

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There is no doubt that a good home protects a child from all kinds of dangers and is the best place for equipping them for all of life's challenges and responsibilities. That's not to say that they receive no help from the outside. School, church, and other organizations are very important for supporting and supplementing what the parents cannot do. But the family remains the most important.

This applies not only to a child's physical, mental, and emotional health, but also spiritual. This is often forgotten by families. During their hectic week of school, activities, and work, parents easily prioritize the seemingly most urgent needs over what is most necessary. The world fills our schedules with times and deadlines for everything but for Christian devotion. Thus, prayer, Scripture, and catechism are barely done. After all, no one is going to drop a grade or fail a class or miss a deadline by skipping prayer or reading the Bible.

On the other hand, there is a real deadline coming. "For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man" (Matthew 24:37). That is, just as the people of Noah's day were going about all their regular business unawares when the flood suddenly swept them away, so it will be on the day of judgment when Christ returns. Satan hasn't forgotten the deadline. He knows he has only so much time left to deceive us into sin before he is thrown into the lake of fire. Thus, he is at work on all Christian families, night and day, to trick us into false belief, despair, or some sinful vice. We have nothing to fear if we abide in Christ. For Christ has power over him and promises that He will not lose

those who are His own. But if we depart from His Word and Sacraments and cease to call upon Him, we will leave ourselves vulnerable to the devil's attacks.

Let us recommit ourselves to Christ's Word through not only church attendance, but also daily prayer and meditation. Use the Small Catechism to keep your children walking in God's Commandments, in prayer, and according to their faith expressed in the Creed. I should not have to be teaching children in 6th and 7th grade to memorize the Ten Commandments. They should already know them by heart, for they've had thirteen years or more to break them!

Especially today, when the mainstream culture is antithetical and hostile to orthodox Christianity, we should be on our guard. Most likely, many of our kids' schools and friends, TV and social media, are teaching them some things that are not compatible with faith in Christ. A good defense against the devil's lies begins in the home, where our children are most heavily influenced.

So, take out that Bible and Catechism and put them in a place where you can easily access them and remember to use them! Bring out a hymnal if you have one. And set apart a time each day for Christian devotion. Do whatever time works best for you. If you need any resources or advice, please ask me. During the school year, I get my kids up earlier than needed (which is not easy!) so that we can have time for devotion. And if we run out of time for the Catechism and Bible memory verse, I quiz them in the car ride to school. I also have the Small Catechism set to music which

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I can play for them in the car wherever we go. Certainly, we all fail at times to make it work, but we repent knowing that we live in Christ's forgiveness and redouble our efforts.

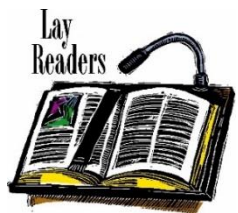
Whether you are single, married with children, or retired, we all need God's Word and prayer to sanctify our days and guard us from the evil one. God bless you and keep you steadfast in the faith, so that when Christ returns, you will be ready to receive Him with joy.

Pastor



PLEASE NOTE:

The September Council meeting will be held on August 31 at 7:00 p.m.



We will be resuming our lay reader program this fall.

Those who are interested in reading the Scriptures for Sunday mornings must attend a

meeting on **Saturday, August 28 at 9:30 a.m.** There we will give instructions for readers, organize the group, and choose a coordinator.

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE . . .



At the end of the first of his chapters on the virtue of faith in *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis provides a helpful reminder, by way of analogy, for the foundation of stewardship. He wrote:

"Every faculty you have, your power of thinking or of moving your limbs from moment to moment, is given you by God. If you devoted every moment of your whole life exclusively to His service you could not give Him anything that was not in a sense His own already. So then, when we talk of a man doing anything for God or giving anything to God, I will tell you what it is really like. It is like a small child going to its father and saying, 'Daddy, give me sixpence to buy you a birthday present.' Of course, the father does, and he is pleased with the child's present. It is all very nice and proper, but only an idiot would think that the father is sixpence to the good on the transaction. When a man has made these two discoveries God can really get to work. It is after this that real life begins. (128-129)."

This is the first thing we are given to confess about stewardship, and it has to do with ownership. God owns everything, and we are simply managers – stewards – acting on His behalf. This is true not only of all that we have in this life (Deut. 8:17-18) but also all that we are in this life (1 Cor. 6:20).

The rest flows from here. Since we are stewards, or managers, of what belongs to God, entrusted to make use of it according to His will, there is an expectation of responsibility and accountability. For the Lord said, "Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more" (Luke 12:48b). And from this comes blessing and reward: "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master" (Matt. 25:21).

We have everything we need to support this body and life from our God's fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us. We have everything we need for our spiritual life also from His merciful hands. On account of the sacrifice of His Son, our Lord Jesus, through the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, we have the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and everlasting salvation delivered to us with absolute certainty that it is ours – not as stewards but as sons (Gal. 4:1-7). Let us then, as His own sons, press all that He gives to us into the service of His church and to His glory.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, September 2021

**Immanuel's next
QUARTERLY
VOTERS' MEETING
will be on
TUESDAY, SEPT. 14th
at 7:00 PM**



Congregational
MEETING

All members of the congregation are encouraged to attend.

Officers, please be present to report to the congregation on the plans and activities of your committees.



September is Christian Education Month

During the month of September, Immanuel is celebrating *Christian Education Month*. At this “back to school” time of year, we may think of children in Sunday School and Catechism Class when we hear Christian Education. But Christian Education is for all of us, a **life-long** process of learning, believing, growing, and serving.

Our theme for this month is *“Did You Ever Wonder . . .”* Did you ever wonder what the colors of the altar paraments mean? Did you ever wonder why we stand, kneel, or sit during different parts of the liturgy? There are probably many things you have wondered regarding the Bible, our faith, or why we do things the way we do at Immanuel. We’d like to give you the opportunity to ask those questions as part of Immanuel’s Christian Education Month.

There will be a “Wonder Box” in the Gathering Place where you can submit your questions, and the answers will be printed in the bulletin each week in September. With Pastor’s help, we will provide a brief answer or give direction to where the answer can be found. Questions requiring a lengthy response are best saved for a one-on-one conversation with Pastor.

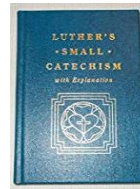
Throughout the month we will share information and opportunities to help us explore God’s Word. We want to learn of the richness of His love for us, and how it equips us to impact the world around us, confident in our understanding of God’s truths and how to apply them to every situation in life.

ADULT INSTRUCTION CLASS



Has it been a while since your Catechism days? Or do you have a spouse or child or friend - high school and older - whom you would like to see learn the basics of Biblical

Christianity? Invite them to our Adult Information Class (AIC) and offer to come with them! Enjoy good conversation and hearing answers to your tough questions as we learn about the Christian faith in a non-threatening environment. Pick up a flyer in the Gathering Place. AIC begins **Thursday, September 2nd at 6:30 p.m.** Contact the church office or sign up on our bulletin board if you are interested.



CATECHISM CLASSES HAVE BEGUN!

The youth catechism classes began Wednesday, August 25, with a meeting of parents and students. Student classes will begin on **Wed., Sept. 1, at 5:00 p.m.**

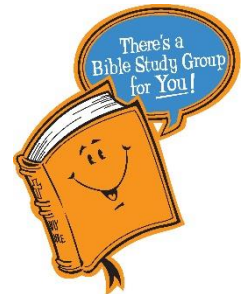
Do you have a child or grandchild in 5th grade through middle school who has not been confirmed? Talk to Pastor about registering your child for class.

BIBLE STUDY CLASSES . . .

Do you attend a weekly Bible study?

We offer many opportunities and a variety of topics—check out the ones below and watch for updates in the weekly bulletin.

All are invited to attend and are always welcome at any of these sessions.



SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDIES

On Sunday mornings these classes are offered at **8:45 AM:**

Pastor Solum leads a study of the CPH book *Ethics of Sex* by Gifford Grobien of CTSFW. This class meets in Fellowship Hall.

A Women’s Bible Class meeting in the Office Conference Room is studying CPH’s *Bless These Lips*.

MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDIES

Tuesday, 6:00 PM – Pastor Solum leads a study on the books of *Luke* and *Acts*. This class meets at Simeon Square.

MONTHLY BIBLE STUDIES

1st Saturday of each month, 8:00 AM – The Men’s Network meets in Fellowship Hall and is studying *The Truth Project*.

1st & 3rd Saturdays of each month, 8:30 AM – Ladies Bible Study & Tea meets in Fellowship Hall and is studying material from the *LWML Lutheran Women’s Quarterly*





Shepherds & Lambs The Sunday School Newsletter September 2021

Rally Day is August 29. To welcome in the next year's lessons, we are spending class time playing Bible Bingo. Children will also have a "sweet treat"! Student Attendance Honors Awards will be given out during the opening. We will list those students receiving an award in the October Gazette.



A special thank you to our teachers who, come covid or snow or whatever, were there to share the love of Jesus with your children. Another special thanks to Deb Topolski for our music and for filling in during the winter in my absence. I really appreciate the dedication of these ladies. God has surely blessed us!



3rd grade students will be receiving their own Bible on Rally Day. We pray that these children will dig into God's Word, realize the depth of His love, and apply the Word to their lives.

As the children return to school, our time with them will diminish a bit. Bonding with our children is so important to their lives as we reinforce our love for them. Here are a few five-second connection moments you can have with your kids.

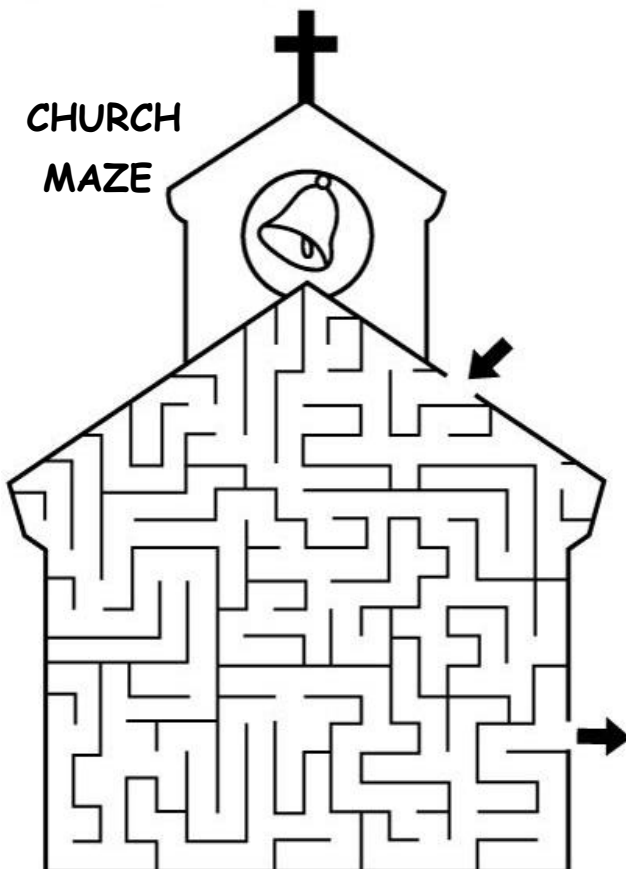


1. Say affirmations such as "I appreciate you."
2. Ask "What was your favorite thing that happened today?"
3. Randomly hang a piece of their art on the fridge, even if you have to dig it out of the closet and your child is in high school.
4. Give each of your kids a toast at dinner time. I bet they'll sit up taller!
5. Ask "if" questions like, "If you could be a superhero, what special powers would you have?"
6. Ask how their friends are doing.
7. Make funny faces at each other.
8. Have a staring contest.
9. Notice something important to them and comment on it.
10. Look them in the eyes and say, "I'm proud of you."

We'll finish with a few more next month! See how many you can use before next month!! ©

--Lynette Johnston-Martin
Superintendent

CHURCH MAZE



Muse Printables ©2018



A Thank You From Jennifer Piening . . .

I'd like to thank all of you for your generous contributions! Without your assistance, I would not have been able to purchase this wonderful Braille display. I feel very blessed to have all of you as a part of my life! God is awesome!

included is a photo of my Handy Tech Braille Star 80. This Braille display enables me to read text on the screen, using refreshable Braille. My previous Handy Tech display lasted 17 years, and it was used at least 40 hours a week!

I use this display not only to read and transcribe documents like the bulletin and the readings, but I also utilize it to browse the web, shop for items, and read articles, documents, and books. In addition, my Braille display is essential in my current occupations. I teach English as a second language to adults, many of whom work for Proctor and Gamble in Costa Rica. I also work as a web accessibility tester, which involves testing web sites and applications, while offering feedback and suggestions in order to make technology and the internet more usable for people who are blind. I've participated in usability studies for companies like Verizon, Federal Express, Walmart, and Google. I am so grateful for these opportunities!

Again, I'd like to let all of you know how thankful I am for your generosity!

--Jennifer Piening



ALTAR GUILD INVITATION

Many talents join together in the service of Altar Guild. We wash, mend, wax, and polish. Altar Flowers are scheduled and some are delivered to members who are shut in. Communion napkins are made and crosses are embroidered on them. Communion bread is baked and cut into cubes. Banners are hung to coincide with the church season or theme of worship. Did you know that someone from our congregation made many of our beautiful banners?

While most Altar Guild members work in one-month increments preparing the Altar for worship and Holy Communion, others provide services as they are needed throughout the year. Thanks be to God for the talents He gives us. He is delighted by the joy we find using His gifts, especially when we use them for the purpose of glorifying Him.

Is there a talent you would like to share or a service that you would like to contribute? There are many areas of opportunity and our Altar Guild members would love to work in unity with you. The next quarterly meeting is **September 16th at 6:30 p.m.** You are always invited to attend our meetings to learn more about Altar Guild.



CHOIR NEWS!!

Immanuel's Adult Choir has not been able to meet for the last 1½ years due to the pandemic. We would like to gather once

again, but we need voices! We are looking for men and women who like to sing and would like to learn the choral harmonies of our hymns. Practices would be once a week and participation in the worship services varies according to the time of the year. If you are interested in sharing your voice, or would just like some additional information, please contact Deb Topolski.

Millions Haven't Heard

Millions haven't heard today
 The story that salvation's free.
 Not just those o'er the ocean deep,
 But loved ones and neighbors to you and me.

Do you hurry along the way
 Caring not if they wither and die?
 Oh, we must quickly seek them
 For the hours so swiftly fly.

Millions are searching for something
 To quiet their troubled soul.
 Ah, dear friend, we must tell them
 Through Christ they attain this goal.

We must heed their urgent plea
 Before it's forever too late;
 If we expect to see them
 Inside of heaven's pearly gate.

So do not walk from day to day
 Hurrying down life's busy road,
 Find time to pray and time to speak
 To those who carry a sinful load.

Millions haven't heard today
 Of the love shown at Calvary,
 And yet, how shall they ever hear
 If not from you and me?



--Ruth H. Underhill
Messiah's Messengers



2021 VBS

"He has done marvelous things!"
 -Psalm 98:1

We had a wonderful week of Vacation Bible School in July! There were 30 children registered and our daily attendance averaged 24 students. In their Bible lesson each day the children learned of Jesus' miracles and how He died for our sins and rose to life again. *Jesus Does the Impossible!*

Thank you to everyone who helped with Vacation Bible School! Thank you for your prayers, financial support, and donations of decorating items, supplies, and craft items. This effort of outreach and evangelism is the work of the whole congregation. Without your support, we would be unable to provide a quality VBS program for the children of our community. Thanks to our wonderful volunteers who used their God-given gifts to share the Good News! Thanks be to God who is the giver of all good things. We are blessed indeed!

We also want to thank our local Meijer store for the donation of a \$100 gift card to purchase our snacks, drinks, and kitchen supplies.

Thanks are also extended to Thrivent for the \$250 Action Team grant they provided in support of our VBS outreach ministry.


MORNING PRIORITY

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice;
 in the morning I lay my requests before you
 and wait expectantly.

- PSALM 5:3 NIV



PLEASE NOTE: The deadline for submitting news for the October issue is **Tuesday, September 7.**

