

GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

JUNE 2022



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

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A Family of Believers

Cultivating a Christian Culture: Living Liturgically

In the last couple Gazette articles, I've been writing about ways we can retain our Christian identity as a community in order to support godly faith and life in the world. The last article was about identifying those negative influences from the world and limiting how much they are able to affect us. This article, I want to talk about what we can do on the positive side of things. What can you practice which allows for the Gospel and Christian life to flourish? These two, of course, go hand in hand. The Gospel is the power we have for this Christian life, without which we are spiritually dead and can do nothing. We want to remain under the power of God's Word for our salvation and service to Christ.

First, this requires that we be an active participant in a Christian congregation, where we can hear the Gospel, commune with Christ and His Church, and develop relationships with other Christians who share this faith and life. This means prioritizing weekly worship first and foremost. It also means that we participate in other aspects of the life of the church, serving and sharing together. We want relationships within which we can be lovingly guided, rebuked, warned, comforted, instructed, and encouraged by fellow Christians. These can be cultivated in Bible classes, while serving on boards or committees, or participating in other kinds of fellowship activities. These activities outside of the Divine Service should not be ignored, as they provide an important aspect of Christian life together.

Secondly, Christian life should be reflected in the home. Setting aside holy times for prayer, Scripture, and devotion during the week are important for keeping our hearts

trusting in God's grace and focused on serving Christ and while we wrestle with all our challenges at home and work. Pick regular times away from distractions, with phones and TV off, gathered with your family. Your hectic schedule must wait while the Spirit puts your hearts and minds in the right place. God's Word and Spirit make your day and work holy to Him. And where you mess up and miss prayers with your family, repent and try again next time. God is good and gracious to forgive and help you.

Follow the Church's calendar. If the secular calendar can have national "talk-like-a-pirate day" (which I am not at all against!) or even celebrates things we should oppose because they promote sin, then we can follow our own calendar for godly edification and enjoyment. I can't recommend highly enough *Treasury of Daily Prayer* by Concordia Publishing House. It contains prayers, Bible readings, Catechism, hymns, and more for each day. There are handy bookmarks to mark your spot. You can do as much as you are able or keep it very basic.

Utilize *The Congregation at Prayer* for your devotions, which is an insert in our weekly bulletin or you can sign up on our website to receive a weekly email. I am reworking it this summer to include commemorations and other celebrations. The Lutheran Church has always had a calendar to recognize particular saints throughout the year. This might sound too "Catholic" to you. The difference is that Lutherans do not pray to them or believe that they are able to help us from heaven. Our confessions give us three reasons for remembering them. First, we thank God for giving faithful servants to His Church.

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Cultivating a Christian Culture: Living Liturgically *(continued from pg.1)*

Second, our faith is strengthened as we see the mercy God gave to His saints of old. Third, their faith and life serve as examples we may imitate according to our calling in life. Our children need good Christian heroes to look up to.

Although much more could be said, let me give you one last exhortation. Do not let summer vacation become a vacation from Christ, who wants you to abide in His Word and Sacrament. Sin and Satan do not take a vacation, nor do the troubles of this world. May our Lord keep you and your families in His grace this summer.

Pastor



TRIVIA NIGHT IS BACK!! JUST IN TIME FOR SUMMER VACATION. Bring the kids out before they forget what they learned in school. It will be held **Friday, June 10th** in Fellowship Hall. Doors will open at 6 p.m. and the contest will start at 7 p.m. Cost is \$10 per player, and we are encouraging teams to be six players per team. You can bring your own food and drinks. Proceeds will go to the Youth Outing at Valparaiso University. See Mark Kline for additional information.



RUTH AND NAOMI UPDATE

Now is a great time to start helping with Ruth and Naomi Quilters! They will continue quilting and making much-needed blankets during the summer months. Ruth & Naomi will meet on **Tuesdays, 1-3 p.m.**, for the months June—August. See Betsy Peters for more information.



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

All members are encouraged to attend.



WORSHIP SERVICE IN THE PARK 2022

Sunday, July 17, 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.

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.

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE...

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?

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.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, June 2022





Shepherds & Lambs

The Sunday School Newsletter

June 2022

SUMMER, SUMMER, SUMMER is just around the corner!! Don't let the busyness of the summer activities keep you and your children from Sunday School and church! It's important that we still make it an important part of our summer! We are again having Vacation Bible School July 18-22. Make sure you sign up!



Summer gives us plenty of opportunities to enjoy nature and to emphasize that the good Lord made these for us to enjoy. From the eruption of the spring tulips, daffodils and many other flowers to the leaves popping out from trees that looked dead in the winter, we can praise God for His glorious world He has shared with us. Remind the children that these things, coming alive again when they looked dead, was like Jesus' death and His resurrection after 3 days. Spend time with your children or grandchildren and take a nature walk. Examine the different kinds of trees, flowers and all the things you see. Impress upon them that God gives us the opportunity to take good care of His world. Picking up litter, recycling, are part of being a good steward of the earth. Most of all, impress on them that we owe all this to God, our Father, who loves us so much that He gave us everything we have out of His divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us. THANKS AND PRAISE BE TO GOD!!

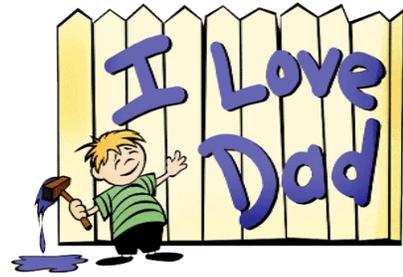


After Labor Day, we are starting a 10-week series on *THE TREE OF LIFE: GOD'S GIFT OF SALVATION!* Pastor's Bible Class and our Sunday School classes will be learning simultaneously on this series. The subject of this series goes along so well with the very beautiful painting by Janet Solum that is on the wall in the Gathering Place. Thank you Janet, for sharing this with us!

ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!



--Lynette Johnston-Martin
SS Superintendent



Father's Day - June 19

Unlock This Message!

Gædsælævðth
□wërldthoth
govtæshvð
nlysen

HERE'S THE KEY!
○=A □=E
▽=I ⊞=O ⊕=U
Write all the words below.

ANSWER: God so loved the world that He gave to us His only Son.



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 1.**



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
JULY 18-22
8:30 – 11:30 AM
For children ages 4-11
(or just finished 5th grade)

Zoomerang: Returning to the Value of Life

*“I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
 Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.”*
 –Psalm 139:14

G'day, Mate! Join the trip of a lifetime as we zoom off to the land down under.

At *Zoomerang*, you'll marvel at the unforgettable wildlife, culture, and beauty of Australia while exploring the wonder and value of life, from the lives of preborn babies to eternal life in the kingdom of God. You will discover that life is valuable. From the tiniest to the oldest, each person is made in the image of God—wonderfully designed to know Him and live for Him!

Register Today!

Registrations are due by July 11. You can register online at **immanuelmc.com** or pick up a form in the Gathering Place. One form is needed for EACH child.

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Would you like to be a part of this outreach ministry? There are many opportunities to help—before, during, and after VBS week. For more information, contact a member of the Board of Parish Education: Peggy Elser, Sherri Kempf, Dawn Bluzma, and Lynette Johnston-Martin.

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

Coming This Fall . . .



Time to Get to the Root of Things!

As Christians, we are called to love, patience, faithfulness, and other fruits of the spirit. But fruits come from trees, right? Embracing the Christian life means turning to Christ, our Tree of Life. In The Tree of Life Series, sermons, bible studies, books, and a thorough children's curriculum all point to God's saving work in Christ through ten key Biblical accounts.

In September, we will begin a ten-week series that will include adult, youth, and children's Bible and Sunday School classes, as well as resources for children, youth, and adults you can read at home through the weeks in between. So, everyone at church, from the oldest to the youngest, can dig into the Scriptures together.

The Tree of Life: God's Promise of Salvation is all about answering the question of how this world God created came to be in such a terrible, confused state and how God stepped forward with a plan and a promise to send His Son, Jesus Christ, to fix it all. Each week, we will explore Bible accounts that guide us through this epic story of salvation from creation, to the cross, to Christ's return on the Last Day.

More information will be provided later this summer, so be sure to watch for it. Plan to be a part of this truly intergenerational program, introducing and reinforcing the same faithful teachings for young and old.

