

GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

SEPTEMBER 2022



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

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The Tree of Life

I am often surprised how little Christians understand the overarching narrative of Scripture and its purpose. The Bible is not just a collection of unrelated stories about people for whom God did great things. The Bible is not just a book of rules either. If you think this way, you've missed the whole point. You've turned the Bible into a nice book of moral teachings and good (or bad) examples of lives to emulate (or not).

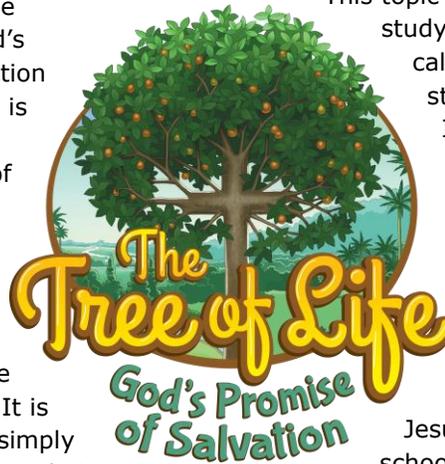
In reality, the Bible is the historical account of God's mission to save His creation through Jesus Christ. It is God's promise of Christ, unfolded in the history of God's Old Testament people, and revealed and fulfilled in the New Testament. To get more personal, it is God's Word of promise in Jesus Christ *for you*. It is not a historical account simply for the sake of history, but that you would believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and have life in His name. The Scriptures reveal God's grace for you in Jesus Christ. By the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures give you the power to trust in God for your salvation.

To combat this ignorance and for the strengthening of your faith, I advise, first of all, that the Scriptures would be read together regularly in the home. You can't expect to understand the narratives if you've hardly ever read them! And it really takes the repeated reading and hearing of them for them to become familiar and to realize how they relate to one another.

Secondly, in your meditation on the Scriptures make the connection between every narrative and the promise of Christ. How does each reading relate to God's central mission? Discuss this with your household. If you don't know, don't feel bad. You can ask me or another Christian. Then keep reading and with more time and familiarity, it will be easier for you to connect the dots.

This topic is the focus of a new Bible study we are doing at Immanuel called "The Tree of Life." This study is for people of all ages. In it, five lessons are given from the Old Testament, and five from the New Testament. At the center is the tree of life, perfect fellowship with our God, from which our sin had barred us, but now we have access through faith in

Jesus Christ. The Sunday school and Sunday morning adult classes (8:45 a.m.), and Simeon Square Bible Study (Tuesdays, 6:00 p.m.) will be using this study. For those who can't come during these times, we are also looking to offer a home Bible study. Let us know if you are interested. The study will begin Sunday, September 11 and Tuesday, September 13. I hope you can attend! Understanding the central message of the Gospel through these key narratives will help you unlock the meaning of the rest of it.



Pastor

FROM THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE...

What is Stewardship?



What is a steward? Most people, when asked this question, will reply: "A manager." That is correct, but it is only half right. A steward is indeed a manager, but he is a manager of what does not belong to him. Someone else is the owner, and the steward manages the owner's property on the owner's behalf.

We are God's stewards. Our stewardship is that God has made us managers of what belongs to Him. For we have brought nothing into this world, and we can take nothing out of it (1 Tim. 6:7). Everything that we have and everything that we are comes from God's fatherly Divine goodness and mercy. God is the owner. Not only because, as the Creator, He created all things. But also, as the Redeemer, He has redeemed, that is, purchased and won all things. It all, therefore, belongs to Him.

We are simply managers of everything in this world. Like Joseph in Egypt, we are put in charge of managing what belongs to God. What a privilege. Think about that for a minute. The all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise God has asked us to manage His possessions on His behalf here on earth. And by doing this, He invites us to take part in the allocation of His good gifts. He wants us to give our input and advise Him in where His gifts are to be used. What a privilege indeed.

What a responsibility. For to whom much is given, much shall be required (Luke 12:48). We are not the owners. And while He puts us as managers, we are still to do with His property what He wants done with it. That means we need to know what His desire and will for His property is.

How do we know this? How can we know the will and mind of God? We find the will of God in the Bible. There God tells us what His will for all His gifts are to be used. He tells us how we are to spend our time and use our talents and treasures. He instructs us in the use of our minds, bodies, and souls.

There is nothing that we have that doesn't belong to Him. "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). He informs us of the big picture, the overarching policy, of how we as His stewards - His managers and custodians - of His property are to do the managing.

And that is what stewardship is. It is simply doing what God wants us to do with what He has given us. As St. Paul said: "Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness" (Rom. 6:13). So, let's dive into the God's Word and listen to what the owner desires from His stewards.

- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter, Sept. 2022

ALL-CHURCH POTLUCK / PICNIC

We will be having a potluck/picnic on

Sunday, August 28th,

in Fellowship Hall. We will provide hot dogs and hamburgers, drinks, and service settings. Please plan on coming and bring a dish to share!



PLEASE NOTE:



The September Council meeting will be held on August 30 at 7:00 p.m.

Officers, please have your budget information prepared for this meeting.

**Immanuel's next
QUARTERLY
VOTERS' MEETING
will be on
TUESDAY, SEPT. 13th
at 7:00 PM**



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.

This year, **beginning Sept. 11**, we are presenting a congregation-wide study of ***The Tree of Life: God's Promise of Salvation***. This program offers an adult Bible Study series in addition to a Sunday School curriculum, all studying the same 10 lessons. The whole family – the whole congregation – can study the same topic each week.

The Tree of Life examines God's plan of salvation as it unfolds through the Old Testament and is fulfilled in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The first five weeks will focus on the Old Testament, while the last five weeks will feature lessons in the New Testament. We will begin with creation and the fall into sin, which brought all the evils we experience into this world. Then we will look at the unfolding of God's promise to send His Son with lessons on Abraham, Moses, King David, and Daniel.

Then, in the second half of the *Tree of Life*, we will focus on Jesus' coming as our Savior. We will look at His birth, Baptism, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, and His promise to return on the Last Day to judge the living and the dead.

By the end of these ten weeks, you will be refreshed with the Bible's overarching theme and storyline, equipped with the tools for unlocking the full riches of each page of Holy Scripture.

This ten-week series will be offered on **Sunday** mornings **8:45-9:45 a.m.**, before the worship service at 10:00 a.m. It will also be offered on **Tuesday** evenings at Simeon Square at **6:00 p.m.** If possible, we would like to offer study opportunities on other days of the week as well. A survey sheet is available in the Gathering Place for you to indicate other preferences if you are unable to attend on Sunday mornings or Tuesday evenings.

Please plan to take part in this congregation-wide study so everyone, from the oldest to the youngest, can dig into the Scriptures together. We also encourage you to invite a guest to attend with you!

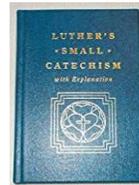
ADULT INSTRUCTION CLASS



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 1st at 6:30 p.m.** Contact the church office or sign up on our bulletin board if you are interested.

CATECHISM CLASSES

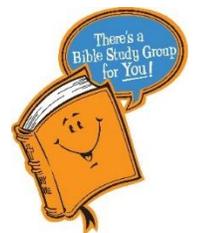


We will kick off the new year of Catechism with our **Parent Meeting on August 31st at 5:00 p.m.** If you are the parent, grandparent, or guardian of a catechism student please plan to attend this meeting. We will discuss what is expected of your child and you for this coming catechism year. **Catechism will begin on September 7th at 5:00 p.m.** for the children.

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 . . .

In addition to the *Tree of Life* Bible Study series, we offer the following opportunities for group Bible Study. All are invited to attend and are always welcome at any of these sessions.



MONTHLY BIBLE STUDIES

1st Saturday of each month, 8:00 AM – The Men's Network meets in Fellowship Hall and offers varying topics.

1st & 3rd Saturdays of each month, 8:30 AM – The 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

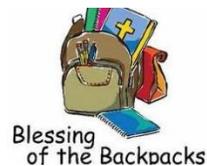
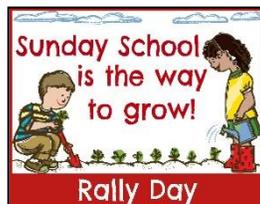
September 2022



Be sure to join us for the new *Tree of Life* series and for the potluck/picnic!!

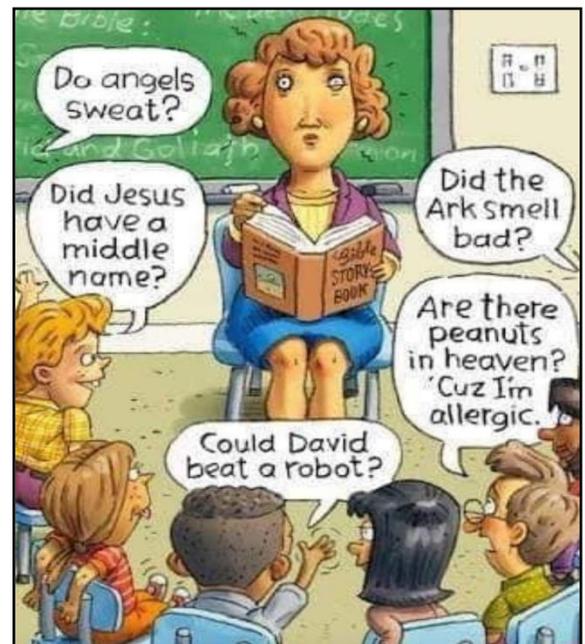
Lynette Johnston-Martin
Superintendent

We hope you had a pleasant summer, are well refreshed, and are ready to begin a new fall Sunday School season!! Well, it's Rally Day time on **August 27-28**. Students who are going into 3rd grade will receive their own Bible on that weekend at either church service. Our Staff is all returning and will be installed for this new season also. Rally Day will be a game day during the SS hour. We will also give out our yearly attendance awards during our opening. To add to our Rally Day activities, we will attend the congregational potluck/picnic and the students will share a song that they learned in VBS.



We blessed the children's backpacks on August 13-14. May God bless and protect our students this year.

Our students will also join the Adult Bible Class in studying a new 10-week series entitled *THE TREE OF LIFE: GOD'S PROMISE OF SALVATION*. All ages will study the same lesson separately each week. We are excited about the new series!



With the conclusion of VBS behind us and the start of the Fall season upon us, we're going to be starting to select a Christmas program. My, My!! Time just marches on to the Christmas Season!! Stay tuned for more information on our selection.

Sunday School will again sponsor Samaritan's Purse - Operation Christmas Child in October.

We put school supplies in the shoe boxes which are sent to children around the world at Christmas time. If you'd like to help us fill these boxes, now is a good time to purchase these items since they are ON SALE. Crayons, colored pencils, pencils, markers, spiral notebooks, coloring books, erasers, rulers, glue sticks, and scissors

are school items needed. You may give those items to the Sunday School office now if you'd like. More information about other items needed will be out in about a month. Thanks for your help!



TRIVIA NIGHT IS BACK AGAIN! This time we will gather together on **Saturday, September 17th**. The Fellowship Hall will once more be the scene of significant informational transference. The time to start will be 7:30 p.m. and our rate per player remains at \$10.00. Get your team ready, bring your own snacks, and be ready to have a good time. Proceeds will be going to help Dale Huhnke's mission trip in October.

2022 VBS



"I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well."

–Psalm 139:14

We had a wonderful week of Vacation Bible School! There were 35 children registered and our daily attendance averaged 28. In their Bible lesson each day the children learned the value and wonder of all life created by God and for God.

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!

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



YOU CAN CHANGE A LIFE!



**American
Red Cross**

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

BLOOD DRIVE - Thursday, August 25 3 p.m. – 7 p.m.

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

**Please register online at www.redcrossblood.org
to make an appointment.**

The American Red Cross is struggling to keep hospital blood bank shelves full and hospitals are being forced to make difficult decisions every day about who should receive a transfusion. Every unit collected is critical!

We are experiencing an urgent need for blood of all types in the USA! By donating your blood, you could help 3 or more people. Cancer patients are in need of platelets because certain cancers and treatments prevent patients from producing their own platelets. Trauma patients need Power Red donation because the red blood cells carry oxygen throughout the body. The Red Cross loves blood from AB donors, positive and negative, called an AB Elite donation, to help burn patients and many other patients, as AB is a universal plasma donor*. Please consider making an appointment for August 25th, here at Immanuel. *Please call 1-800-Red-Cross to schedule an AB Elite appoint



PLEASE NOTE: The deadline for submitting news for the October issue is **Tuesday, September 6.**