



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH - STEGER, IL

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WEBSITE: www.ilcsteger.org



Twin Spires

JULY / AUGUST, 2019 A+ D

A Time of Rest

The children of Israel spent 40 years in the wilderness preparing to enter the Promised Land, desiring the *rest* the Lord promised them there. Yet, when their spies returned, except for Caleb and Joshua, they acknowledged the land's fertility, but despaired at the enormous challenge overtaking it would be. This was the case despite how the Lord delivered them through so much. In punishment, only Joshua and Caleb's families were allowed to finally enter and settle the Promised Land from that generation.

But even those of the younger generation who entered hardly enjoyed the rest the Lord had set before them. As they fell into idolatry and failed to drive out the Canaanites, they were instead soon constantly facing threats or being overrun. So much for a little R+R!

Do you notice a parallel here with contemporary American life? Today we have more "free time", and yet we're busier and more exhausted than ever. Modern technology makes so many of the tasks once necessary for sustaining our lives amazingly efficient, or even obsolete, while presenting more kinds of activities for enjoyment than we can count. Yet there's little we truly marvel at anymore or appreciate with the same depth. We're even bored and disinterested with all the choices before us, though angry and afraid that all of what's out there might be misleading us or leaving us behind. Meanwhile, those who labor are reportedly not working less, but more, and working longer hours with more stress than ever. Work and home life are more often overlapping, and to many, their job is "everything."

Why is all this the case? I suppose we can try to analyze all the causes to no end, but one I'd suggest is that like those around us, we as Christians, aren't listening, receiving, and treasuring God's greater gifts first, and so neither are we apprehending many of these other things presented to us in light of God's word and promises in faith. We don't fear, love and trust in God above all things, and so instead disobey God's commands (Heb. 4:11), and fall into idolatry – trusting other things for our life. But idolatry makes us *idle*... so that we're really doing nothing, though thinking we're busy. This was what happened the Israelites when they fell for idolatry and sought their own material prosperity instead of the Lord. It similarly is the case today.

Rest is not something we attain when all our required work is done and we have lots of money. *Rest is something we receive - a state of receiving from God.* Consider Psalm 95. This psalmist invites us to worship the Lord, remembering *His* work for our salvation, and to receive His continued words and works in faith. The Psalm rejoices that "we are people of [the Lord's] pasture and sheep of His hand," as it recalls His care and provision for us, much like Psalm 23. But then, Psalm 95 ends with these words:

"Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness, when your fathers put me to the test and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work. For forty years I loathed that generation and said, 'They are a people who go astray in their heart, and they haven't known my ways.' Therefore, I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.'"

When it says the Israelites "hardened their hearts" it meant they wouldn't receive what God promised and offered them, like rain bouncing off hard rocks rather than porous soil. It seemed too impossible for them to believe. They thought following His words would be too physically demanding, and depriving them of possessions and opportunities, that it could cost them their lives. They wouldn't trust His grace, power, and promises. And so, what did the Lord do? Just what He said: He gave the things He promised to those few who did believe.

Keep in mind, all of these promises were made in light of His promise of the Savior for all nations the Lord's promise to their forefathers - that the Messiah would come thru this people. That's why God favored the Israelites with these special promises, protection, and help among other things. *Rest and leisure does not mean an absence of activities. It is, rather, the posture of receiving from the Lord that allows us to appreciate and marvel at what He's done and given. It starts with*

knowing Jesus gives us rest from the demands of our sins and the restless conscience we have if we hold on to them, leaving them unrepented. If we are seeking pleasure apart from His word and will, avoiding His commands, we are seeking a false rest, and it will catch up with us eventually, if not drawing His anger. Accordingly, many of us in our leisure time like to do hobbies, make things, play sports, or other activities. Nobody can “do nothing,” no matter how much we try. But if we are not right with the Lord, and knowing ourselves for who we are, we will only be adding to our restlessness and anxiety. And on the other side, if we *are* right with the Lord, perceiving and receiving things in faith, thanksgiving and prayer for what they are, there are many common obligations, tasks, and leisure activities we can enjoy without dread and anxiety.

The whole concept of the Sabbath in the OT was to protect this for us, and point God’s people to the greater rest He has for us in Jesus. He created the world in six days and rested the seventh, setting it apart, thus setting a liturgical pattern for us to live and work in. And remember, it was this way before the fall, *but also after*. He was thereby setting aside this day for Israel so they would especially spend time in His word, remembering His past deeds, and especially His promises of salvation despite their sins. When the Jews got so preoccupied that they began to see it instead as an obligation by which they could earn God’s favor, thus departing from receptive faith that relies on God for salvation, they started wrongly and legalistically nit-picking about Jesus “breaking the Sabbath,” even to heal people. Quite ironically, they were restless in doing so, anxiously watching Jesus in suspicion.

We don’t need to have all the latest and greatest things and experiences to have rest. What we need is contentment and peace with God, having a peaceful conscience amidst them. This is what He gives by Christ’s forgiveness for all our sins in His word and Sacraments, and what He accordingly will gladly guide His people in to the glory of His name.

False Humility – A Deadlier Sin

Have you ever noticed how in America our leaders and candidates for office portray themselves as “humble servants,” and seek to paint their opponents as domineering. Here, though only certain people enjoy the spotlight, and everyone privately wants to have a name for himself before others, we still say that everyone is equal and should be treated as such. We don’t like anyone acting like they’re bigger or better than anyone else, but want everyone, including our leaders, to be someone who everyone can relate to. And we certainly don’t like people coming at us heavy-handedly or judgmentally, even if they’re doing their job. Selfishness and arrogance are particularly despised in our country.

But behind all the great showmen portraying as humble servants, great equalizers, and champions of the “the people,” there is often a hidden sin which is even more deadly: *False humility*.... behind which is the deadly

sin of pride. Scripture gives us quite a few examples of how this sin disguises-but-manifests itself. Consider the rich young ruler of Mark 10:17-31 and Matthew 19. He comes up to Jesus addressing Him, “Good teacher...”, thinking he’s deserving of eternal life. But Jesus, of course, stripped him of his mask. In Matthew Chapters 21-24, the Pharisees, scribes, and Sadducees all approached Jesus like humble students, but all the while trying to trap or defame Him. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Judas humbly addressed Jesus as “Rabbi.” and “Lord,” instead of by His first name.

The point is, while God gives life to all, and loves all, *not all people, things, or accomplishments are equal in every respect*. I think everyone can plainly see this. But *true humility and equality is demonstrated in right faith and obedience to proper authorities*. And it is especially difficult when there is great pressure from peers to do what they want us to do, rather than what God calls us to do in our office or station. Luther has much to say on this point in the Large Catechism where He discusses the Eighth Commandment (paragraph 274ff) and also the Fourth. In our day it is ironically more unpopular to be perceived as “judgmental” when judging justly, than to simply do our duty of judging justly. In contrast to other eras, parents and teachers out of fear of appearing “judgmental,” “unequal,” or domineering are often too afraid of disciplining their children and calling out what is sinful when in right humility they should. In private relationships we don’t respectfully speak up in disagreement with our neighbors out of fear of hurting feelings. Instead we passive-aggressively stew in anger toward them behind their backs (Cf. Lev. 19:15-18). And we don’t honor what is truly honorable.

When things like this happen, where man judges that he knows better than God, he shows despise for God and the orders and roles He established. He is despising God and His gifts. False humility reveals disordered love and wrong faith in the heart.

Jesus, however, makes a new creation, and He makes it in an ordered way. Not all things are equal, and certainly not equal in every respect. His words were affirmed with the resurrection, and His reign is a reign of rightly ordered love according to His word. This is what He redeemed us for – “to live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him [according to His word] in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness (Small Catechism, Second Article). In these, there is great freedom, because you no longer have to wear a mask. We’re certain that the Lord will provide for us, and has a greater place for us. Many of the Gospels in this time of the Church Year (the early part of the Trinity/Pentecost season) carry this theme. Think of Lazarus, for example, who was dirt poor on earth, but was seen in Abraham’s bosom. So, it is with who trust Christ as our pride and joy. When all false humility and earthly positions become exposed and finally pass away, He will still be our Lord, and we’ll be glad to be at His side.

CHOIR & BELL NEWS

LSB 608 “Lord, To You I Make Confession”

1. Lord, to You I make confession:
I have sinned and gone astray,
I have multiplied transgression,
Chosen for myself my way.
Led by You to see my errors,
Lord, I tremble at Your terrors.
2. Yet, though conscience’ voice appall me,
Father, I will seek Your face;
Though Your child I dare not call me,
Yet receive me in Your grace.
Do not for my sins forsake me;
Let Your wrath not overtake me.
3. For Your Son has suffered for me,
Giv’ n Himself to rescue me,
Died to save me and restore me,
Reconciled and set me free.
Jesus’ cross alone can vanquish
These dark fears and soothe this anguish.
4. Lord, on You I cast my burden—
Sink it in the deepest sea!
Let me know Your gracious pardon,
Cleanse me from iniquity.
Let Your Spirit leave me never;
Make me only Yours forever.

This hymn is listed as the Hymn of the Day for the Third Sunday after Trinity. The text was written by Johann Frank and the tune was written by his friend, Johann Cruger. It first was published in Geistliche Kirchenmelodien 1649 (roughly translated as Spiritual Church Tunes). This hymn had eight stanzas of which we have four stanzas in our hymnal.

LSB 533 “Jesus Has Come and Brings Pleasure”

1. Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal,
Alpha, Omega, Beginning and End;
Godhead, humanity, union supernal,
O great Redeemer, You come as our friend!
Heaven and earth, now proclaim this great wonder:
Jesus has come and brings pleasure eternal!
2. Jesus has come! Now see bonds rent asunder!
Fetters of death now dissolve, disappear.
See Him burst through with a voice as of thunder!
He sets us free from our guilt and our fear,
Lifts us from shame to the place of His honor.
Jesus has come! Hear the roll of God’s thunder!
3. Jesus has come as the mighty Redeemer.
See now the threatening strong one disarmed!
Jesus breaks down all the walls of death’s fortress,
Brings forth the pris’ners triumphant, unharmed.
Satan, you wicked one, own now your master!
Jesus has come! He, the mighty Redeemer!
4. Jesus has come as the King of all glory!
Heaven and earth, O declare His great pow’r,
Capturing hearts with the heavenly story;
Welcome Him now in this fast-fleeting hour!
Ponder His love! Take the crown He has for you!
Jesus has come! He, the King of all glory!

The text was written by Johann L. C. Allendorf in the area of Cothen, Germany. He is considered the chief poet in a circle of poets from that area at that time. The tune was written in the Cothen area, as well. It has a triple meter form which keeps it moving. Paul Bunjes wrote the harmonization of the melody. He was the editor of the 1982 Lutheran Worship hymnal.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Voter's Assembly meeting – June 2, 2019

Pastor opened the meeting with a prayer.

Tom Roberts asked if there were any new members which there were none. Tom asked if there were any questions regarding the minutes from the last meeting. A motion to accept the minutes was given by Greg Paul; seconded by Cal Yoder and approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Bill McCarthy gave the Treasurer's report for January through April. ***** PORTION REMOVED FOR PRIVACY REASONS ***** Paul Sengstock made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report; seconded by Roger Lemajeur and passed unanimously.

Board Reports

Paul Sengstock gave the Elder's report. He reported the Circuit Ascension Day Service went well and we had about 47 people attend, half of which were guests. The summer schedule started with Divine Service at 9 a.m. and Bible Study afterwards. They are planning to have a Men's club on 6/27/29 at The Loft around 6:30 p.m. Members from Zion Beecher may be there also.

Roger gave the Trustees report. They reviewed the budget and were able to cut \$3,525.00 from last year's budget and will continue to look for ways to make more cuts. They are looking into the need for no parking signs in our parking lot. ***** PORTION REMOVED FOR PRIVACY REASONS ***** If we purchased signs ourselves it would cost about \$100.00 and if that didn't work we would have to put up signs saying they would be towed with the towing company and number of the company on the sign. The towing company may provide such signs.

The Board of Education report was given by Candy Pfeifer. Sunday school is finished for the year and will restart on 9/8/19.

Committees Reports

The Altar Guild report was given by Lois Genova. Rebekah, Carol Risley, and Pat Hart will take care of June and July.

Christine Meyer made a motion to approve the reports; seconded by Bonnie Roberts and passed unanimously.

Pastor's Report

Pastor had one official act; the funeral of Eloise Offdenkamp. New members taken in were the Tim and Amy Guido family through profession of faith, and Savannah and Michelle by transfer.

July 4th is a Thursday, there will be no service and offices will be closed. During the summer Pastor and Rebekah would like to get families together on Sunday after service for lunch and friendship and discuss things they hope to see with the congregation.

This would start in July. Pastor is going to have a Bible overview this summer for 3 girls who haven't had a Sunday school background. Pastor and Paul Sengstock are delegates who will vote for Synod President and Vice President. Voting will take place between June 22nd and the 25th.

Old Business

A question was asked if on the Treasurer's report the number in parenthesis is correct. The figure \$7,700 for total utilities is correct and cuts to the budget were made to utilities, building maintenance, miscellaneous, and visiting Pastors. The budget shows what we actually spend.

New Business

Lois made a motion to increase Pastor's salary ***** PORTION REMOVED FOR PRIVACY REASONS *****; seconded by Christine Meyer and Cal Yoder. Bill made a motion to increase the salaries of the organist, custodian and secretary by 3%; seconded by Bonnie Roberts and passed unanimously. ***** PORTION REMOVED FOR PRIVACY REASONS ***** Christine made a motion to accept the new

proposed budget as revised; seconded by Lois and passed unanimously.

The Constitution that we approved previously was sent to the Synod and they returned it with a few corrections. Terri went over the corrections. Carol Risley made a motion to accept the Constitution as corrected; seconded by Cal Yoder and passed unanimously. It does not need to be resent to the Synod.

Christine asked how the air conditioning was working and as of now it is working fine. In the past it lost Freon and we cannot put the new Freon in our lines as they are.

There being no other business, Greg Paul made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by John Stachulak and passed unanimously.

The meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Theresa Yoder

MONTHLY INCOME & EXPENSES

***** REMOVED FOR PRIVACY REASONS *****

Happy Birthday



<u>July Birthdays</u>	<u>August Birthdays</u>	
Angela Cryan	Bonnie Roberts	Carol Risley
Brittaney McCarthy	Carol Zartler	Christie Marino
Doreen Meyer	Cynthia Penwitt	Eleanor Zepeda
Evelyn Martinez	Elva Mednansky	Emma Platopoulos
Joan Ristenpart	Kim Sutor	Megan Zepeda
Joe Escoe	Millie Galvan	Richard Marino
Megan Crumbaugh	Robert Zeman	Roger Lemajeur
	Yvonne Newquist	

Happy Anniversary

Happy Anniversary

<u>July Anniversaries</u>	<u>August Anniversaries</u>
Billy and Grace Merrell	Bennie & Sylvia Glossom
Bob and Becky Mann	David & Noreen Mannel
	Dennis & Debbie Rhodes
	Donald & Donna Blankenberger
	Gerald & Linda Zeman

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

Date	4/28	5/5	5/12	5/19	5/26	Ascension Day 5/30	6/2	6/9
Attend/Comm	57/45	60/49	69/54	60/48	56/49	48/33	59/50	68/62

Elders Report

Our Elders Report typically is used to remind people about upcoming events or special services as well as changes in service times. This time around we want to focus on a different topic; stewardship.

One of the main definitions of 'stewardship' is, "the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care." For us Christians and especially as members of Immanuel's congregation, the meaning is similar, first because it means we have special or additional obligations entrusted in our care with regard to Immanuel. Second, it means that together, we should do whatever is reasonably within our power to support our church, its employees and congregational members, as well as the work of the church and its preaching. So how do we be good stewards for Immanuel?

Good (or proper) stewardship requires we be good fiduciaries of those things entrusted to us; we watch out and take care of our church and its members. We've said this before that one way of looking at this is that we should try to take care of our homes like we would our church, and we should try to take care of our church like we would our homes. For Christians, this all comes together and makes sense. But to help everyone fully understand Immanuel's situation better ... and to help everyone to be good stewards and fiduciaries, we want everyone to be aware of multiple areas where we are lacking and/or need more people to step up.

We realize that this seems to be a common topic, but nonetheless, financially we need more support. Pastor has talked about tithing (giving 10%); some people do it and some do not. But if we could ask each member (or family) to contribute just \$5 more per week, that equates to approximately \$10,000 more in one year and would help us so much. We shouldn't just do that much if we can actually afford more, but this certainly is a start.

We also need people to volunteer and be members on various boards. We especially need Trustees. We currently have only one Trustee, and it is really unfair to burden that one person with all of the Trustee responsibilities. A Trustee can be any adult member of the congregation, so we ask everyone to please consider becoming a Trustee.

Hopefully we are getting everyone to pause and think about what they can do (or do more of) in supporting Immanuel. We understand it is easier said than done. But that doesn't change the fact that we still could use more support to facilitate Immanuel's purpose or mission. We ask everyone to please prayerfully consider what they can do to be better stewards and fiduciaries for our Immanuel congregation.

Respectfully Submitted,
Board of Elders



SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES

The Sunday school year is behind us and another soon to begin! I hope that you are all enjoying the summer weather and getting a chance to relax.

To recap this year, the children helped to collect bags and boxes of food for the pantry in Crete. We were able to once again purchase livestock and seedlings for our neighbors in developing countries. We received very nice notes from both organizations thanking us for helping others. It's nice to see the smile on the children's faces when they realize how much they've accomplished. As I've said before, these are good ways to teach the children that the whole world is our neighbor.

And, again, thank you for all of your support with their projects. Next year, I plan to do the same projects and maybe a new one as well. Sunday school resumes on September 8th.

Respectfully, the Sunday school Staff

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS

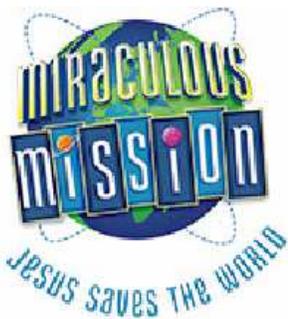


St. John (Beecher) is going to have Vacation Bible School from July 22-26 for ages 4 - grade 8.

Would you like to go on a space travel adventure this summer? Then you won't want to miss "To Mars and Beyond VBS". Kids will explore the wonders of God's power at work within themselves and others. They'll blast off to distant planets on exciting missions. Add to the adventure with out-of-this-world fun, learning, and timeless Bible stories that inspire kids to give glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine!

Register at: <http://www.myvbs.org/StJohnVBS2019>

Registration deadline is Monday, July 15. If you have any questions about VBS, please contact Rhonda Stadt at 946-9017.



St. Paul's (Chicago Heights) is going to have Vacation Bible School from Wednesday, July 31st through Friday, August 2nd from 6 PM - 8:15 PM. Dinner to be served at 5 PM for those attending (for ages 4 - grade 8).

Join us on Saturday, August 3rd from 10 AM - 12 Noon and bring family and friends for a Potluck Picnic! Bring a dish to share and come see what the children have learned with an art show and musical.

Contact: Heather Cabello, Liz Bellamy, or St. Paul's Chicago Heights church office for more details.

SCHEDULE:

(June through August)

Starting June 2nd through August 25th

Sundays:	9:00 AM	Divine Service
	10:30 AM	Bible Class
Thursdays:	6:00 PM	Divine Service
Mondays - Thursdays:	8:15 AM	Matins
Saturdays:	8:15 AM	Matins



**PLEASE NOTE:
VOTER'S ASSEMBLY on JULY 28nd**

SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th.

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**NOTE: Some portions of the Twin Spires
 (online version only) were modified and / or
 removed for security privacy reasons.**

**Please contact the church office or
 webmaster with any questions.**

SCHEDULE:
(June - August)

Sundays:
9:00 A.M. DIVINE SERVICE
10:30 A.M. BIBLE CLASS

Thursdays:
6:00 P.M. DIVINE SERVICE

Mon.-Thurs: 8:15 A.M. MATINS

Saturdays: 8:15 A.M. MATINS

VOTER'S ASSEMBLY JULY 28th

**SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS ON
 SEPTEMBER 8th.**

JULY 2019

VOTER'S MEETING JULY 28th

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 8:30am Matins	4 4 th of July – office closed	5	6 8:30am Matins
7 8:10-8:40am PC&A** 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Bible Class	8 8:15am Matins 9:30am Bible Class	9	10	11	12	13
14 8:10-8:40am PC&A** 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Bible Class	15	16	17	18 8:15am Matins 6:00pm Divine Service	19	20 8:15am Matins
21 8:10-8:40am PC&A** 9:00am Divine Service	22 8:15am Matins 9:30am Bible Class 6:30pm Planning & Coordinating	23 8:15am Matins	24 8:15am Matins 3:30pm Board of Elders	25 8:15am Matins 6:00pm Divine Service	26	27 8:30am Matins
28 8:10-8:40am PC&A** 9:00am Divine Service VOTER'S MEETING	29	30	31			

**Private Confession & Absolution

ELDER

Tom Roberts

USHER SCHEDULE

Joan Kraus/volunteer

6-21-2019

AUGUST 2019

IMMANUEL EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 8:15am Matins 6:00pm Divine Service	2	3 8:15am Matins
4 8:10-8:40am PC&A** 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Bible Class	5 8:15am Matins 7:00pm Board of Trustees	6 8:15am Matins 7:00pm Board of Ed.	7 8:15am Matins	8	9	10
11 8:10-8:40am PC&A** 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Bible Class	12 8:15am Matins	13 8:15am Matins	14 8:15am Matins	15 8:15am Matins 9:30am Board of Ed. 6:00pm Divine Service	16	17 8:15am Matins
18 8:10-8:40am PC&A** 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Bible Class	19 8:15am Matins	20 8:15am Matins	21 8:15am Matins 3:30pm Board of Elders	22	23	24
25 8:10-8:40am PC&A** 9:00am Divine Service 10:30am Bible Class	26 8:15am Matins	27 8:15am Matins	28 8:15am Matins	29 8:15am Matins 6:00pm Divine Service	30	31 8:15am Matins

****Private Confession & Absolution**

ELDER

Paul Sengstock, John Stachulak

USHER SCHEDULE

Erwin Hanck

6-20-2019