

# THE BEACON

## IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, LELAND

### PASTOR'S REFLECTIONS

Dear Parishioners of Immanuel,

In his article, "Lent: A Time for Giving Up or Taking Up?", Dr. Mark Wood calls Christians "to engage in a serious journey through Lent in a way that brings us to a deeper understanding and appreciation of Christ's atoning work" (Rev. Dr. Mark Wood, "Lent: A Time for Giving Up or Taking Up?", on blogs.lcms.org, February 10, 2016). He suggests that by doing so, Christians might go beyond merely "giving things up for Lent," and perhaps consider using the penitential Lenten season as a time to "take up things instead" (Wood, "Lent").

Wood believes that the things Christians should "take up" during Lent are those things that "we've let fall by the wayside as we've lived our lives at the breakneck speed of our culture. It might include taking up a daily devotion or taking up the practice of meditative prayer. If we've been away from the gathering of God's people in worship, we could take up participating in the Divine Service on Sundays as well as the mid-week Lenten services" (Wood, "Lent").

Imagine the difference the Lenten season could be for us and our congregation if all the parishioners of Immanuel went beyond "giving things up" and decided to "take up" reading God's Word daily using our New Testament reading plan (available on the back of the monthly calendars), attending Bible studies (currently studying Hebrews), reading a Lenten devotional (Try *Faithful Facts for Lent* by Dr. Paul A. Maier--available in the narthex), and attending Worship services more regularly? In these ways the Word of God is in the center of our life together as a congregation even as it dwells in each of us richly (Colossians 3:16).

To this end, I invite you to join us for our mid-week Lenten services every Wednesday at 7 p.m. from February 14--March 21. In each service we will reflect on the following parts of our Sunday morning Divine Services and the rich Scriptural tradition behind them:

- Ash Wednesday—February 14
- "Kyrie"—February 21
- "Gloria in Excelsis"—February 28
- "Creed"—March 7
- "Sanctus"—March 14
- "Agnus Dei"—March 21

Together we "take up" receiving the Lord and His gifts as He gives them in His Word and Sacrament. In this way we follow faithfully the one who for us first laid down His life and took it up again (John 10:18).

In Christ,

**Pastor LaFeve**

### SPRING 2018

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## MUSICAL MEANDERINGS

We've finally nailed down a concert series for 2018! I look forward to seeing all of you at these concerts and sharing the great treasure of music with you. The first will be **Wednesday, June 13 at noon**, featuring our newly obtained piano in the church basement. I will play works by Bach, Chopin, Mozart, Rachmaninoff, Debussy, and more on this short program on this short piano!

On **Sunday, July 1 at 3 PM**, we will feature a Pentecost Hymn Festival featuring the Immanuel Adult Choir, instrumentalists, and Kantor Nathan Beethe as organist from Grace Lutheran in Auburn, MI. The hymn festival will also include meditations and readings from Scripture in the order of Evening Prayer.

Last but not least, we are pleased to have Steven Wurst, who is currently pursuing a doctorate in organ performance at Oklahoma University, here at our organ playing a concert on Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM. Stephen is an excellent organist and is the son of Rev. Robert Wurst, who is the pastor at St. Paul's in Good Harbor.

Meanwhile, as we finish our Lenten journey, meditate on this great Lenten hymn.

On my heart imprint Your image, Blessed Jesus, King of grace,  
That life's riches, cares, and pleasures, Never may Your work erase;  
Let the clear inscription be: Jesus, crucified for me,  
Is my life, my hope's foundation, And my glory and salvation! LSB 422

In Christ, *Mark Peters*

## CHURCH EXTENSION FUND

Did you know that Church Extension Fund is not a credit union or bank, but a non-profit corporation of our Michigan District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, designed to allow you to see your savings dollars build and expand the mission and ministry of sister congregations? If you know, thank you for being a partner in this ministry. If you didn't know, then consider God's abundance to you can be invested in Church Extension and used for the blessing of many. Ask Al and Esther Perrault to share the story of CEF. Or, for more information, call 800-242-3944 or visit [www.mi-cef.org](http://www.mi-cef.org).

## QUILTING DEN

We've been busy making more quilts for the homeless as we've had cold weather. We sent 24 quilts, one comforter and one blanket. We are now back to our regular quilting for World Relief.

Lenore Hagstrom

## BOX TOPS

Don't forget to bring your "Boxtops" for education to the can in the Narthex. The box tops benefit Leland Public School. Thanks!

## NOTES FROM THE EVANGELISM BOARD

Pastor & Talitha, Diane & Bob Gregory, and myself attended a retreat in Grand Rapids entitled "Parents of a Prodigal Child". It was presented by the child of a pastor who had been away from the church for 25 years. The retreat documented her inspiring journey back to the church.

The Evangelism Board is sponsoring a seminar entitled "Everyone His Witness". Part one was presented on Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>. The second half will be presented on Saturday, April 14, at 9:00AM. Workbooks are still available for anyone that would like to attend. The second half deals with the LASSIE approach (Listen, Ask, Seek Share, Invite, Encourage), an approach to witnessing to people in our everyday lives.

In conjunction with the Youth Board, the Education Board and the Evangelism Board, a once a month family game night is being considered. More information about game night will be presented at a later date

We continue to be interested in providing out reach opportunities for the congregation.

Cathy Heidel, Evangelism Board

## BOOK REVIEW

### I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH FAITH TO BE AN ATHEIST

By Norman Geisler and Frank Turek, Crossway Books

The basic idea behind the title of this book is that the claims of atheism are so outlandish they cannot be accepted which is a reversal of the way atheism treats the Christian faith. Atheism attacks belief in God by implying that belief in God is so old fashioned, so anti-intellectual that no reasonable person would ever believe in Christ. This book encourages us to ask the questions: "What if the atheists are the ones who are truly the anti-intellectuals? What if the claims of atheists are so outlandish we need an infinite amount of faith to trust what they teach?"

The first part of this book deals with truth and how we can know truth from a philosophic position. The temptation for someone trying to read this book may be, "Golly this is deep water. I think I'll go have that root canal done I have meaning to get to." Keep reading. This book has a lot of valuable information to share and it does get easier.

This book deals with several topics from proofs that God exists to did Jesus rise from the dead, to who is Jesus. And there are others. The authors give a possible reason why people follow evolution when the evidence for evolution is no very good. On page 164 they suggest that evidence for a Creator is suppressed as a way to deal with the guilt that comes from immoral activity. If there is no God there is no one to make moral demands so there is no reason to feel guilty. If this supposition is correct, one way to reach evolutionists is to help them understand the objective nature of right and wrong and the way to remove guilt is through the Christian faith.

There are several charts in this book. One is on page 369. In this chart some of the early church fathers are listed and what they taught about various books of the New Testament. There are some who teach the books of the NT did not come into being until hundreds of years after the time of Christ. Since they are so late, they must be fictional (unbelievers say). But how could the NT be written so late when there are historical records of people quoting them just a few decades after Jesus lived? I feel this chart alone is enough to justify this book in our Church Library.

There is a brief discussion on the Second Law of Thermodynamics (also known as the Law of Entropy). Briefly, this law states that things wear out. But what does this mean for Evolution that says things are becoming more and more organized?

I think the easiest way to summarize this book is that we as Christians do not have to be ashamed of the Bible and what it teaches. It is not as if we decided to trust a science fiction story with no connection to the real world. The things in this book are things we can take to unbelievers. But it is the Holy Spirit that works faith.

CHRIST IS RISEN

Russell Egeler

## NOTES FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Education opportunities at Immanuel:

For children:

- Vacation Bible School for children 3 to 10 years old will again be offered during the last week in June from 9:00-11:30AM.
- Sunday School for children age 3 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade is offered September through May, at 10:30-11:30AM, on the first, second, and fourth Sundays of the month. On the third Sunday, the children join in the fellowship event downstairs.
- Confirmation Class for children in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade is held on Sundays at 4:00PM, September through May.
- Children worship bags are found in the Narthex.

For Youth

- Youth group meets on the third Sunday of the month at 11:00AM in the Net.
- Latin Class is offered for youth of all ages and meets at 5:00 on Sundays.

For Adults:

- Mother and children (MOPS) meet the first and third Tuesdays at 5:45-8:00PM from September through May.
- Men's Bible Study meets the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7:00-8:00PM from September through May.
- Women's Bible Study meets the first and third Mondays from 5:00-6:00PM from September through May.
- Adults meet for Bible study the first, second, and fourth Sundays at 10:30-11:30AM. The third Sunday is fellowship Sunday throughout the year. Adults also meet on Wednesdays from 10:00-11:00AM through the year.