

Immanuel Lutheran News

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Visit our web site at www.immanuelaltamont.org

November 2018

From Pastor Wright

The first chapters of the book of Daniel are very encouraging. They tell us the story of some young men who were taken from their homeland and held as captives in a foreign place. Their very names that spoke of the God of their fathers were taken away from them and they were given names of a false God. Their captors were trying to change the identity of their religion. "Daniel" means "God is my judge." El is Hebrew for the God of Israel. The Babylonians took away this name and gave him the name "Belteshazzar," which means "Bel protect the king." Bel is the name of a Babylonian God, probably Marduk, the bull calf god.

They could take away Daniel's name, but they could not take faith away from his heart. When he was in training to be an advisor to the court and was told to eat foods that were unclean to Hebrews, he asked for leniency for ten days. After that time he was evaluated to be of better health and complexion than those who ate the king's rich food. He was challenged, but he did not compromise what he believed, and God was with him. He risked everything to be faithful to God. This is the courageous faith that God would create in each of us.

His friends Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah had their names forcibly changed to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. When they would not worship the Babylonian king's golden image of himself, they were locked in a hot furnace. They could have been spared if they would bow down to the idol, but they would rather die. Their courage amazes me. God saw their desperate situation, and even though He allowed them to be put into the furnace, he sent an angel to protect them from the heat.

A similar thing happened to Daniel himself. His enemies reported that he would not pray to the king as a god, but prayed privately to the God of Israel. The king's judgment was to force him to stay the night in a lion's den. In the morning he said, "My God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, because I was found blameless before him."

We know that of ourselves no one is blameless before God. All have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God. Jesus Christ, who was blameless,

offered his holiness to us through his sacrifice on the cross. He was declared to be sin for us, so that we might be the righteousness of God.

With a God like this over us, why would we ever hesitate to tell everyone what He has done for us? God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble. We need not give in to fear, no matter what we see happening around us. We can be still and trust in Him to help and deliver us from all evil. We are encouraged to face the future with boldness. We are Christians. We belong to the God of all power and strength. Our God is merciful and forgiving. Our God is love.

I am praying that all of you reading this will be strengthened in faith. You have challenges to face. You have critics of your belief. You face temptations of worldly things. But God is your strength. Think of Daniel. Think of Jesus, enduring all that he suffered, because of you. He loves you. You can be strong because He sent the Holy Spirit to fill you with faith. It's time to let that faith lead you.

Pastor Wright

From Pastor Ross

Dear friends in Christ,

Fall is here, and if you're like me, you love the cool days and chilly nights, the fall foliage and crunchy leaves, and all that the season entails. But since time immemorial, fall has been associated with the end of life: as the plants which surround us appear to shut down and die, so too do we humans connect them to the elderly years, as we prepare for our deaths.

In that way, the *church year* mirrors this: after the long, green season of Pentecost throughout the summer, the final month of the year, from All Saints' Day to the beginning of Advent, we focus on the end of the world. Whether you call it *The Day of the LORD*, *The Second Coming*, or *Judgment Day*, all of our readings focus on the end of this world, and the judgment to come upon all who now live, or have ever lived, upon the earth. Rather than being terrified of this, as Christians, we *want the end to come, as soon as possible!*

Christians are eschatological people! Now *eschatology* is a pretty big word; it comes from the Greek *eschaton* (ἔσχατον) which means "the end"

or “the last.” It’s the word God uses to describe the last days/things in places like John 6:39, Acts 2:17, 1 Corinthians 15:52, 2 Timothy 3:1, and Revelation 22:13. Christians are an eschatological people, because we not only believe that Christ will come again (*from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead*), but we eagerly pray for this to happen (*thy kingdom come*)!

Why would we pray for the end of the world? Because we trust all of God’s promises, of course! The Lord has promised that, when Christ comes again, all the dead will be raised (1 Corinthians 15:51-57), and hell, death, and Satan himself done away with forever (Revelation 20:10-15). It is the end of the this world that reunites us with our God and our faithful departed loved ones, and it is this world passing away that leads to the creation of the new heavens and new earth, where we will all live with God forever (Revelation 21:1-7). As an eschatological people, we not only live each day of our lives mindful, that *this very day* could be the day when Christ returns, but we pray that it is!

The end of the world is when our faith becomes sight, and instead of holding on to God’s promises in Christ by faith, we will see them kept and fulfilled with our own eyes. So yes, we want *The End* to come, the sooner, the better! But this also serves the purpose of keeping us focused as Christians: knowing this world will pass away, it keeps our possessions in the proper light (they’re all temporary), it focuses our time and how we conduct our lives (since the End could come at literally any moment, would you want Christ to return while you’re sinning?), and it especially keeps us minded on doing all we can to share the love of God with those who don’t yet believe – not just because we don’t want them to be sent to the lake of fire, but because eternity would be so wonderful, we want them to be there with the Lord and with us!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Ross, an Eschatological person

State of the Church A congregational meeting was held after worship on October 21 to inform about the blessings and challenges at Immanuel. Members were encouraged to be regular in worship, give a percentage of income as a regular tithe offering, and to serve God through volunteer opportunities in our church and school. Brochures are available on the Parish Hall lobby shelf outlining the information shared at the meeting.

Thanksgiving Service Thursday, November 22 at 9:00 AM we gather to give thanks to the Lord our God for all of the blessings He gives to us: food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

Thank Offering We are gathering an offering to pay off our church’s debt by December 2. Use your congregational “Thank-Offering” envelope or mark your gift accordingly.

My Commitment Members are encouraged to make a commitment for 2019 of time, talent, and treasure. Forms are available to place this record in a sealed envelope in the box under the altar. The commitments will be mailed back to you next fall unopened.

Thanks from the Pastors *We are very grateful to the congregation for Pastor Appreciation Sunday and for the gifts you share with us. Thank you for your love, encouragement, and support as we serve you in the Lord’s ministry with word and sacrament. We love you all.*

–Pastors Jim Wright and Bernard Ross

Thanks for the prayers following my auto accident.

Emily Becker

Prayer Corner

- For healing of Kenneth Budde, Tiffany Dunaway, Abbey Franzen, Wayne Franzen, Mike Herboth, Jim Jones, Pam Kepley, Louis Kroening, Melissa Kruse, Amiee Lowry, JR Newby, Karen Richter, Paul & Shirley Schulze, Doris Strullmyer, Candy Stuemke, Elizabeth Weidner, Dale Wolff, Lisa Wright and others.
- For our pastors, church staff, ALIS school staff.
- For Lutheran missionaries Ted Krey, Andrew Schlund, Britt Odemba and for their families.
- For all who travel
- For peace in the world, an end to violence in the name of God, and for harmony among the nations.
- For those persecuted for their faith in Jesus.
- For police, fire fighters, emergency medical personnel, and those who serve in our military and their families, Chelsea Giovanetti on USS Wasp.

Stewardship Corner

Sometimes people don't like it when pastors talk about stewardship. For some, it hits too close to home. It is easier to talk about bad people in Washington, in history, or overseas than it is to think about what our daily life in Christ is supposed to look like – how we are supposed to love our neighbor.

The fact that we don't like hearing about stewardship certainly means we ought to face it. Here are a few simple and practical realities.

God calls us to first-fruits, sacrificial giving. This means we should give off the top. We should set a percentage of our income as a deliberate gift for the work of the Church and give that first. We write the check to the Lord's work in the Church before we pay the mortgage or pay for our medicine or pay for anything else.

We don't pay for all the stuff we need, and think we need, and then give from what is left over. That is the first-fruits idea. It is hard because we think we need all sorts of other things first. But that is the point of "sacrificial."

Next, how could the starting point for Christian generosity and sacrifice really be anything less than a tithe – 10 percent? The ceremonial law of the Old Testament was never arbitrary. In the Old Testament, the Levites received this tithe so they could be full-time ministers.

Does the New Testament have a ministry that is larger or smaller? It is far larger: "Make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19).

And we are still to have a full-time ministry: "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel" (1 Cor. 9:14).

So, if 10 percent was needed in the Old Testament, and we have a bigger mission need in the New Testament, how can we expect the Lord's work to be done on less than a tithe?

First-fruits, sacrificial, generous giving – that's the way. We shouldn't fool ourselves into thinking that we've out-given God's goodness or that we've given plenty.

We might be tempted to think so but consider – no one in the Church has given plenty because no one has given all. No one has died for his sins. Only the sinless Son of God did that.

Or, as St. Paul said, bringing the Good News of Jesus into the discussion of our giving to support the Lord's work in the Church:

"I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus

Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Cor. 8:8-9).

As you can see, what the Bible commands about our stewardship can sting. It's law, and the law shows our sins. It calls us to repentance.

The law is meant to expose and accuse for the sake of showing us Christ and His fulfillment of the law. If first-fruits, sacrificial giving has you squirming, that's the point.

In Mark's account of the feeding of the 5,000, Jesus took the disciples' five loaves and two fish and blessed them. It was nothing among so many, but, of course, it was plenty. Jesus makes something from nothing.

Mark doesn't say that all the disciples gave Jesus all the bread they had. It is quite possible some of them held something back. But even if they did, that didn't stop Jesus from blessing them. Jesus makes something out of nothing.

He, who fed His people in the desert with Manna every morning, doesn't need their bread. But they need to give it. And what they give, however little it might be, however grudgingly they do so, He blesses it.

He not only blesses those whom He feeds with it, but He blesses them, the givers – not just in that they wind up with (a basket full for each loaf) but that they learned to trust and rejoice in Him.

The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. The Lord gives abundantly or asks us to fast. We do not know what will happen. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

He does all things well and works all things together for good. The disciples don't give their bread to Jesus because it is a good investment. They give it because He is good, they love Him, and they trust Him. Let us go and do likewise. (LCMS Stewardship)

England & Scotland Tour Pastor Wright will give a presentation of his upcoming sightseeing tour of England and Scotland scheduled for July 15-25, 2019 at Immanuel on **Sunday, November 11 at 5 PM** in the Parish Hall. The tour will visit Stonehenge, Salisbury, Bristol, Bath, Stratford, Lake District, Edinburgh, York, Oxford and two days in London. The cost is \$4,299 and includes airfare, accommodations in first class/select hotels, most meals, tour guides, and admissions. Contact Pastor Wright at jimwright1961@gmail.com or call 217-821-2165 for more information. All are invited to the presentation.

Large Print workers needed for Tues. November 6. Sign the chart in narthex or call Eloise 483-6439.

Music Corner

- Christmas Cantata Practice is Sunday from 7:00-8:00 PM in the sanctuary. All singers are encouraged to make this a tremendous Christmas celebration. Performance is December 15-16.
- Mixed Voice Choir rehearsal is Wednesday from 7:15-8:15 PM in the sanctuary. We are preparing for Thanksgiving and Advent seasons.
- Handbell Choir rehearsal is Wednesday at 6:15 PM in the sanctuary. Extra ringers are always needed.

Ladies Aid Meeting November 1, 7PM. Devotion by Carol Sheppard; topic by Pastor Wright. Hostesses are Carol Sheppard and Lisa Wright.

Take advantage of our Electronic Giving: Make your donations to the church automatically. Your offering will be marked with your envelope number. If interested, contact Barb Busby 618-694-5499.

Tax Savings Take advantage of this tax law allowing IRA distributions to go to a Qualified Charity. Consider donating your IRA Required Minimum Distribution to the Church and pay no tax on the amount distributed.

Offering Envelopes – To save money on envelopes, we will be renumbering 2019 offering envelopes.

On Friday, November 9 the ALIS 4th grade class will have a "Salute to Veterans" program at 9:30am in the ALIS gym. Everyone is invited.

LYF Fundraiser at Effingham Panera Bread - Sunday, Nov. 11, 4-8pm: *Simply show the flyer included in the bulletin when you place your order, and our LYF will get a portion of the proceeds!*

Altamont Ministerial Alliance Food Pantry
Needed Items: *Canned meals (spaghettios, etc.) & Ramen Noodles.*

12th Annual Holiday Bazaar Saturday, December 1 at ALIS Gym, 7 South Edwards St, Altamont. Over 30 vendors and crafters will be there from 9AM to 3PM. Concessions and Christmas candy will be sold by LYF.

St. John's Ladies Aid, Louisville, annual soup supper and bake sale on Sunday, November 4, 4-7 p.m. Menu: chili, vegetable soup, sandwiches, desserts. This will be a free will offering. All the proceeds from the bake sale will go to future playground equipment for the children of St. Johns.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church LWML and Ladies Aid Chili Supper is Sunday, November 4, 4PM. Menu: chili, chicken noodle and sauerkraut soup; hot dogs, BBQ, chicken salad and ham sandwiches, pie and cakes. Cost is a free will donation.

St. Paul Blue Point Ladies Aid Soup Supper Sunday, Nov. 11, 4PM. Menu: chili, chicken noodle, BBQ, hot dogs, chicken salad sandwiches, homemade pies and cakes. Free will donation. Bake sale and crafts.

Lutherans for Life meeting Sunday, November 25, 1PM.

Each month, a **LWML-CID mission grant** will be featured. Our mission goal for 2018-2019 is \$95,000; \$71,250 for district grants, \$23,750 will be sent to LWML for national mission grant projects. Grants are paid in full in the order presented as funds become available. Updates are available at lwmlcid.org.

NOVEMBER 2018
LWML-CID MISSION GRANT #3: Fort Wayne & St. Louis Seminary Food Banks (\$10,000)

A necessary part of sharing the Gospel with others and spreading the Word is having trained church workers, including pastors. Having the ability to draw on food bank resources supports the church's mission of training church workers and pastors to spread the Gospel. This grant will assist the staff at these food banks in buying food, toiletries, and other needed items.

Afghans for Cannon Place Quilts for Veterans
The LWML CID will be gathering items for Christmas gifts for 200 veterans at the Danville Convention next April. As part of those gifts, we would like to present them with a new bed covering (quilt). The afghans or quilts need to be full size, 80" x 85" or so. The request was originally for knitted and crocheted afghans (it seems they really like granny square afghans). If you don't knit or crochet, as I don't, a nice quilt would be lovely. This request is being sent out now as it takes time to make these quilts and we will need 200! By my math, this means 16.6 quilts per zone, round to 17. I greatly appreciate all your efforts to make this happen. The ladies of the LWML CID have always come up to my challenges and you make me so happy with your love of serving the Lord. God Bless you all, Laura Strattman, Human Care Committee Chairman LWML CID

Appreciation Banquet for CEFS Meal delivery volunteers at the Carriage House on Tuesday, November 6. Doors open 11AM and meal served at 12 Noon. *RSVP to 483-6912.*

Sunday School Perfect Attendance

September

3 yr olds

Briar Berg
Samuel Stock
Olivia Ross
Aubree Robertson

4 yr olds

Connor Alwardt
Reed Bowman
Silas Stock
Adrie Voelker
Max Wolff

Kindergarten

Barrett Alwardt
Weston Robertson

1st

Olivia Bowman
Konnor Robinson
Daniel Ross
Liam Schnarre
Aubrey Scholes
Spencer Stock
Blaire Suckow
Nolan Winter
Reagan Winter

2nd

Brock Beccue
Chase Pals
Grant Suckow
Maggie Wolff

3rd

Adison Alwardt
Lilly Burrow
Evan Elam
Sophia Long
Carson Milleville
Kolton Robison
Adilyn Schnarre
Reed Stuemke

4th

Blake Berg
Cooper Hankins
Laila Hankins
Landon Savage
Calvin Voelker
Kaiden Wolff

October

3 yr olds

None

4 yr olds

*Connor Alwardt
Harper Arend
*Reed Bowman
Max Wolff

Kindergarten

None

1st

*Olivia Bowman
*Liam Schnarre
*Nolan Winter
*Reagan Winter

2nd

*Brock Beccue
Carter Boehm
Chase Pals
Maggie Wolff

3rd

*Adison Alwardt
Haley Arend
Eli Elam
*Evan Elam
*Carson Milleville
*Adilyn Schnarre
*Reed Stuemke

4th

*Kaiden Wolff

September (Cont.)

5th

Brayden Elam
Kade Milleville
Cooper Pals
Brayden Schnarre
Brock Wendling

6th

Kylie Osteen
Ethan Savage
Abigail Weishaar
Gabriella Weishaar

7th

Della Berg
Dillan Elam
Nathan Stuemke

8th

Matthew Becker
Adam Weishaar

October (Cont.)

5th

*Brayden Elam
*Kade Milleville
Cooper Pals
*Brayden Schnarre

6th

*Kylie Osteen

7th

Claire Boehm
*Nathan Stuemke

8th

None

Note: Some of the students that had perfect for both months are not perfect for the year because they missed one of the two Sundays in August that attendance was taken.

August was not published in the newsletter.

Trinity Lutheran School Raffle – Tickets sold until Jan. 31, 2019 or until sold out. \$50 per ticket for a 2018 Polaris Ranger 500 Solar Red Courtesy of Car Corral, Flora, IL 618-662-2641. Proceeds to Trinity Preschool. Need not be present to win. Drawing held Feb. 9, 2019 or 2 weeks after last ticket is sold. Tickets available at Trinity Lutheran School Office at 217-682-3881.

ALIS needs a volleyball coach January to March season, with practices beginning in December. Contact Bethany Nelson 217-240-0556 bnelson@alisrockets.com.

Men of all ages: Only 5 days left to register for the Men's Target Shooting Retreat at Camp CILCA November 9-10. Bring your own firearms and ammunition. Hear Rev Jonathan Fisk give permission for men to be men. Cost is \$65 per person and includes overnight lodging in the Christian Growth Center and 3 meals on Saturday. Visit cilca.org or call 217-487-7497 for more information.

