

September 2020 IMAGE

Vol. 164, #9

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

3300 24th St. Rock Island, IL 61201-6212

"The MISSION of Immanuel is to glorify God, build the Christian Church, foster Christian fellowship and concern, and join in the worldwide work of winning souls for Christ."

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Recently I passed through an affluent community and espied a billboard with the following saying: "Jesus dressed casual, you can too!" This was followed by the name and address of a local church. The billboard presents an argument. It is not a good argument, and since arguments like this are so common, I wish to share some thoughts on the topic.

Let me begin with the following: Our salvation is not dependent on what we wear. In a certain sense, we are all naked before God, especially when we enter His presence in His church.

The message on the billboard makes a few bad (fallacious) arguments. I will only discuss one of them and then make a few theological points.

The message (argument) has what in informal logic is called an unstated premise. We could restate the argument like this: "God accepts you as you are. Therefore, we accept you as you are." (This is a very common mantra for churches today: "We are welcoming and accepting. We won't judge you.") Sounds good, right? However, there is problem and it is this: God does not accept us as we are. Yes, He meets us where we are and does something about who we are, but He never accepts us as we are. Think about it. If He could accept me as I am, why give me those troublesome commandments that typically point me to a behavioral standard opposite of what I want to do? More importantly, why the need for Christ and Him crucified? Why are the saints dressed in robes washed in the blood of the Lamb? Why the need for the Cross? You see, God does not accept me as I am, but accepts me for the sake of His Son with Whom I am covered. The unstated premise is false rendering the argument fallacious—bad.

So, what does this have to do with a dress code? In our day, we want God to accept us. In fact, we demand that He does. "This is who I am God! Love me!" This, however, is a dangerous path. If I want God to accept me as I am, then I had better acknowledge that I am sinful—I have not loved Him nor my neighbor as I should. I must acknowledge, if Scripture is correct and I am honest with myself, that, in His justice, I should be dead now and forever. I should be punished now and forever. See, for example, Leviticus 10 where Aaron's sons die for entering the presence of the Lord the wrong way. See also Leviticus 16 where the LORD gives highly detailed instructions illustrating exactly how one (and only the High Priest) may enter His presence. How about the sad account of Uzzah (2 Samuel 6) who did what we would most likely do by sticking out his hand to prevent God's Holy Ark and Mercy Seat from falling off a cart—and who was promptly smote for his effort? All these things make explicitly clear the need to be "dressed" properly in order to stand before God. All these things point to Christ and the need to be covered in His righteousness. Only in Him can we stand before God.

Now this gets us back to what I first noted. What we wear *to* church does not count one whit in regard to our salvation and standing before God. What counts is what God dresses us with

in church—we are dressed in Christ and so may stand before God, and it is this thought that finally gets to the practical—what we do.

There is a reason in my confession most pastors still cover themselves in ornate robes, the churches are still highly decorated with symbolic artwork, and people adopt a certain decorum upon entering—these reflect what we confess. While just things (clothing, paint, plaster, wax, and hushed voices), these things confess the reality among us—Christ...God Incarnate...The One who holds the keys of Death and Hades...The One St. John sees (Revelation 1) and falls down before as if dead. Nobody writes any rules, there is no authoritative voice on church dress, décor, and decorum to which we pledge our allegiance—our churches all look different and the people and place are dressed according to the means God provides. No, we just do these things because of the reality among us. As we gather, we know we gather in the presence of God. Beggars dressed in the Royal Robe of Christ's blood is what we are. We are the Bride of Christ. So, it remains a practice among many of us to adopt a certain decorum—to reflect by our outward actions the hidden reality. There are no sermons on the appropriateness of ties and hoop skirts. We preach Christ and Him crucified. I do suspect an outsider enters our little sacred space and perhaps feels out-of-place. The congregants are quiet, typically well dressed for our community, and the liturgy is very formal with a lot of standing, bowing, signing the Cross, congregational singing, and even chanting. None of this adds too or diminishes the presence of Christ among us, but these things do reflect and emphasize the fact that we confess and believe that He is. An outsider is confronted with the Holy God coming among His people and with people who believe this. And we are all too eager to explain this to any who asks. But I digress: back to the billboard.

My travels as a pastor have taken me to some of the poorest places on earth—unlike the community in which I espied the sign. The people of God in those poor places gather (mostly by way of feet) in mud and stick buildings, sit for hours on very rough hand-hewn pews placed on dirt floors, endure stifling heat, and do it often in one of two sets of clothing they own: Suits, ties, jackets, dresses, and hats. Their actions reflect what they believe. Their actions reflect the belief that they indeed are in the presence of the Holy God, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Sanctifier, our Judge. It is interesting (and perhaps a little sad) that we, the wealthiest people the world has ever known, can't be troubled. Jesus dressed casual? Irrelevant! Jesus dresses you. Remarkable!

Your servant in Christ,

Pastor Astrowski

Happy Birthday... We ask God for His blessing upon all our members, especially those who celebrate birthdays in September (especially 80+ this month).

September 4 – Margaret Thompson
September 27 – Lois Stewart

Happy Anniversary ... We ask God for His blessing upon all couples celebrating a wedding anniversary in September.

Memorials

In loving memory of Eleonor Bergren to the General Memorial Fund

Recycle your Portals of Prayer when you are finished rather than tossing it in the trash. Bring them to church office and we will get them to the Central Illinois District LWML who will recycle them to prison ministries.

IMAGE DEADLINE for the **October 2020 issue** is **1:00 PM September 18th**. Have all items to the office, in writing, by that date. Thank you.

Reminder... each time you enter the hospital, be sure to say you are a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Rock Island. According to the laws, the hospital needs to ask each time you come for a procedure. If you would like the pastor to know immediately, please have a family member or friend call the office and/or Pastor—otherwise we may not be aware of your hospitalization. Also, unless requested otherwise, members of the church will be prayed for using their first and last names.

Please keep all those who are serving our country in your prayers, including Michael Williamson.

Camp CILCA NEWS:

Due to COVID, the annual Camp CILCA Auction Fundraiser, usually held on the same day as the Chicken Fry, will be conducted a little differently this year. It will be online on FACEBOOK ONLY! You do not need to be a Facebook user to participate in the Auction. The list of items available at the Auction will be posted by August 17. Along with that list will be instructions as to how to bid, etc. The ending date for bidding will be announced soon. Visit Camp CILCA (www.cilca.org), Events/Retreats, Auction Items. Keep checking the list of Auction items (new gifts will continue being added) and keep bidding!

Camp CILCA's Chicken Dinner, Sun Sept 6, 2020, 11:30am - 2:00pm.

Meals are \$10 each and include a 1/2 roasted chicken, green beans, mashed potatoes, rolls, desserts, and drinks. **Meals must be ordered in advance by September 1.** You can call the camp office (217-487-7497) or order online at <https://nelsonscatering.com/camp-cilca/>

THE LUTHERAN HOUR

The Lutheran Hour can be heard each Sunday on the following Stations at the listed times.

WGEN Kewanee, IL 1500 AM 5:30 am

WKEI Kewanee, IL 1450 AM 5:00 am

KCLN Clinton, IL 1390 AM 9:30 am

WMT Cedar Rapids, IA 600 AM 6:30 am

You can receive Daily Devotions to your computer. Go to lhmin@lhm.org

LWML NEWS:

Our first meeting will be held in the cafeteria for social distancing on [September 24th](#) at 6 p.m. Our president, the inspiring Christine Boudro, will give us an overview of our "Grab and Go" plans for the year.

Be on the look out for more information on the early October Pick Up and Go: Nacho-Ordinary Fundraiser supporting Cristo Rey.

This year LWML will be challenging the congregation with mission service projects that for the most part will be "Grab and Go". In this manner we can care for each during this pandemic by social distancing and by loving and sharing our own resources.

Our first "Grab and Go" project is tying fleece blankets for the Davenport East Side Mission. All you will need is a pair of sharp scissors. You can pick up a bag with the fleece pieces and instructions after church on September 13th and return to the church any time before October 11th.

You can do it as a family project, or while binge watching your favorite movies. It is easy and you will be filling a need in our community with only an investment of your time. Please let Shelley Moeller or Helen Vogel know that you are interested in aiding the LWML with this project so there are enough sets for anyone interested.

Save Stamps For Missions

Bring used postage stamps to church.

They may be trimmed leaving 1/8" of the envelope showing around the stamp or simply cut the envelope down leaving the stamp (intact) and others will trim to specifications.

The stamps collected are turned in to be further sorted to make sure they are ready for sale. The stamps are sold to stamp collectors all over the world. The proceeds support the Central Illinois District LWML Mission projects. Bring the stamps to a LWML meeting, to a church service, leave them in the church office, or give them to Sandy Kramer.

Your offerings to LWML missions are paying grants to spread the Gospel to a world in need. One grant waiting to be paid is for \$40,000.

Wind River Indian Reservation Transportation at Fort Washakie in Wyoming

Wind River Lutheran Mission (WRLM) works with the Shoshone and Arapaho tribes and is currently the only existing full-time mission with a pastor living on site. In this high poverty area of Native Americans, children receive little or no support when it comes to Christian education. A large part of this ministry focuses on outreach to the children of the Wind River Reservation. Very few children can acquire transportation to attend bible classes at Fort Washakie and Crowheart. Parents allow WRLM staff to pick up their children and take them to Sunday school or VBS. In most instances this is the only opportunity to share the Gospel of Christ with children living on the reservation. With a suitable vehicle purchased with this grant money, children will be able to continue the approximately eighty-eight mile round trip for Sunday school at Fort Washakie and the sixty mile round trip for "Monday" school at Crowheart.



Grants in the Central Illinois District waiting to be paid include

Student Aid for Church Workers – \$30,000

Due to the high cost of becoming a full-time church worker, many students find it difficult to complete their schooling. This grant will provide partial funding to CID students so they may realize their dreams of becoming full-time church workers. These funds would be distributed through the LCMS CID Scholarship Committee.

How can I help? Pray that God provides men and women willing to become church workers to spread the Gospel message throughout the world. Support this grant by donating to your church's LWML society mite fund.

Keep collecting that change, make special donations in honor of family or friends, and pray for these ministries as God blesses the work.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Newsletter article – September 2020

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might” (Eccl 9:10).

God bids us to be faithful in the tasks He calls us to do. He calls us to be members of a family (husbands and wives; fathers and mothers; sons and daughters). He calls us to be members of society (those who govern and those who are governed). And He calls us to be members of His family, the Church (those who preach and teach and those who hear and learn). Each of these callings from God places a duty on us.

As members of a family, husbands are given the duty to die for their wives as Christ gave His life for His bride, the Church; while wives are given the duty to respect their husbands and submit themselves to them as the Church does to Christ. Fathers and mothers are to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, teaching them the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Scriptures concerning Baptism, Confession, the Office of the Keys, and the Lord’s Supper. Children are to honor their parents throughout their lives, and even when their parents are no longer alive, serving and obeying them, loving and cherishing them, and speaking well of them.

As members of society, God calls those who govern to bear the sword, that is, to punish those who do evil (those who live contrary to God’s will) and to reward those who do good (those whose lives are lived in conformity with God’s will). Those who are governed are to obey their leaders as to the Lord Himself, for their leaders bear the sword of God’s temporal justice for a purpose.

As members of God’s own family, the Church, He calls those who preach and teach to do so in faithfulness to His holy Word. To preach and teach the Law of God to convict the hearts of hearers of their sin and to encourage, admonish, and exhort them to do good works in accordance with God’s will. They are to preach and teach the Gospel, the full forgiveness of their sins accomplished by Christ and received through faith, not by works. They are to administer the means of grace in accordance with the Gospel and the Word of God. They do all this for the young and old alike, for those who are near and far off. Those who hear and learn are to submit themselves to their preachers and teachers. They are support them by their prayers and their gifts.

Each of these callings from God place a duty on us. They make a claim on our presence; on our prayers; and our time, talents, and treasures. So, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might” (Eccl 9:10). Pray for your family, your government, and your church. Give of yourself by means of your time, your talents, and your treasures to your family, your government, and your Church. That is what it means to be faithful in the tasks that God has given us. That is what it means to do it with all your might.



King - Cristo Rey - Lutheran Church

1301-19th Street, East Moline, IL 61244

E-mail: crstorey-em@sbcglobal.net

Phone: (309) 738-6124

Rev. Pablo G. Dominguez

<http://iglesialuteranacristorey.ctshost.org>

SEPTEMBER 2020



A few years ago, I transported a statue of Jesus which had been donated to Cristo Rey by St. John, Topeka, IL. Sadly, this church closed their doors, but they wanted to preserve this beautiful statue. I brought it home to East Moline along with some other items. Unfortunately, one of Jesus' hands was broken when it arrived home. During a visit to the LWML meeting at Concordia, Geneseo, Kathy Kramer said that she knew a friend who would be glad to restore the statue. She came for it and her friend, Norma Emmerson, from Sheffield, IL started to work on it. She spent many hours in her basement working on it. On Saturday October 31, 2009 Mrs. Kramer, Mrs. Emmerson and her husband came to CR to deliver the restored Jesus' statue. As I looked at it, I remembered how it had looked; but now it was painted with new, brilliant colors and the hand was in the correct place. Now the Jesus' statue is part of the decor in our sanctuary. Mrs. Emmerson did a great job! Thank you, Norma Emmerson for your labor of love.

This Jesus' statue restoration brings to mind our own restoration accomplished for us by our Savior, Jesus Christ. As sinners, we were "broken" and far away from God. We were His enemies and we rejected His love. But in His mercy and because of His huge concern, God rebuilt the broken bridge between God and man. God sent his beloved Son and changed our heart. As dirty and unclean lumps of clay, we are cleansed by Jesus' precious blood. He washes away our sins and imperfections. Thanks to Jesus, we are now His children and a part of His family. We then must say to God, thank you for Your labor of love!

Titus 3:3-7 says "At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. 4But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life"

Church parish is considering a small remodeling project in the men's and women's bathrooms as well as the kitchen. Replacing the fronts of the kitchen cabinets which are showing deterioration is under consideration as well as replacing a faucet. I am contacting a person who has done remodeling work on my house. It is hoped that work will begin in the month of August. The exact date is pending.

Now the meditations on FB are Monday through Friday at 4 pm. Just the sermon from Sunday worship is recorded. I recommend that all viewers share the videos with family and friends. By the way, some acquaintances from Monterrey watch and listen to the daily meditation.

And due to Covid-19, I am not visiting the homes of members and contacts, but I do call them by phone to inquire about their well being.

Bible study on Wednesdays continues with my family only.



*Thank you so very much, dear friends,
for your loyal support of the Hispanic ministry at
Cristo Rey with prayers, donations, and monetary gifts!*

The Pregnancy Resources Center Walk for Life 2020 will be held on [Saturday, September 12](#), 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Empire Park - 751 N. 20th Street, Hampton, IL (East Moline/Hampton Border on Illinois Route 84). The PRC has a mission of sharing the Gospel with people as well as providing medical services, teaching men and women about childcare and providing clothes and childcare supplies. This walk is a BIG fundraiser for PRC. Please pray for this event! If you would like to donate money to a particular walker or register to walk, please go to qcpregnancypartners.org/events. Please see Laurie Astrowski or Christine Boudro with questions.

THE IMAGE is the monthly newsletter published for members and friends of Immanuel Lutheran Church, 3300 24th St., Rock Island, Illinois. Immanuel is a member of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Sunday Schedule

Bible Study at 8:00 AM

Worship Service with Holy Communion at 9:00 AM

Bible Study at 10:15 AM

Sunday School at 10:15 AM

We invite you to join us for worship and Bible Study and the fellowship of Christians who share in the joy of salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pastor: Rev. Leonard A. Astrowski, Jr.
Organists: Christine Roth and Katherine Cobert
Bell Choir Director: Karen Soeken

Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Our Website: Immanuelri.org

Church Office Phone: 309-786-3391

Pastor Astrowski's Phone: 989-326-0199

Email addresses:

Pastor Astrowski: pastrowski@gmail.com

Church Office (Tammy): ilchurch@mchsi.com