



Immanuel Lighthouse

February 2011



*God's word is a lamp to my feet and
a light for my path. Psalm 119:105*

Sharing Faith, Hope and Love

In the Sellwood
Neighborhood of Portland
Since 1907

Immanuel Lutheran Church & Preschool

Pastor David Zemke
7810 SE 15th Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97202
503-236-7823

Church e-mail address:
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Sunday Worship: 10:30 am
Education Hour: 9:00 am
Communion on
1st & 3rd Sundays

Immanuel's Mission Statement

Called to love God
with all our hearts
and to love
our neighbors
as ourselves,
We offer ourselves
to God through:

- + Faithful study of
God's Word
- + Sincere worship
and prayer
- + Active fellowship
- + Loving Service



From the desk of Pastor David Zemke

Every year we celebrate St. Valentine's Day. This used to be a Roman Catholic feast day, but has now turned in to a multi-million dollar business for the greeting card companies. I'll leave our friends at Hallmark out of this. Suffice to say that I don't regard the hundreds of pink cards as worth more than a passing glance.

In all our haste to get to the chocolate and the valentines we may have forgotten to celebrate St. Valentine! But wait Pastor Dave, we're Lutheran! We don't have saints! What kind of celebration can we have?

So maybe praying to St. Valentine is out, but I'd like to put forward a thought on this topic. We actually don't know which Valentine we're supposed to be celebrating, nor do we know when he lived. The stories of his outstanding Christian love have traveled through time, much like St. Nicholas' good deeds. This reminds me of John 13:35. "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

St. Valentine's day isn't just a once a year celebration of romantic love, it's a year round celebration of Christian love. St. Valentine's Day is just a convenient time to talk about it!

So how are you doing in your quest to love everybody as Christ loves them? I suspect you, and I, will need to work more on this! To love like Christ loved may not be possible in this life. But that's no reason to stop working at it! We're called Christians, little Christs, for a reason!

Not everybody is easy to love, much less put up with all the time. Yet we're not called to love when it's convenient or when it's easy, we're called to love everybody all the time. I believe that as we turn to God in prayer, as we surround ourselves with His word, this will become an easier task. Let us then turn our hearts, in need of love, to God, who IS love.



Nursery Makeover

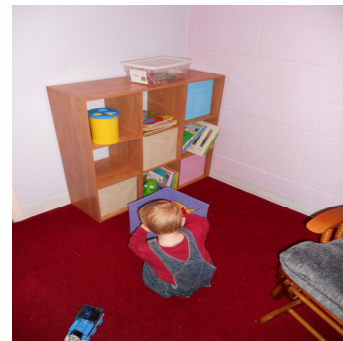


The remodeling of the nursery room began back in September when the Endowment Committee granted me (Stasia Zemke) funds for updating the Nursery (then called Mother's Room) to help support our growing young families ministry. To meet the growing and changing needs of the young families in the church, I asked the Endowment Committee to consider our Family Ministry for a grant to freshen up the Mother's Room with new paint, much needed new furniture, improved technology, and other miscellaneous items to turn this well used and well worn space into an inviting and safe place for our youngest members and their parents. They agreed and off I went to tackle the project, a large one that I couldn't have completed without the help, encouragement, and prayers of so many people!

First step was to pick colors and furniture. Lou Christianson was a huge help in shopping for and choosing two new chairs as well as navigating the challenges of toy storage! Lou also made the curtain. Then the Bladow family jumped in helping with both painting and technology. Ken has been our amazing tech man with all the wiring and shopping and other "stuff" that is beyond my understanding. Kris designed, sketched, and created the beautiful mural! Thanks also to Susan and Stephen for their behind the scenes work and support and for Judy Cox who watched kiddos while we painted! More thanks to Thomas Whalen (painting help), Don Cox (pizza delivery man!), Dennis Vockrodt (painting supplies), and Terrie Wolff (donated extra rocker) for their help! I would also like to thank Kathy Lambert for her support from Division Hardware (if you haven't shopped there yet it's a fantastic store!) And, of course, a big thank you to Pastor who patiently listened to me fret and who donated his time and labor. Finally, thank you to all those who gave kind and supportive words and for the many prayers.

Changes to notice:

- New paint and Mural!
 - 2 New gliders and a new gently used rocker
 - New toy storage
 - Window coverings
 - Mounted TV that can be adjusted!
 - Dimmer switch (it's a little lever right next to the light switch)
 - Changing pad (our original one disappeared so this one was donated by Lou's children)
- A few final notes, yes, I changed the name! I know, it's probably been called the Mother's Room for years and won't be an easy switch. However, I feel it is important to change the name to honor and encourage the wonderful young fathers who bring their children to church, patiently nurture them, and are often found changing diapers!



Lastly, each Sunday there is now a volunteer who sits in the nursery during the second half of service to welcome our little ones (ages 0-4) so that they might stretch their legs and their parents might have a few moments to reflect on God and worship Him without the many challenges a young child in a pew provides. The volunteers are a combination of parents and other members of the congregation. If you are interested in helping out please let me know. If you are a parent of a little

one you are welcome to use this service but don't feel obligated. Noisy and quiet children are always welcome in service!



Sunday School

Sunday, December 19th, the Sunday School celebrated Christmas with a party! Eight children participated as we decorated ornaments, listened to the Christmas story, had a visit from Santa, and listened to a story about Santa when he was still Bishop Nicholas.



Pictured right:

Devon Johnston
Mei Thomas
Salem Rambo
Santa Claus



We look forward to learning more about Jesus' life and our new life in Him as we usher in the New Year!



God's Cake

Sometimes we wonder, "What did I do to deserve this?" or "Why did God have to do this to me?" Here is a wonderful explanation! A daughter is telling her Mother how everything is going wrong, she's failing algebra, her boyfriend broke up with her and her best friend is moving away.

Meanwhile, her Mother is baking a cake and asks her daughter if she would like a snack, and the daughter says, "Absolutely Mom, I love your cake."

"Here, have some cooking oil," her Mother offers.

"Yuck," says her daughter.

"How about a couple raw eggs?"

"Gross, Mom!"

"Would you like some flour then? Or maybe baking soda?"

"Mom, those are all yucky!"

To which the mother replies: "Yes, all those things seem bad all by themselves. But when they are put together in the right way, they make a wonderfully delicious cake!"

God works the same way. Many times we wonder why He would let us go through such bad and difficult times. But God knows that when He puts these things all in His order, they always work for good! We just have to trust Him and, eventually, they will all make something wonderful!



Birthdays

Lou Christianson	8th
Edie Folkestad	10th
Debra Wagner	12th
Neil Maunu	16th
Matthew Gross	18th
Myles Zemke	21st
Andrea Golin	24th
Katherine Pearson	24th
Jordan Cox	25th

"Nobody's Happy"

In trying to decide on a topic for this article I was reviewing some devotions I get in my e-mail and this one caught my eye. It is a Lutheran Hour Ministries daily devotion from Pastor Ken Klaus. Here is a link to the whole thing <http://www.lhm.org/dailydevotions.asp?date=20100711>. Here it is in part:

It was only last week that I read a story of the ancient Greek, Aesop, that I'd never heard before. The narrative spoke of how a wasp settled on the head of a snake and tormented it with its stinging. The snake, maddened with the pain and not knowing how else to get revenge on the wasp, put its head under the wheel of a wagon so they both died together. Now that I retell the story, I realize there is a reason I haven't heard the story before. After all, it's a pretty gruesome tale. But it's also pretty true. It's certainly true about people. Have you noticed how there seems to be an attitude going around that says, "If I can't be happy, you shouldn't be either. If I can't succeed, I'm going to do my best to see that nobody else gets ahead. If I can't have something, you'd better not have it either." Much of humanity is trying to bring other people down rather than helping them get ahead.

Pastor Klaus used this to illustrate a passage from James, but it reminds me of Luther's explanation to the Eighth Commandment in the Small Catechism:

...we "should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, or defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything."

More and more in the past few months I have discovered how wide the divide is between "us and them", those of us who struggle every day to live up to Luther's instruction and the rest of the world that sees no benefit to "putting the best construction on everything". Innocent comments are misconstrued, actions you intend to improve a situation are taken wrong. It very much seems like those around us have been given a miserable pill and told to medicate the world.

My fear, however is that though we know we are to "**put the best construction on everything**" or "**explain everything in the kindest way**", it is too easy to think only about the problems we are having and look for the fastest way to deal with them – throwing someone else under the bus – or the wagon wheel, damaging our perceived antagonist as well as ourselves.

Take a moment to ask the LORD to help you maintain the perspective we all desire.

Rick Rambo



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