

August Newsletter 2020



Also available online at www.immanuelriverside.com

Two Pronouns Too Often Mixed Up Pastor Steven Borst

“The heart of religion lies in its personal pronouns.” –
Martin Luther



Ask a Christian about their faith and they will often describe what Christianity teaches or what their church professes. They might even be quick to point you to a website and encourage you to click on the tab that states what “we” believe.

Ask a Christian about their prayer life and they will often enumerate for you the various things upon their prayer list. While they’ll be careful to point out that they pray for others ahead of themselves, yet even so, much of what they pray for is for “me” and “my”.

The problem with how we as Christians approach faith and prayer is that we have our pronouns mixed up. To be more accurate, we confuse the singular and plural of the first person pronoun. We mistake “me” for “we” and the other way around!

Each Sunday, we recite what we believe to be most true. We use the words of the Creeds to express our faith. Christians have been reciting these words since shortly after Christ’s ascension, and they reflect what Scripture teaches about the Triune God. Even though we are not using our own personal choice of words, and even though the church has been teaching the converted to speak these words for nearly two millennia, we don’t use the plural but the singular. We say, “I” believe in God the Father, Son, and Spirit.

Our catechism gives us some insight to this. Question 88 asks, “Why do we say, ‘I believe,’ and not, ‘We believe’?” The answer given is straightforward. “Everyone must believe for himself or herself; no one can be saved by another’s faith.” While Christianity is based on objective truth, God is always calling us to a very personal faith.

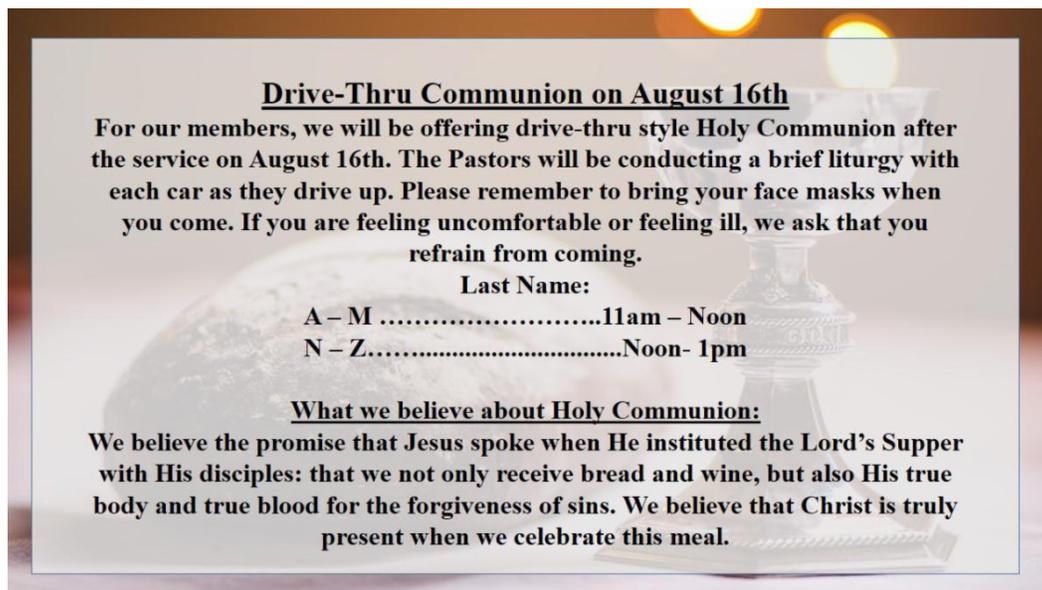
Compare how we are taught to believe with how we are instructed to pray. Jesus said, “Pray then like this: ‘Our Father in heaven...’” (Matthew 6:9) Our prayers are not to be selfish wish lists, but rather are to have a much broader perspective that focuses on God’s will for our neighbor.

Again, our catechism is helpful. Question 206 asks, "What does the word *our* impress on us when we pray, 'Our Father'?" The response teaches us that "In Jesus all believers are children of the one Father and should pray with and for one another." While we are invited to pray for our personal needs, God is always calling us to focus first on His Name, Kingdom, and Will, and second to include the whole family of God when we ask for Bread, Forgiveness, and deliverance from Temptation and Evil. Of course, praying this way means that God's will and/or our neighbors' needs might supersede our own will and needs, but faith joyfully does so anyway.

When it comes to living in our current Covid circumstances, what pronoun we use is really important. When facing trials, our faith teaches us to cling to God's grace in a very personal way. Because Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, He has also died very specifically for me. All that the Gospel promises is granted to me personally through faith. What great news!

At the same time, even though we are being forced to social distance, we are not to forget our neighbor. You and I have been made God's children through Christ, and we are part of His eternal family. God's grace has freed us from being consumed by our own wants and desires to pursuing God's will and serving our neighbor.

So when it comes to faith, the "I's" have it! When it comes to prayer, "We" are quick to place God and others ahead of ourselves.



Drive-Thru Communion on August 16th

For our members, we will be offering drive-thru style Holy Communion after the service on August 16th. The Pastors will be conducting a brief liturgy with each car as they drive up. Please remember to bring your face masks when you come. If you are feeling uncomfortable or feeling ill, we ask that you refrain from coming.

Last Name:

A - M11am - Noon

N - Z.....Noon- 1pm

What we believe about Holy Communion:

We believe the promise that Jesus spoke when He instituted the Lord's Supper with His disciples: that we not only receive bread and wine, but also His true body and true blood for the forgiveness of sins. We believe that Christ is truly present when we celebrate this meal.

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I'm a huge fan of the Pirate of the Caribbean movies (at least the first trilogy). The righteous rogue, yet selfish character of Jack Sparrow mixed with the lovelorn couple of Will Turner and Elizabeth Swan in a tumultuous story on the high seas makes for a very entertaining time. More than once, they have to sail through storms and unnatural tides, through waters that no one has ever crossed or traversed before. There is the fear that they might not survive, the chaos of storms, and panic of disaster palpable to the audience watching it. And that's where we are with COVID—we are on uncharted waters and we're not sure where it will take us next.

Indeed, we keep hearing about new information, conflicting studies, different recommendations, and new restrictions. It's caused us to feel and be isolated during a crisis and what's more is we don't know how long this will be the norm. This is no longer an interruption but rather a disruption to our way of life. It's affected us all. And the unrest that has resulted from it has caused many of us to turn off the television because we can't handle another piece of bad news.

If we are *hoping* that suddenly the world will give us good news, then we have placed our trust in the wrong thing. If you can replace *hope* with *wish*, then it is not true hope. However, for Christians, our hope is fully assured and secure because it rests upon the person and work of Jesus. Because of Jesus' redemptive work through His life, death, and resurrection, no matter what transpires or how dire things look, St. Paul tells us in Romans 8:38-39, "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." This simple yet profound confession becomes ours as well to know that our faith in Christ is not misplaced nor likely to shift in the waves of whatever is happening in the world. We hear as much in Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

So, while things may look dire, our future and hope lies in Christ. In that future and hope, Christians have the unique opportunity to speak directly into the storm of the unknown. But, in order to do that, we have to also take care of ourselves as well. Fortunately, there's some overlap!

Be present with others who are in the same boat in worship (and by others, I mean other Christians!). We get to come around God's Word every Sunday (whether in person or virtually), and be refreshed by the Gospel and the fellowship of believers.

Dig into God's Word throughout the week. Find a Biblical devotional book (I recommend Lutheran Hour Ministry's Devotional App) that will allow you to read and inwardly digest God's Word.

Look for at least one opportunity to serve someone in some way throughout the week. It can be as simple as asking someone what they need prayer for casually when wrapping up a conversation, or paying for the next person's meal while you're in the long drive-thru of a restaurant.

God's peace to you through Christ alone!

Pastor Robert Jones

OUTDOOR WORSHIP SERVICE COMING IN AUGUST? Our staff is looking to hold an outdoor worship service on our campus in the latter half of August. We will send out an email for families to sign up. Check your inbox!

CANCELLED: VOTERS MEETING ON AUGUST 16th Because of the recent state orders, we are not allowed to have an indoor meeting. The Board of Directors is looking at ways to communicate to our voters to bring you up to date regarding our budget, elections, and other items. Please watch for more information coming later in August. For suggestions or concerns, please contact President John Lundi at lundi.five@gmail.com

IMMANUEL NEEDS TECH PEOPLE As you may be aware, we are currently taking steps to install equipment in our sanctuary so that we can live stream our Sunday morning

services. When the system is finally installed, we need a team to come together and help run the software on Sunday morning so that everyone who is not able to join us physically for sanctuary worship will be able to worship at home. If you would like to use your technology talents to learn the new system and help us in this new season of ministry, please contact Pastor Robert by sending an email to robert.jones.immanuel@gmail.com.

UPDATE FOR OUR IMMANUEL ELEMENTARY PARENTS:

I know much has happened in the last week in regard to this ever changing pandemic situation. I pray that you and your family are well.

Our reopening task force has been hard at work researching what options Immanuel has in regard to reopening in the fall as it relates to the Governor's July 17th announcement. Our task force has found that there is a potential exemption for elementary schools only in those counties who do not meet the criteria to reopen schools as normal. As we understood from our research and information gathered from other parochial schools in our area, a possible appeal can be made to the County Health Director, Dr. Kaiser. A waiver may be granted, depending on the specifics of the pandemic in the region the school is located, the protocols the school has in place to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and in consultation with the California Department of Public Health.

In reviewing the required mitigation efforts, Immanuel Lutheran's reopening protocols line up very well with the Governor's expectations. Having emailed Riverside's Director of Public Health on July 22, we have been informed that at this time, we are unable to obtain a waiver. This is due to the fact that their office is waiting for the official process from the State, for a waiver to be granted.

I believe that moving forward with the request for a waiver from the school closure order was in the best interest of our students and families, however, we seem to be at a dead end in this regard. I know that the uncertainty of all of this is frustrating and challenging for each of us.

I still plan to address our families the week of August 3 with another Principal Update. This update will lay out a detailed plan on what instruction will look like at Immanuel starting in September. In the meantime, Immanuel asks that you please continue to pray that God would find favor over us and provide us with the strength and wisdom we need to navigate this complex situation. Your feedback is always welcome as we value your partnership in educating our children.

In Christ,
Mr. Carl Boburka, Principal

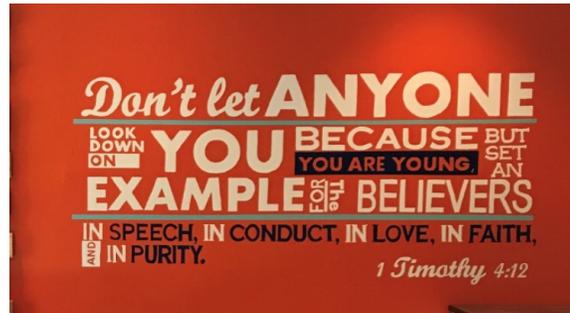
2020-21 ENROLLMENT: We continue to accept enrollment from our current families and from new families to Immanuel from our community. We are anticipating that our classes will reach maximum capacity. If you know a family who is searching for an excellent, Christ centered education, share this information with them. For more information call the school office 951-682-4211 or contact our Admissions Coordinator, Brianna Foster, at brianna.foster.immanuel@gmail.com or Heather Pingel-Au at heather.pingel@immanuelriverside.com.

2020-21 STAFFING: We are very excited to announce that we will be welcoming two new part time teachers for the upcoming school year.

Ms. Grace Eun Hyang Park has been teaching and directing music education to adults and children since 1998. She has a Masters degree in music and is certified in teaching English to young learners. Ms. Park will be teaching music to our Kindergarten through 6th grade classes.

Mrs. Alicia Seinturier has been on the ILCS staff teaching Physical Education for the past year. She will be expanding her role to instruct our students in Technology. Mrs. Seinturier is an experienced teacher who has been a part of our substitute teaching program as well as RUSD.

2020 ROADRUNNER GOLF CLASSIC: This past November many members of our church and school parents participated in Immanuel's "Roadrunner Golf Classic." We had a fantastic day at the Victoria Club. We have reserved a date for our 5th Annual Roadrunner Golf Classic. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2** for a fun day to support our school. The event will be held again at the Victoria Club. Don't be left out. Mark your calendar TODAY!



Jr. High/Confirmation: On June 17th, in a smaller and shorter than usual service, but no less joyful we Confirmed 6 young people in the faith. We rejoice with Justin McCombs, Jonah Brown, Carter Worthington, Zoe DeHoog, Lauryn Ramos, Laura Peterson and their families.

High School Youth



We have just started some High School small group Bible studies for guys and gals that meet in the Youth Lounge (wearing masks, keeping social distance) to keep us focused on growing our faith in this time of Covid 19. Guys meet on Tuesdays and Gals meet on Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m.

Community Outreach Report by Julia Gardner - Outreach Coordinator



Foster Youth Graduation Gifts Was a HUGE SUCCESS!!

Thank you for the LOVE you showed these young people! MANY THANKS to ALL who donated money, gift cards, gift baskets and laptops! It is VERY important to celebrate them especially in these uncertain times, remembering that less than 55% of Foster Youth graduate

from high school.

Please keep these young people in your prayers for continued success in their life journey ahead!



It's Time to Replenish— Blessing Bags

Items Needed:

- Water Bottles
- Snack Bars (Soft)
- Men's socks (CREW)
- Toothbrush

TRAVEL SIZE:

- Toothpaste
- Soap Bars/Body Wash
- Hand/Body Lotion
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Tissue/Washcloth
- Hand Sanitizer



Please bring your donations to the Church Office—Mon-Fri, 10am-2pm during the month of AUGUST! Also, you will need to ring the bell outside the church office so that someone will come to open the door for you.

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