

# The Grapevine

September 2019

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Caring For Our Community Through Christ

## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

As our children grow up we begin to wonder if they will continue to come to church and remain faithful to all they have believed, taught, and confessed from their baptism. While I was thinking about that recently, I came across an article by a dear friend, Rev. Mark Surburg, who reminds the church of the story of St. Augustine. His mother, Monica, faced the same ordeal that we face today. Read Pr. Surburg's article and find comfort in knowing that God continues to take care of His sheep, even in moments of uncertainty.

With a Shepherd's Heart,

Pastor David

### Lessons from Monica about family members who are not Christians



Monica was the mother of St. Augustine. No theologian has had more influence on the Church than Augustine. The fascinating thing about Augustine is that he was not always a Christian, even though he had been raised by a Christian mother. He wandered in a life of lust, and then also in a false religion, before he returned fully to the Christian faith. In his book *Confessions* Augustine writes about this journey, and in particular focuses on the role that his mother Monica had in bringing him to Christ.

Monica was born in Thagaste, North Africa in 331 A.D. She was raised in a Christian family, but it was an elderly servant who fostered a profound faith in Jesus Christ as she cared for Monica. Her family arranged for a marriage to man name Patricius who was not a Christian. Augustine describes him as a kind individual, but also says that he had a bad temper that could erupt in anger. As a pagan who followed what the culture considered acceptable for a husband, he was unfaithful to Monica.

Augustine was born in 354 A.D. Christianity had only become legal in 313 A.D. and the Church was in the process of bringing large numbers of converts into the faith. A belief had arisen that baptism only forgave sins committed prior to receiving the sacrament. Forgiveness for sins committed after baptism required a very difficult public process of penance. It became a common practice for people to enter the catechumenate, but then not to receive baptism for years and even decades. They did this because a catechumen was considered part of the Church, but because he or she was not baptized, the individual was not expected to undertake all of the demands of living as a Christian. Many people wanted to put off baptism as long as they could, so that it would forgive as many sins as possible.

Augustine became a catechumen in his early teens. He said of Monica, "My earthly mother was deeply anxious, because in the pure faith of her heart, she was in greater labor to ensure my eternal salvation than she had been at my birth" (*Confessions* 1.11). Augustine describes those early years as a contest in which Monica worked against Patricius in order to keep Augustine in the Christian faith:

Even at that age I already believed in you, and so did my mother and the whole household except for my father. But, in my heart, he did not gain the better of my mother's piety and prevent me from believing in Christ just because he still disbelieved himself. For she did all she could to see that you, my God, should be a Father to me rather than he" (*Confessions* 1.11).



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# IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod

***Caring For Our Community Through Christ***

**REV. DAVID CASEY-MOTLEY, PASTOR**

## PASTOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION

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## PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.; and by appointment

## BUSINESS OFFICE HOURS

The office is normally open from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Please remember that the administrative assistant may be  
away from the office running errands during this time.

Office Phone .....410-673-7107  
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## CHURCH OFFICERS — 2019

President..... Ruth Thomas  
Secretary..... Gail Crampton  
Financial Secretary ..... Dee Lambert  
Treasurer..... Carol Frase  
Evangelism Chair ..... Marsha Kenton & Shelly Kapitan  
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However as Augustine became a young man he became ensnared in a lustful life. Eventually he even took a concubine and had a child with her named Adeodatus. Augustine had a brilliant mind and he excelled in rhetoric, which was the most important subject in the late antique world. He also found himself seeking answers in the religion Manichaeism which had come from Persia. This dualistic religion taught that the world had been created by an evil god and offered salvation in an escape from this world and a return to the light.

Monica was distraught to see her son leave the Christian faith. Augustine tells us that his mother prayed earnestly for him:

But you sent down your help from above and rescued my soul from the depths of this darkness because my mother, your faithful servant, wept to you for me, shedding more tears for my spiritual death than other mothers shed for the bodily death of a son. For in her faith and in the spirit which she had from you she looked on me as dead. You heard her and did not despise the tears which streamed down and watered the earth in every place where she bowed her head in prayer. (*Confessions* 3.11)

Monica sought to help her son, such as when she asked a priest to speak with Augustine and show him the errors of Manichaeism as he had with other young men. The priest had himself been caught up in the false religion when he was younger, and so was well equipped to help others. However Augustine reports:

He often did this when he found suitable pupils, but he refused to do it for me – a wise decision, as I afterwards realized. He told her I was unripe for instruction because, as she had told him, I as brimming over with the novelty of the heresy and had already upset a great many people with my casuistry. ‘Leave him alone,’ he said. ‘Just pray to God for him. From his own reading he will discover his mistakes and the depth of his profanity’ (*Confessions* 3.12).

Unwilling to accept this, she persisted all the more in asking the priest to speak to Augustine. Augustine tells us, “At last he grew impatient and said, ‘Leave me and go in peace. It cannot be that the son of these tears should be lost’” (*Confessions* 3.12).

Augustine went to Rome and then to Milan in order to teach rhetoric. Out of concern for her son’s spiritual well being, Monica followed him. It was in Milan that God used the timing and circumstances of Augustine’s life to bring him back to Christ. As the priest had predicted, Augustine had finally seen through the lies of Manichaeism. He was still searching for answers. Ambrose, the bishop of Milan, was an intellectual, an excellent speaker and an impressive personality. Augustine went to hear him preach, at first, just because he appreciated Ambrose’s rhetorical skill. But as he listened the content began to impact him. In July 386 Augustine heard Romans 13:13-14, “Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.” This text at that moment in his life led Augustine to commit fully to the life of faith. He was baptized at the Vigil of Easter in 387 A.D. Monica was overjoyed and Augustine writes, “she was jubilant with triumph and glorified you, *who are powerful enough, and more than power enough, to carry out your purpose beyond all our hopes and dreams* [Ephesians 3:20]” (*Confessions* 8.12).

Monica also lived to see her husband, Patricius, become a Christian. Augustine writes: “In the end she won her husband for you in the very last days on earth. After his conversion she no longer had to grieve over those faults which he tried her patience before he was a

Christian" (*Confessions* 9.9). Indeed, Augustine says that Monica's goal was always to bring him to Christ: "She never ceased to try to gain him for you as a convert, for the virtues with which you had adorned her, and for which he respected, loved, and admired her, were like so many voices constantly speaking to him of you" (*Confessions* 9.9).


Many people have family members who have drifted away from Jesus Christ and his Church. There are a number of things we can take away from Monica's life and example. First, Monica put faith in Jesus Christ and the salvation he provides first. This was the lens through which she viewed her family and it guided her actions. Once could view Monica as an overbearing mother who followed Augustine to Rom and Milan. Yet Augustine himself understood her concern about him was *spiritual*. She wanted her son to be saved in Jesus Christ, and this guided her decisions. The same can be said in regard to her husband Patricius.

Second, Monica was devoted to prayer about the salvation of Augustine. She repeatedly and constantly turned to God in prayer as she asked for her son to be brought back to Christ. Prayer puts the First Commandment into action as we fear, love and trust in God above all things and implore him to save those we love.

Third, Monica attempted to make use of resources. She knew that the priest had a background in Manichaeism and had helped others escape that false religion. She contacted him and sought his help. Monica prayed constantly. She *also looked for opportunities and resources* that could help bring Augustine back to the faith.

Fourth, Monica was patient. She did not give up and kept looking for God to act. During those years Augustine travelled a path through lustfulness and Manichaeism. He arrived at Milan in 384 and this coincided with a renewed interest in philosophy. For him, reading Neoplatonism was a preparation for commitment to the Gospel. He went to hear Ambrose preach because of his rhetorical skill, and eventually came away with far more than that. All of these factors coalesced in 386 when his conversion occurred that led to baptism. We never know how God may be weaving together the different factors and influences in the life of a loved one. We never know how long it may take. We too must be patient.

Finally, as Paul told the Galatians, "faith is active in love." Monica's life with Patricius was one of a lifelong witness to Jesus Christ by what she did. To be sure, the objective content of the Christian faith had to be received and believed by Patricius for him to become a Christian. But Augustine saw how the quiet witness of Monica's life had help to win his father for Christ.

*From the  
President's Pen* 



The Summer has flown by and we are waiting for a scheduling date from Mr. Breeding on the front steps work. Meanwhile, the Council met to work on planning for 2020 and to draft the Budget. We are looking at an increase of 3.5% for the 2020 Budget, a copy of which will be included in the October Newsletter. Please note that we will have a Voter's meeting on October 13<sup>th</sup> after the 10:30 service.

## Thursday Connections:

### God-Family-Others

Begins September 5 at 9:05 am



"I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy – down in my heart!" This wonderful children's song reflects how we Christians feel in the good times, although perhaps not as much in the less-than-good times. But shouldn't we have joy consistently? After all, we've got the "love of Jesus" and the "peace the passes understanding" -down in our hearts. Don't we?

Join Thursday Connections as we discover real joy in everyday life – gifts from our heavenly Father through the saving grace of Christ Jesus. We will be using a new study from CPH called **JOY A Study of Philippians**, written by Deb Burma. Philippians, of course, is Paul's letter to the people of Philippi and is known as the New Testament "letter of joy." Each week we look forward to learning what Paul had to say about God's gifts of joy and how these gifts are ours today, too.

If you are interested in the study but are unable to attend on Thursdays, consider following along at home at your own pace. The study book is available to order from CPH and Amazon.

Thursday Connections meets weekly beginning September 5<sup>th</sup>. Gathering begins at 8:55 with the study activities beginning at 9:05. We respect your time and plan to finish each week by 9:40. We meet upstairs in Geiger Hall. Everyone is welcome. For more information, contact Lynn Short at [Its0955@gmail.com](mailto:Its0955@gmail.com).

**Copies of the books will be available at the Bible Study.**

COMING TO YOUR FAVORITE PARISH ...

## HANDBELLS AND CHOIR SINGING!

YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT !

WEDNESDAYS: HANDBELLS 6:45 - 7:30 p.m.

SENIOR CHOIR 7:45 -8:30 ish p.m.



*if you can hum or lift a  
bell,  
YOU QUALIFY!*



I hope everyone had a great summer!! But with the start of the new school year, we are starting our Youth group back up too. I will be posting important dates and activities on our Youth group Facebook page. So, please check in on the page for exciting information.

Looking forward to another exciting year.

See everyone soon! If you have any questions or concerns please let me know.

–Jennifer Phillips

410-829-9302.

## Care and Compassion

Lutheran Mission Society

The Compassion Place at Lutheran Mission Society in Cambridge was very grateful for the donation of canned goods from Immanuel's Vacation Bible School. Well done, staff and children!!!!

The food pantry at the Lutheran Mission Society in Cambridge is in need of many of its regular items. **Boxed cereals, canned fruits, spaghetti noodles,, spaghetti sauce, canned soups and one pound jars of peanut butter** are in low supply.

Please leave your food donations in the designated baskets in the narthex. If you need help getting your donations into the church or would like to make a cash donation, please see or call Irene Wheatley – 410 – 310 – 2571.

LMS is in need of gently used jackets and coats – all sizes – as well as blankets. These donations can be left in the designated area in Geiger Hall. Please remember to not overload your boxed or bagged donations. Thank you for your support in helping us help others.

***“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” Hebrews 13:16 ESV***

## Fundraiser Update



*Many thanks to all who helped WINGS with their annual Easter egg fund raiser Here is an update on the results of all of the hard work:*

*Profit from the Easter eggs was a little over \$9,000.00! Of that money, WINGS bought a new BINGO machine for the Preston Fire Company and Preston Lions Club for use at their annual carnival, donated \$500.00 to Lifetime Wells International, and donated \$1,000.00 to Immanuel Nursery School for new playground equipment. The rest is used throughout the year for various expenses, and to support needs within our congregation.*

*Also, a \$250 credit card was received from Thrivent to help defer the expenses of the egg making.*

*We appreciate all of the help that all of you, members and friends, give us over those couple of days. It is a total group effort, with so many individuals working together. Thank you so much!*

## SCHOOL'S IN SESSION



We are gearing up for another great school year! We welcome Mrs. Angel for her third year and Mrs. Desi for her second year. This year we will be teaching our three- and four-year old's all day. We have 11 two-year-old students and a total of 19 three and four-year-old students. We are so thankful for the generosity our nursery school has been given this year. Due to a wonderful donation we were able to purchase new toys for our playground and classroom.

We were also able to purchase cots for our students who will be staying all day; now they have a comfortable place to rest. We will be sharing lots of pictures as we prepare to make new memories this year!

I would also like to extend an invitation to any of our nursery school families to join us at Sunday School every Sunday at 9:15 am.

Peace be with you,

Sarah Durham



## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS



**Congratulations to**

**John & Katie Northam who were  
married on**

**September 1st.**



**On August 24th 2019**

**Pastor David Casey-Motley  
baptized Harper Thomas.**

**Welcome to your new church  
family, Harper!**

Harper is the daughter of JT and  
Pamela Thomas. Harpers sister,  
August was baptized at Immanuel in  
2016 by Pastor Schaefer.

To Immanuel Lutheran Community,

Thank you so much for welcoming  
our family into your church and  
welcoming Harper into God's hands.  
Thank you so much for allowing us  
to come together as a family.

*You are so very nice!*

Thank you again,  
*The Thomas  
Family*

## THOSE SERVING IMMANUEL SEPTEMBER 2019

| Date       | Usher  | Lay Reader             | Greeter                  | Assisting Elder | Kids Worship | Acolytes           | Head Tellers                                       |
|------------|--|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|--|
| Sept. 1st  | Ron Andrew Sr.<br>Ron Andrew Jr<br>Ryan Andrew | Richard Wheatley       | Myrna Roth               | Mark Frase      | TBD          | Veronica Phillips  | Janice Isenberg<br>Shelly Kapitan<br>John Crampton |
| Sept. 8th  | Ron Andrew Sr.<br>Ron Andrew Jr<br>Ryan Andrew | Melva Jean<br>Glessner | Earleen Lozen            | Dale Kenton     | TBD          | Hayden Plutschak   | Doris Maser<br>Karen Lyons<br>Olga MacDonald       |
| Sept. 15th | Ron Andrew Sr.<br>Ron Andrew Jr<br>Ryan Andrew | Earleen Lozen          | Windsor &<br>Peggy Meyer | Glen Plutschak  | TBD          | Kalei Durando      | Dee Lambert<br>Glen & MaryLou<br>Plutschak         |
| Sept. 22nd | Ron Andrew Sr.<br>Ron Andrew Jr<br>Ryan Andrew | Desi Casey- Motley     | Rex Rosebrock            | Rex Rosebrock   | TBD          | Catie Casey-Motley | David & Kathy<br>Schmidt                           |
| Sept. 29th | Ron Andrew Sr.<br>Ron Andrew Jr<br>Ryan Andrew | Janice Isenberg        | Shelly Kapitan           | Mark Frase      | TBD          | Veronica Phillips  | Carol Frase &<br>Paul Nichols                      |



Dawn Johnson 9/13

Heather Plutschak 9/13

Mitchell Morris 9/16

Patti Frase 9/18

Theodore 9/18

Swieczkowski

Gary Glidden 9/20

Kim Bowmaster 9/22

Sherry Braband 9/22

Vera Rieck 9/22

Ian Nabb 9/26

Lynn Short 9/26

Charlotte Casey- 9/27

Motley

Richard Wheatley 9/29

Rebecca Scudder 9/30

Scott Engle 9/1

Sam Lozen 9/2

Rebecca Schmidt 9/2

Ashley Schanken 9/3

Erin Schanken 9/3

Madison Braband 9/4

Rene Langwost 9/4

Roland Limpert 9/5

Timothy Engle 9/7

Jonathan Noble 9/8

Maureen Garcia 9/10

Garland Fisher 9/12



Leonard & Dolores Slyter 9/6

James & Marilyn Harris 9/7

Dale & Marsha Kenton 9/11

Michael & Arlene Stevens 9/12

Clark & Abby Andrews 9/19

David & Desi Casey-Motley 9/20

Christopher & Kelli Schanken 9/28

### SPECIAL DATES

- Labor Day, *September 2, 2019*
- National Grandparents Day, *September 8, 2019*
- Patriot Day, *September 11, 2019*
- Hispanic Heritage Month, *Sept. 15 - Oct. 15, 2019*
- First day of autumn, *September 23, 2019*

# SEPTEMBER

| Sun   | Mon   | Tue                         | Wed   | Thu  | Fri                | Sat                |
|---|---|-----------------------------|---|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1<br>10:30am Worship w/<br>Communion  | 2<br>Labor Day<br>Office Closed                           | 3                           | 4<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>Starts for 3's & 4's<br>7:00pm AI-Anon              | 5<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>8:55am Thursday<br>Connections                               | 6<br>7:00 pm A.A.  | 7<br>7:00 pm A.A.  |
| 8<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:30am Worship<br><b>RALLY DAY &amp; PICNIC!</b>              | 9<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>7:00pm Church Council       | 10<br>8:45am Nursery School | 11<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>6:45pm Handbells<br>7:00pm AI-Anon                 | 12<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>8:55am Thursday<br>Connections<br>7:00pm WinGs              | 13<br>7:00 pm A.A. | 14<br>7:00 pm A.A. |
| 15<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:00am Continental b-fast<br>10:30am Worship w/<br>Communion | 16<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>7:00pm Elders Meeting      | 17<br>8:45am Nursery School | 18<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>6:45pm Handbells<br>7:00pm AI-Anon                 | 19<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>8:55am Thursday<br>Connections                              | 20<br>7:00 pm A.A. | 21<br>7:00 pm A.A. |
| 22<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:00am Continental B-fast<br>10:30am Worship                 | 23<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>7:00pm Board of Ed Meeting | 24<br>8:45am Nursery School | 25<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>6:45pm Handbells<br>7:00pm AI-Anon<br>7:45pm Choir | 26<br>8:45am Nursery School<br>8:55am Thursday<br>Connections<br>6:30 Nursery School Board | 27<br>7:00 pm A.A. | 28<br>7:00 pm A.A. |
| 29<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:00am Continental B-fast<br>10:30am Worship                 | 30<br>8:45am Nursery School                               |                             |   |  |                    |                    |



## **Kick off Sunday School**

**September 8 at 9:15 am**

**(ages 3 years & up)**

**Worship Service at 10:30 followed by  
Pot Luck Picnic at James T Wright Park**

**FUN FOOD GAMES & Fellowship**

**Bring a dish & Invite a friend**

**Immanuel Lutheran Church Preston**



# Greetings from the Board of Education



This year we will Kick off the Sunday School year with Rally Day on September 8th.

Sunday school starts at 9:15 and after the church service we will have a Potluck Picnic at the Park. See the flyer in this newsletter .

Starting on September 15th we will have Sunday school at 9:15 followed by a congregational breakfast from 10:00-10:25. I

encourage everyone to come to Sunday school from age 3 and up. We are never too old to learn more about God's word and deepen our relationship with the Lord.

Fellowship and food are important as well so everyone should join us for breakfast!

For best results choose the Triple Pack: Sunday school, breakfast and church! Or try any combination !

May God lead your path,

Rene Langwost



# Evangelism News

On Sunday Dec 8th, there is going to be a parade in Preston during the day. They have asked our church to be in the parade or participate in some way. The theme is an old fashion Christmas. There is an idea for caroling in the parade but will need people. Or maybe someone else has a better idea.? If you are interested please let me know ASAP. Their next meeting is Sept 9 & we will need to give them an answer. Thanks, Evangelism/ Marsha 410-924-9057



# Frontier Girls

The Frontier Girls continue to have FUN!

They recently had an end of year trip for the "Otters " and "Dolphins". Many great memories were made at the Turkey Hill Factory and Dutch Wonderland!





THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

# Pray For Us Calendar

## THE CREED — SEPTEMBER 1-15

We confess the three ecumenical Creeds, the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian. We believe in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, three persons. Luther's explanation of the Apostles' Creed in the Small Catechism teaches important truths about God as our creator, redeemer and sanctifier.

*Rejoice in God's goodness in Christ as you pray:*

- 1.** Thank God that He is our loving heavenly Father.
- 2.** Thank God for His creation.
- 3.** Thank God for daily bread. Pray that all would be fed and clothed this day.
- 4.** Thank God for family. Pray that God would guide all families love each other with the love of God in Christ Jesus.
- 5.** Thank God for shelter. Pray for those who are without homes this day.
- 6.** Thank God for reason. Pray that learning and intellect

are always in service of God's Kingdom.

- 7.** Thank God for Jesus. He is our only Savior from sin, death and the power of the devil.
- 8.** Rejoice that Jesus is true man, that He can sympathize with our weaknesses.
- 9.** Rejoice that Jesus is true God, that our Savior is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
- 10.** Repent of all your sins and trust that God forgives your sins through the blood of Jesus.
- 11.** Pray that God would empower you, by His Spirit, to live in righteousness, innocence and blessedness.

**12.** Thank God that He freely gives faith and salvation through His Spirit. Pray that all would hear the Word and be Baptized according to His will.

**13.** Thank God for the Holy Spirit. Pray that He would keep all in the true faith.

**14.** Thank God for the Church. Pray that she would remain faithful to her Savior.

**15.** Rejoice that God gives and sustains faith in the Holy Trinity. Rejoice that God is love.

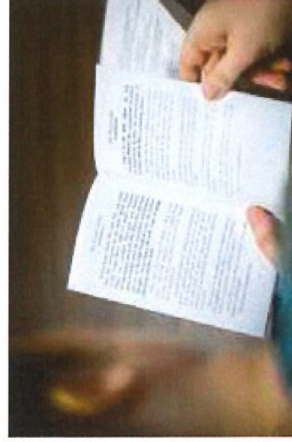


PHOTO: LCMAS COMMUNICATIONS/FRANK M. LUISFORD

## SEPTEMBER Pray For Us Calendar

### OFFICE OF THE KEYS/CONFESSION — SEPTEMBER 16-30

Jesus gave the office of the keys to the Church through His Apostles. Confession has two parts. First that we confess our sins, and second that we receive the forgiveness of our sins.

*Rejoice in the gifts of Confession and Absolution as you pray:*

- 16.** That God would lead all sinners to repentance.
- 17.** Confess your sins before God. Trust that God forgives your sins through Christ Jesus.
- 18.** Thank God for your pastor and all pastors. Pray that God would grant them faith and strength in their Word and Sacrament ministry.
- 19.** Thank God for corporate confession and absolution each Sunday.
- 20.** Thank God for the opportunity for individual confession and absolution with your pastor.
- 21.** Thank God for the vocations He has given to you. Pray that you serve Him and your neighbor faithfully each day.
- 22.** Pray for all unbelievers, that they would repent and trust in Christ.

- 23.** Pray for all who are caught in unrepentant sin, that they would humbly confess their sins and receive holy Absolution.
- 24.** Pray for the Spirit to empower you to amend your sinful life, that all you think, say and do would please God.
- 25.** Thank God for the Church. Pray that the Church remain faithful to the preaching and teaching of God's Word and the administration of the Sacraments according to God's will.
- 26.** Pray for those who have stopped attending church. Ask God to provide someone to share Christ with them and bring them back.
- 27.** Pray for Christian parents, that they would model forgiveness and raise their children in the Christian faith.
- 28.** Pray for the strength to forgive people in your life. Ask God to give the faith necessary to forgive as He forgives.



**29.** Thank God that He always answers our confession with words of forgiveness and life.

**30.** Pray that Jesus would return quickly, that sin and death will soon be finally defeated, and God's people will dwell with Him forever.

Congregations and individuals are invited to copy these pages for newsletters or other distribution. Download at [lcms.org/prayforus](http://lcms.org/prayforus) or call 888-843-6267 to request a copy.



PHOTOS: LCMS COMMUNICATIONS/ERIK M. LUNSFORD



***Immanuel Lutheran Church***  
***P.O. Box 39***  
***Preston, Maryland 21655***



***Fruits of the Vine***  
***September 2019***

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