

# GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

MAY 2024



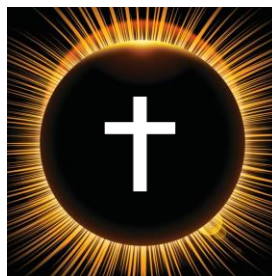
## Total Eclipse of the Son

My family and I saw the total eclipse and I am still thinking about it. It was truly *awesome*, and I say that in the fullest sense of the word. So many things overwhelmed my mind and senses:

- The glory of the sun, that when even the tiniest beam of its light pierces through, it lights up the whole earth
- How a cold breeze picked up when the sun's fire was blocked
- The animals of the day all returned to their homes and nests, and the creatures of the night started making noises
- The beauty of the sun's rays beaming white around the moon
- The ability to stare at and take pictures of the sun without any protection

When it was over, I immediately had a longing for it to remain so that I could stare even more at its beauty. It was so fleeting. Yet, if it remained like that, it would be perilous for all life on earth.

This then made me think about the celestial events and symbolism in the Bible: how God is called a sun (Psalm 84:11); how the fiery light and glory of His face cannot be seen by sinful, mortal man, lest we die; and how God's glory is always veiled and covered by cloud and darkness on Sinai and in the Tabernacle. I remembered the creation account of light out of darkness and how the Lord gave light on the earth even before He created the sun. I thought of the failing of the sun's light in the 9<sup>th</sup> plague of Egypt and during the three hours of darkness when our Lord hung on the cross. And on the Last Day, the sun will be turned to darkness (Matthew 24:29). But at the resurrection, God will give our new world its light, and its lamp will be the Lamb (Revelation 21:23).



Did you know that that same day of the eclipse was the observed festival of the Annunciation of Our Lord? The Annunciation typically falls on March 25, but because it occurred during Holy Week (which eclipses all other festivals), it fell on the Monday after the Second Sunday of Easter, which this year was April 8.

The Annunciation is the celebration of Gabriel's announcement to Mary that conceived in her is the Son of the Most High (see Luke 1:26-28). Mary is frightened when the angel first greets her with "the Lord is with you!" Why? Because she doesn't know if this is good news or bad news! She is a sinner in the weakness of mortal flesh. If God were to come down in all the brightness of His majesty and glory, it would be the end of her. But the angel Gabriel said to her, "Do not fear, Mary, for you have found grace with God." He also said, "the power of the Most High will overshadow you." That's Tabernacle language. The glory of the Lord overshadowed the Tabernacle. Although it indicated God's glorious presence and thus made Moses unable to enter, it veiled the fire of God's wrath. In the Tabernacle, the Lord received the sacrifices of animals as a payment for their sins. These, of course, didn't actually pay for sin, but pointed toward the coming Messiah who would make full atonement. Mary was the new Tabernacle, but God's glory was veiled in the weakness of human flesh and mortality.

The face which no man could look at and the glory which made Moses' face shine like the sun was eclipsed in the Christ child. We could now gaze at God and live. But this ordinary appearance and weakness caused Christ to be despised and rejected by the

*(continued on page 2)*



*"Loving, Sharing, Serving  
Jesus with you."*

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"For the Lord God  
is a sun and a  
shield..."

## Total Eclipse of the Sun

*(continued from page 1)*

world and His own people did not recognize Him. The solar eclipse, when it reached totality, did not look like the sun. It was a halo of white light. Yet it was still our sun, which didn't change its essence or glory, but was veiled. So Christ was and is Yahweh, our true God, yet He was hidden in humility.

But the beams of His Word still shined through, giving life and salvation to all who believe. He forgave sinners, healed the sick and crippled, and raised the dead.

"Those who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2). The world still despised Christ and was ashamed to look at Him because He did not come in glory. But this was grace because, if He did shine with His full glory in this fallen world, it would be completely destroyed. Christ glory was the cross because there He would be our Savior. To us, Christ was beautiful, because from the cross beams God's love for mankind. For all the darkness of our sins and our despising of the light, He gave His life. The sun was darkened because the wrath of God was coming upon its Maker. But this eclipse could not last forever, or else we'd all be undone. If the Light of the world were totally extinguished all life would perish.

On the third day, at the rising of the sun, Christ appeared risen from the dead. No more in the weakness of mortality, Christ shined with the glory and image of God in human flesh. He rose with healing in his wings (Malachi 4:2), declaring the peace of sins forgiven. Christ Jesus is both our sun and our shield (Psalm 84:11). He shines with the rays of His divine holiness, but He also shields us from God's wrath and delivers us from death. And by His baptism, Christ shares His holiness, clothing His people with His righteousness, so that we would shine like the sun, reflecting the glory of His cross, showing His love to the world. We do so now in the weakness of sinful flesh, but on the Last Day, we will shine with His perfect glory, body and soul and mind. Until then, we shine the beams of His Word into the darkness of this sinful world and His Spirit draws more people into His light. On the Last Day the sun will go dark and the old fallen creation will be unraveled, but we will enter the new world, clothed with the sun, shining in the brilliant presence of Christ.

If you missed the total eclipse, you did miss out on something spectacular, but don't let that bring you down. When Christ appears, you will see the beauty of the One who made the sun, moon, and all the stars, shining with love for you.

*Pastor*



**Friday, May 17**

**4:30 – 7:00 PM**

<b>Adults</b>	<b>\$15</b>
<b>Children ages 3-12</b>	<b>\$ 8</b>
<b>Under age 3</b>	<b>free</b>

Tickets will be sold by the youth;  
walk-ins are also welcome.

*Several of Immanuel's youth will be attending the Higher Things Conference in June. To help cover expenses, they have been hosting several fundraising activities. Enjoy the Spaghetti Dinner and watch for details of the next event:*

**June 8 – Car Wash**

*Please support their efforts while enjoying good fellowship!*



**IMMANUEL'S CABLECAST  
WORSHIP SERVICES ARE  
NOW AVAILABLE ON  
YOUTUBE**

The recording of our Services that is cablecast on channel 99 via Access LaPorte County Media (ALCO) is now available to be watched on YouTube on their Access LaPorte County Media channel.

You can access the channel by:

- Looking for "YouTube Access LaPorte County Media" on your search engine and clicking on the link, or
- Clicking on the YouTube link found on the [accesslaportecounty.org](http://accesslaportecounty.org) website.

Once on the Access LaPorte County Media YouTube channel, click on "Playlist" and scroll down to "Michigan City Church Programs." Click on that and scroll down to find the Service of interest, from the most recent back to early 2023.

Our Service is streamed in classic 4:3 aspect ratio and is currently available to be watched around 6 p.m. the Wednesday following the Sunday it was recorded.

**--Dana Radke**



## More Than a Negative

Even if you've never had to testify in court, a thousand TV shows have made you familiar with the question, "Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" Why not just make people swear to tell the truth? Or make them promise not to lie?

Any parent who has ever had to interrogate a child about a broken cookie jar or a scuffle over a toy knows the answer. There are plenty of ways to try to get out of trouble without technically lying. You tell just enough of the truth to skate on by.

We often play the game of seeing how close we can get to sinning without technically going over the line.

But in our heart of hearts we know that this is not what God intended when He gave us the commandments. He's not giving us a merely negative rule and challenging us to just barely stay away from this or that. There is much more to each commandment than a prohibition. We shouldn't just avoid murdering people — we should be of service to our neighbor.

For each negative prohibition in the commandments there is a positive good that we are to cherish and protect. In the Eighth Commandment, that gift is the reputation of our neighbor and our relationship with him:

*You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.*

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

Your relationship with your family members (who are your nearest neighbors), the other members of your congregation, your coworkers and your friends is one of the most precious gifts you have been given. You need to exercise good stewardship with this gift just as much as you need to exercise good stewardship with your life, resources, time, and income. This is an especially fragile gift because it's easy to ruin a relationship with slander and talking behind someone's back.

But speaking well of your neighbor in Christian love is absolutely free; it costs you nothing, yet it pays you great dividends. If you find this challenging at times, if you are tempted to speak ill of others, just remember that this other person is also a beloved child of God for whom your Lord Jesus suffered and died. Your Lord Jesus loves you both.

**--LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article May 2024**

**PLAN TO JOIN US  
FOR  
THE ASCENSION DAY  
WORSHIP SERVICE  
THURSDAY, MAY 9  
7:00 PM**



**PLEASE NOTE:** The deadline to submit items for the June *Gazette* is **Monday, May 6**. There will **not** be July or August issues of *Gabriel's Gazette*, so be sure to get all your summer news in now.




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### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS:**



**2024  
WORSHIP SERVICE IN THE PARK  
SUNDAY, JULY 21, 10:00 a.m.  
at Creek Ridge County Park  
7943 W. 400 N., Michigan City**





# Shepherds & Lambs

## The Sunday School Newsletter May 2024

**As April showers bring May flowers**, talk “along the way” with your children about God’s wonderful plan to bring the world back to life after winter, comparing Jesus’s death and resurrection coming back to life after being in the tomb. What an awesome God we have!!



**Summer is coming soon!** Children have extra time on their hands when school is out. It seems like about 2 weeks after school is out, the children will start getting bored! (By the way, they can enroll in our VBS this year-- CELEBRATE THE SAVIOR) Sometimes there is some sibling rivalry and arguing. You may need PEACE in the family...proving that you care more about each other than winning an argument. Try this, get out a favorite puzzle for a fun new spin. Puzzles are fun and challenging all on their own. Once you have picked your puzzle and cleared your space on a table, pour out all the pieces. Flip them upside down. Not only will this be a challenge on its own, but the bigger challenge is to work as a family and keep the peace while putting all the pieces together. Work as a team, have patience one with another, and remembering that your relationship means more than winning an argument or a disagreement. Once you’re finished, be sure to take a photo of your great accomplishment and talk about how you solved problems together as a family and kept the peace!!



I got this from a new Christian parenting site for all kinds of activities. It’s called [theparentcue.org](http://theparentcue.org). Check it out!

**I hope you had a chance** to participate in our FAMILY PAJAMA/MOVIE NIGHT APRIL 26.



**Stop to smell the flowers this spring and during the summer!**



*Lynette Johnston-Martin*  
Sunday School Superintendent



**CELEBRATE  
the Savior**  
Jesus Gives Us Joy

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL  
JUNE 17-21  
8:30-11:30 a.m.**

**For children ages 4-11  
(or just finished 5<sup>th</sup> grade)**

At *Celebrate the Savior* VBS, children look into the Bible, God’s Holy Word, and discover that Jesus gives us the joy of eternal life with Him! Our loving God has given us so much to celebrate—family, friends, food, and especially forgiveness through faith in Jesus, our Savior. As kids explore five key events in the life of Jesus, they will discover how the love of Jesus fills us with joy.

**Register Today!**

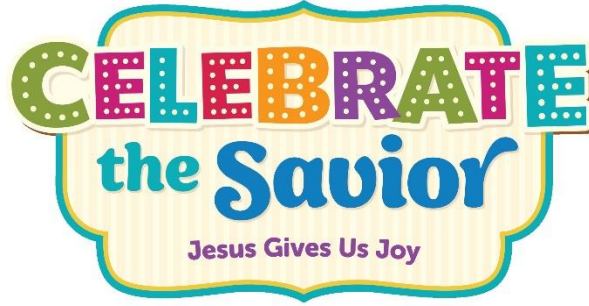
You can use the registration form on page 5 or register online at [immanuelmc.com](http://immanuelmc.com) and click on the VBS box.

One form is needed for EACH child.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL  
JUNE 17-21, 2024  
8:30-11:30 a.m.

For Ages 4 – 11  
(or just completed 5<sup>th</sup> grade)



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
1237 E. COOLSPRING AVE.  
MICHIGAN CITY, IN 46360  
(219) 872-4419



### Registration Form

(one form for each child, please)

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade just completed \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Siblings Attending VBS \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Names \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Church Home \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Food Allergies \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Allergies or Conditions \_\_\_\_\_

People who may pick up the child \_\_\_\_\_

I permit my child's name and food allergy to be posted for VBS staff to see. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ NA \_\_\_

VBS leaders have permission to photograph/film the minor(s) designated above in any manner or form for any lawful purpose associated with this VBS program. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

By signing, I agree that my child has my permission to attend and participate in the *Celebrate the Savior* VBS program, June 17-21, 2024.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

You can also register online at [immanuelmc.com](http://immanuelmc.com) and click on the VBS box.

**PLEASE SUBMIT REGISTRATION FORM BY MONDAY, JUNE 10.**