



# Growing in Grace

*Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen — 2 Peter 3:18*

Case Statement

October 15, 2013

There is a pressing need for a confessional Lutheran church and classical school in the nation's Capital. God has richly blessed Immanuel with faithful Scriptural teaching, an overflowing communion rail, and school classrooms bursting at the seams. We need to seize this moment. Now is the time to cement Immanuel's place in Alexandria for generations to come. This capital campaign will raise funds to do just that - enhance the sanctuary, build more classrooms, and improve our aging facility. **We ask God's help to grow in grace.**

## Home Gatherings

This weekend, we conclude our "Time in the Wilderness" with a 12-hour Prayer Vigil. If you haven't officially signed up, please take a few minutes, a half hour, or more to come to church and pray anytime from 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 19 until 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 20.

The next big campaign event will actually take place during the last week of October and the first week of November. A number of our members have graciously agreed to open their homes to host Home Gatherings so that we can all learn about the "Growing in Grace" campaign, come



together to support the campaign and share our thoughts about how to make it a success.

You'll receive an invitation in the mail to one of the scheduled Home Gatherings.

Please make every effort to attend a Home Gathering. If you cannot attend the one to which you've been invited, please contact your host to find another Gathering that is a better fit with your schedule.

This is a low-stress event. At the Home Gathering, you should expect:

- Chit chat, and introductions, friendly conversation
- Presentation of Campaign Brochure
- Presentation of Campaign Video
- Sharing of hopes and dreams for Immanuel Lutheran Church and School
- Bible Study on Stewardship
- Closing Prayer and refreshments

There will be **no** pledge cards at the Home Gatherings. The entire Gathering should only last about an hour and a half but we won't put limits on how much fun you can have.

We want all of our Immanuel families to attend these important meetings.

## STEP BY STEP FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS:

### Now

- Continue “90 Days of Prayers.”
- Continue reading materials.
- Finalize your Spiritual Renewal Pledge Sheet and begin your chosen exercises.
- **Set aside time to attend the prayer vigil this weekend.**
- Begin fast, if appropriate
- Attend Spiritual Commitment Sunday on October 20
- RSVP to Home Gathering Meeting Host or work with Host to find an alternate Gathering time and location

### October 27-November 12

- Attend a Home Gathering Meeting

### October 27, November 3, November 10

- Listen for Stewardship Testimonies at the end of worship services.

## Building Proposals

As you may recall, during a special Voters Assembly in August, our congregation authorized the solicitation of 3 proposals for our church and school’s building and renovation project. These proposals have been received and distributed for your consideration and review via email and on the table in the narthex.

Each proposal is slightly different, and gives the congregation a wide range of options for our building and renovation projects. An integral part of these proposals is the associated cost.

It is important to remember that these proposals are just that – *proposals*.

The drawings you see can be altered and modified to better suit our needs — whether that is changing appearances, adding or eliminating aspects, or adding or lowering costs.

During our regular Voters Assembly on Sunday, October 20, we will be fully discussing each proposal and deciding which, if any, proposal and design firm fits the needs of our church and school.

Choosing a design does not mean construction will begin immediately; nor does it mean that we will be immediately undertaking a large financial commitment. Rather, it is simply the next step forward. Any decision regarding finances and construction will be made at a subsequent Voters Assembly.

Please review these materials and prayerfully consider these proposals and come to the Voters Assembly on Sunday, October 20, ready to discuss this matter.

## When It’s All Finished...

- Our sanctuary will be bright and welcoming.
- Our communion rail will be more accessible.
- Our kitchen will be large, modern and functional.
- Our bathrooms will be the best bathrooms in the history of the world (or at least in the history of Immanuel).
- Our school will have additional classrooms to serve our growing student population.





## What Is Classical Education?

Our case statement refers to the “pressing need” for Classical Education. Immanuel Lutheran School uses a Classical model. But what does that mean?

A century ago, there wasn't a variety of competing educational options. The principles of classical education were practically universal and had been the educational standard for centuries. In a nutshell, classical education differs from modern approaches in that it seeks to promote wisdom by teaching children how to think and learn for themselves. By contrast, modern education spends too much energy and effort simply telling kids what to think.

A classical curriculum is guided by the three phases of learning known as the trivium: grammar, logic, and rhetoric. These three principles had been developed over two thousand years, stretching all the way back to ancient Rome and Greece.

**Grammar:** Modern education downplays memorization, yet

children in early grades are at the prime age to develop their memory. Learning songs, chants, and poetry enables children to take in massive amounts of information. More importantly, students who learn how to memorize when they're young are also able to retain information more easily as they get older. This enables older students to learn complex concepts more quickly, and these memory skills carry on into adulthood.

**Logic:** Parents know all too well that students become argumentative as they progress into adolescence. Believe it or not, argumentative children are a good thing—if they are educated properly so their questions are productively focused. It is a natural development for children to start making connections and drawing conclusions as they gain knowledge and experience, but modern education virtually ignores logical argumentation until college. Classical education holds that the moment when adolescents start to question the world around them is the best time to start teaching them about formal logic, proper reasoning, and fallacies.

**Rhetoric:** As students emerge from adolescence, they take on an increasing desire to express individuality and define themselves in relation to their peers, becoming self-conscious about their appearance and communication with others. Classical education recognizes that this rhetoric phase is the ideal time to teach students how to persuasively and accurately present themselves to others through clear writing and speaking.

**Integration:** While different parts of the trivium roughly correspond with child development, it should be noted classical education emphasizes the integration of pedagogical concepts and information. Logic and rhetoric are also taught when children are young, just as older students are encouraged to further develop the memory skills they learned before they could even read. Instead of school being broken up into a series of discrete subjects, students are taught how math, science, history and philosophy relate to each other. Students also learn to appreciate the fine arts – exposure to the great masters of painting and the seminal works of classical music enhances pupils' broader cultural and historical education.

Finally, and most importantly, the educational subject matter is seamlessly integrated with a Biblical Christian worldview. As the secular world embraces relativity in all things, understanding scriptural truth becomes even more essential to grasping rational truth. Faith only complements reason, as it provides students with the essential motivation to develop the moral character and discipline necessary to learn and achieve for themselves, as well as serve others.

# It's Not My Truck

I don't tell many stories. But this is a true one.

In college, I had a housemate named Greg. We lived in a large house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with 12 other students. When I decided to move to an apartment closer to my school in Boston, I wasn't sure how I was going to move my stuff. I didn't have a car, taking the subway or bus everywhere.

Greg had a pickup truck. Greg also only had one leg, the other having been amputated after a childhood accident. I always felt sorry for Greg because of this. And I certainly wasn't going to ask Greg to borrow his truck.

But as the time came closer for my move, and I'd resolved to make as many bus trips as it would take to move my things, Greg offered me the use of his truck. He made this offer without any hints on my part, and it was entirely sincere and, what is more, cheerful.

I was stunned. Even now, more than 20 years later, I'm still stunned, especially by what he said. "Why would you offer me your truck?" I asked him. Greg replied, "It's not my truck. It's God's truck. I'm just using it."

I didn't feel sorry for Greg after that. And I have come to realize that he had something I still long to have: putting into practice the truth that what is mine isn't really mine. It's not my car, my condominium, my phone, my money. It's all God's. I'm just using it.

That's stewardship. Everything we have is God's. We're just using it. So the question we have to ask is, "What should we use it *for*?"

Your unworthy undershepherd,

Pastor Esget

