

April 2023

The Manger

Connecting Lives to Christ

The monthly newsletter of Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA

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About Us

Our purpose as a faith community is connecting lives to Christ, serving God and neighbor, and living our faith. We exist to connect people to Jesus, his message of hope and his saving love.

Because we believe that the power of God’s love transforms us, Immanuel seeks to be a place that welcomes, nourishes and empowers all people to grow in faith. Join us each Sunday at 10 a.m. for worship.

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT...a note from Your Pastor

5Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26Look at the birds of the air: They do not sow or reap or gather into barns— and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?... Matthew 6

If you have been here at Immanuel for a while, you may notice something that is different from many other congregations. We don’t have a “Stewardship Sunday.” We don’t have a Sunday or a month that is designated as stewardship month where we talk about giving and we don’t ask for pledge cards or that sort of thing.

There is a simple reason for that; our stewardship towards God, our gifts of time and talent, our financial resources are not meant to be a once a year or once a season type of thing. Stewardship is a way of living in God’s kingdom. It is part and parcel of our faith walk. Stewardship is not primarily about giving our money for the ministry of the church, although that is a key element, but rather stewardship is all about our relationship with God. It is about trusting that God will meet our needs and by tithing or giving an offering, we demonstrate in a very real and tangible way that we have faith that God will care for us just as God cares for all of creation.

It is true that because of several extremely generous gifts that Immanuel finds itself in a strong place financially. However, this has nothing to do with our personal stewardship, because as I said, stewardship is about our relationship with God, not about paying the bills. When we see stewardship in this light, as part of our faith walk, we come to understand that our giving is part of how we live out our

FOOD FOR THOUGHT continued...

faith, both to our families and to ourselves. Additionally, as we tithe or work towards a tithe or beyond, we begin to see signs that God is indeed caring for us in ways that before we felt were totally related to how much money we had.

Thus, here at Immanuel, we encourage an attitude of 365 Stewardship, living each day in thankfulness and trust that God has a plan for our lives AND our finances. As we grow in this way, we learn to lean on God more and more and we discover that peace that passes all understanding. Stewardship then becomes a way of life; a natural progression of living a life following Jesus and placing our trust in God.

So, as we prepare to enter into Holy Week and the season of Easter, I invite you to lean on God in all things, trust in the Lord and the Lord will provide you with all that is needed. I promise you, you are worth more than many sparrows. Peace be with you!

Journeying with you, Pastor Chuck



During Pastor's Sabbatical **May 15—August 15** **Presiding, Preaching, and Pastoral Care**

From the middle of May through the middle of August, we four pastors, George Ayoub, Jim Couser, Rick McKenzie, and John Schleicher have covenanted to preside and preach and provide pastoral care for and with you, the people of Immanuel, while Pastor Chuck is immersed in three months of reflection, rest, reformation, and renewal. With the exception of the Day of Pentecost, the last Sunday in May, when the service will be led by lay members, a Service of the Word with prayers and joyful hymns and songs but without Holy Communion, we will take turns weekly leading Sunday worship with Communion and for the rest of the week be on call for any pastoral needs. Additionally, we will post in advance office hours in our assigned week during which you may call or sign up to visit with us in person to share any spiritual concerns and to pray with us.

Our hope as “temporary shepherds” is that we can assist you in your own sabbatical journeys, so that when your pastor returns you and he will both reengage, both “made new” as together then you live into a future filled with renewed strength, with hope, with joy, and ever deeper love.

We truly look forward to this time to serve you. We promise to regularly pray for your pastor that he be richly blessed during his sabbatical and for you as you too reflect, rest, experience reformation and renewal in this precious time.

Yours in Christ,

Pastors George, Jim, Rick, and John



COUNCIL CORNER



Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to Springtime in Michigan. We are getting more snow in spring than we did all winter. We all live here for variety. We are getting ready for the rebirth of all of the flowers and plants reintroducing color to all of the brown and gray.

I want to make sure that we are getting ready to give Pastor Chuck some much needed time for renewal. This is a time when he will be allowed time off to recharge and learn things that will enhance his own personal spiritual journey as well as help him in the future of leading of our church family. It has been in the works for a couple of years and it is finally here. Behind the scenes, your church council members have been doing a lot of planning to make sure that all our church family members' needs are met without any gaps in coverage. We have four retired pastors who will be helping out with meeting the needs of all. We will be posting a schedule of who will be available each week.

The pastors who will be helping us are Pr. George Ayoub, Pr. Jim Couser, Pr. Rick McKenzie, Pr. John Schleicher. These gentlemen have been truly helpful in the planning of the coverage. All of them have extensive knowledge in being a full time Pastors and all of them have had interaction with Immanuel over the years in different capacities. I can't tell you all how much I didn't know or had never thought about going into pastors sabbatical. These four have given me a ton of insight. We are truly blessed to have them here and so willing to help.

As we go into this time, I want to make sure that everyone knows if you have questions or concerns, please contact me or any of our council members. Not only is this a time of growth for Pastor but it is also time for all of us to grow and renew. I was a little concerned going into this, but I have come to realize how much this will mean to all of us.

For any of you who have gone on a vacation or are planning to go away on spring break I hope you have safe travels. If you have already gone hope it was a time of relaxation and a time to spend with family and friends. I look forward to seeing everyone during Holy week. I am really looking forward to the warmer weather and I would like to see our church family being able to get outside and have some events like we had prior to COVID. If you have any thoughts or ideas please let me know. It would be fun to get outside and enjoy the warmth.

Your Brother in Christ

Scott

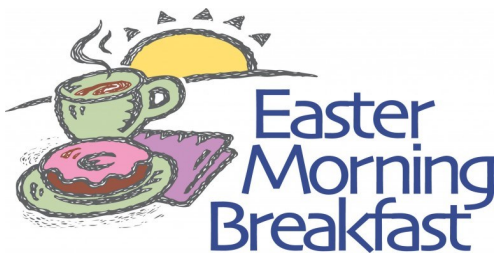
NEWS FROM SERVING TEAM

Our **March noisy offering** for the Grand Ledge Food Bank was \$117.67. Our April 9 (Easter Sunday) noisy offering will be for Blessings in a Backpack. Blessings in a Backpack provides additional food especially for the weekend for some of the families that need some additional food assistance in the Grand Ledge Public Schools.

Thank you for your donations during Lent of cold cereals for the Grand Ledge Food Bank. As of March 26th, 76 boxes of cold cereal have been donated. Donations can be made through Easter Sunday. Please add your donations to the grocery cart in the church lobby and we will see that they get delivered. Thanks again for your great response!



The Grand Ledge Community is working at bringing back **Community Meals**. The Grand Ledge First United Methodist Church is hosting a meal the first Wednesday of each month from 5:30-7:30. The meal is served from 5:30-6:00p.m. Everyone is invited to stay and talk or play games until 7:30p.m. Immanuel will be hosting its second community meal on Monday, April 10 from 5:00-6:00p.m. Immanuel is planning on hosting a community meal the second Monday of the month. Let's reach out and invite people to these community meals. Thanks to all of the volunteers that make these meals happen!



Thanks to Gordie Larkins and Brian Yusten for bringing back an **Easter Breakfast** this year! They start serving at 8:00 am. Make plans now to attend and invite family and friends. What a great way to start celebrating Easter!

Looking Ahead: May is appreciation month for First Responders, Police and Firemen. Immanuel will be showing our appreciation by putting together boxes of goodies to be delivered by the Serving Team. Snacks can be donated from May 7- May 21. Watch for more details to follow.

Den Graeber

Serving Team
Leader



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



Christine Person grew up on a farm in "the thumb" in Applegate, Michigan. She graduated from The University of Michigan as a Registered Nurse and worked as an RN for St. Lawrence/Sparrow Hospital until she was 81 years old. She met her husband, John Person, a Civil Engineering student, at the Lutheran Student Center at U of M. They were married for 63 years before he passed away in 2014. Together they raised five children who have all gone on to raise families of their own. She and John were very active at Calvary Lutheran Church where they both sang in the choir. Christine was a quilter at Calvary along with many of the current quilters at Immanuel.

Marge Lauer is one of Christine Person's five children. Marge grew up in Lansing and is a Waverly alumni. She graduated from The University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. Before retiring last year, Marge worked for 43 years as a Civil Engineer for The Michigan Department of Transportation and for Consultant Engineering firms where she was on charge of many infrastructure construction projects around the Lansing area and throughout the Midwest. Marge is widowed and was married to her husband Chuck for 38 years before he passed away in 2021. Marge and Chuck have one child, Matt, who now lives and works in Detroit. Prior to coming to Immanuel, Marge was a member of Calvary Lutheran Church.



Community Connections

I wrote this article for the newsletter last year, and felt it was something worth repeating, along with an update for the fall's Community Book Read.

"I have recently experienced several definitions of 'community.' The one that caught my eye was 'a feeling of fellowship with others as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals.' I would also add, 'Which can lead to action and change for good, in the greater community.'"

Immanuel is an important part of the community of Grand Ledge and other nearby towns, and there are some things coming up where we are called to action for change. One such opportunity will be to donate specific baby items, to be distributed by the Food Bank, with referrals coming from a couple agencies. (Watch for further details in this newsletter)

Another opportunity happens in the fall. It is the annual Community Book Read, which was started by Grand Ledge United but is now part of a reconfigured group of people, looking at ways to continue the work, learning and action towards justice and equity. The books being considered will be read by local ministers, librarians, teachers and others, and then decided upon. When that decision is made, I will share it with you, so you might consider joining us for conversation at that time. We will offer the Zoom option, as it works well for those working or traveling. Stay tuned.

And finally, I will re-share this: "For the well-known and loved Bible passage, Micah 6:8, The Message version of this verse reads: What is God looking for in men and women? It is quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate in your love for others, and don't take yourself so seriously—take God seriously."

Blessings on your journey. Blanche, Joni, Jan and Pastor Chuck



Palm Sunday, April 2nd

Palm Sunday, 10am worship, will begin in the Narthex with the Triumphal Procession (entry) with the palm branches. During worship, the scene will shift from triumphal entry to the Passion of our Lord. Inside, Drive-In and Livestream Worship.

Maundy Thursday, April 6th

Worship on Maundy Thursday, 7pm, will be a fairly simple service with hand washing and communion. Inside worship.

Good Friday, April 7th

Noon worship at Immanuel will be a Service of Shadows.

In the evening at 7pm you are invited to Wacousta United Methodist Church, 9180 W. Herbison Rd in Eagle, MI for a Community Good Friday Service



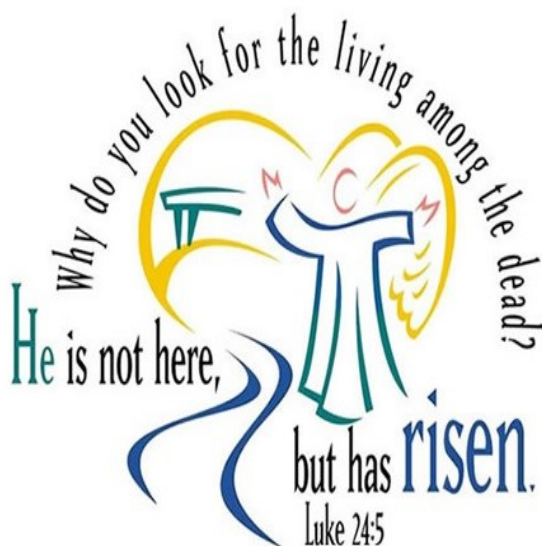
Easter Sunday, April 9th

All are welcome to Easter Breakfast at 8am with Easter Worship following at 10am.

Following Worship there will be an Easter Egg Hunt.

Please join us this day to celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord!

Inside, Drive-In and Livestream Worship.



Immanuel Quilters

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Quilt Ministry



This ministry is a tangible way to express love to our neighbors in need. The quilts made at Immanuel are used as warm bedding, simple tents or floor coverings by people less fortunate. When quilt supplies ran low, we asked for help, and Immanuel didn't disappoint! Pastor Chuck was instrumental in securing funding for this ministry when donations fall short, which is a true blessing. Thank you Pastor Chuck! We would also like to thank everyone that donated gently used sheets and blankets, quilt batting, fabric and even completed quilt tops. We will put them to good use. If you'd like to check out and possibly join this ministry, we meet on Thursday mornings at 9 AM in the lower level of the church. No sewing necessary; all you need to be able to do is tie a knot.

Luther League II Luncheon

Monday, April 11th, 1pm

Hibachi Grill & Sushi Restaurant in Lansing

Luther League II luncheons are open for those who would like to meet for lunch with our church friends. We usually meet on the 2nd Monday of the month at a local restaurant for food and fellowship. We take up a small collection (usually \$1.00 apiece) after lunch to be used, at Christmas, for a charity of the groups choice.

There are many new faces in our congregation, as well as, those we haven't seen in a long time. It would be fun to get acquainted and reacquainted. Look forward to seeing you. Please join us.

Please call Kristine Hernden, 517-712-7185 by Friday April 7, if you are interested or have questions.

Altar Committee

Greetings Immanuel Friends! Hasn't it been exciting watching Immanuel grow and transform!? After the past couple years of Covid and all the changes we needed to make, it is a blessing and a joy to be where we're at today. I sit in church on Sundays now and hope we have prepared ENOUGH trays for communion. What a great blessing to see so many coming to the table! And if you have noticed, we've had a lot of new faces serving the communion wine. Such a great response and such a blessing!! Thank you all!

Now, we're reaching out with another opportunity to serve. Our **Altar Committee** needs volunteers. Serving on the Altar Committee means you would share the responsibility of placing the right colors on the altar throughout the church year.

It's easy, it doesn't take a lot of time and yet, and, it's one of the most important tasks we do - making sure the altar displays the correct colors symbolizing the "season" of our church year. Currently, we have two volunteers. We need 2-3 more, men, women, or couples willing to serve. Would you consider joining us? I can tell you, like communion, it's a "spiritual" experience. It is with reverence and privilege that we stand at the altar and prepare it for worship.

Please call or text Sue Marsh at (517)331-2353. Thanking you in advance for your prayerful consideration



Starting Up! **Handbell Choir**

for ANYONE interested

We will start practicing again on Wednesdays, 6pm

April 19 & 26, May 3, 10 possibly 17



You are invited!

During the month of April, we will be making donations of specific items needed to complete the Baby Baskets at the Grand Ledge Food Bank. The items are listed below, and the collection will begin the week after Easter until Mother's Day. Collection containers will be located in the entryway, and delivered to the Food Bank the week after Mother's Day. Consider gender neutral colors when purchasing. Thank you ahead of time, for considering a donation.

- Diapers: Newborn and Size 1 & 2
- Wipes, Baby Wash Cloths/Towels
- Receiving Blankets, Crib Sheets
- Onesies: Size Preemie to 6 months
- Pajamas: Newborn to 12 months
- Tops/Bottoms: Newborn to 12 months
- Soft Rattles, Hardcover Baby Picture Books



Funeral Luncheon Volunteers

We are updating our volunteer list, and would like to include you if you are interested.

If you are able to help in setting up, serving, or bringing a dessert, that would be appreciated. We understand you might not always be able to help, so let us know what you might be able to do, days you are available and the best way to contact you. Annette Ryan works closely with Pastor and the family, and then lets Blanche Schaudt know so that she can reach out to those on the list. Your willingness to serve in this ministry is appreciated.

Annette Ryan: 517-290-8459
ryan2375@aol.com

Blanche Schaudt: 517-410-1545
bls_u@yahoo.com

APRIL BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Anniversary!

- William & Donna Gibbons ~ 4/1
- Rick & Linda Merrifield ~ 4/7
- Doug & Cindy DeYoung ~ 4/17
- Tom & Nicole Sullenberger ~ 4/17
- Nate & Lacy Boyers ~ 4/22

- 3 Jessica Beitel
- 5 Barb Roush
- 6 Sandy Couser
- 7 Annette Ryan
- 7 Charlotte Polley
- 9 Angelia Marsh
- 9 John Van Hoesen
- 10 Norah Williams
- 12 Eva Dinsmore
- 12 Tom Sullenberger
- 13 Keelyn McKenzie
- 14 Roger Wickerham
- 14 Avery Riggs
- 15 Kelly LaGrave
- 17 Harper Beckwith
- 17 Pat Graeber
- 17 Lucas Smith
- 20 Olivia Buchweitz
- 23 Katie Bryant
- 24 Delaney Fedewa
- 24 Erin Hubert
- 24 Mike Pitchford
- 25 Anna Baribeau
- 26 Doug DeYoung
- 26 Owen Smith
- 27 Allan Blaske
- 29 Alan Goschka
- 30 Henry Polley
- 30 Angie Blake
- 30 Donna Gibbons
- 30 Abby Osburn





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>If you have any questions related to upcoming events, please contact the Church Office at 517.627.6310 or Pastor Chuck at 989.750.4573.</p>						<p>1 AA Support Group 8am</p>
<p>2 Palm Sunday Worship w/ Comm 10am</p>	<p>3 Sewl Sisters 10:30am-3pm Serving-Team 3:30 Support Team 6:30</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5 7am Men in the Morning Bible Study</p>	<p>6 Immanuel Quilters 9am Maundy Thursday-Service 7pm</p>	<p>7 Good Friday service 12pm Wacousta U.M. community service, 7pm</p>	<p>8 AA Support Group 8am</p>
<p>9 Easter Breakfast 8am Worship 10am Noisy offering Blessings in Backpack</p>	<p>10 Office Closed Free Community Meal 5-6pm</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12 7am Men in the Morning Bible Study</p>	<p>13 Immanuel Quilters 9am</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15 AA Support Group 8am</p>
<p>16 Worship with Communion 10am</p>	<p>17 Sewl Sisters 10:30am-3pm 6:30pm Council Mtg Meeting</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19 7am Men in the Morning Bible Study</p>	<p>20 Immanuel-Quilters 9am</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22 AA Support Group 8am</p>
<p>23/30 Worship with Communion 10am</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 7am Men in the Morning Bible Study</p>	<p>27 Immanuel-Quilters 9am</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29 AA Support Group 8am</p>