

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.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
517 S. Clinton Street
Grand Ledge, Michigan 48837
517.627.6310 • www.immanuel-gl.org



1 The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name’s sake.

This is one of the most well-known Bible passages, one of the most quoted psalms out there. But what about those times you don’t feel like you are being led besides still waters? What about those times that you don’t feel you are lying in some beautiful green pasture? Certainly, there are times when our lives can seem chaotic, out of control and anything but serene like the image describes in psalm 23. When times like these happen, we might forget those words that are meant to comfort and reassure. Like they say, when you are in the midst of the alligators, it is tough to remember your goal was to drain the swamp.

But Psalm 23 is unique in that it not only provides comforting words, it speaks a sure and certain promise from God! It says that these things ARE happening and HAVE happened and are GOING to continue to happen because of God’s grace filled love. Even when it seems like you are not in the calm, serene pasture, this is where God is leading us and restoring us. God’s goal is to create this peace in which our lives can refocus on the divine and what God has done. A place where we are able to hear and live out the promise of peace in times of trouble, surety in times of danger, grace in times of adversity. All part of God’s plan and with Jesus as our shepherd, we will lack for nothing.

One last thing about this passage; in the last line, most translations say, “surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.” However, that word follow, might be better translated as

FOOD FOR THOUGHT continued...

“pursue.” That’s right! God’s mercy and goodness pursues us. Wherever we go, wherever we wander or stray. God’s mercy wins because it is always chasing after us. What a comfort to know we cannot escape God’s love and mercy. Praise God.

May you find the peace that passes all understanding, if only in small doses, and be reminded that nothing can separate us from God’s love and mercy.

Journeying with you,
Pastor Chuck

*... Surely goodness and mercy shall
pursue me all the days of my life...*



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

Immanuel Family,

We have made it through Easter and Holy week, and I think everything went incredibly well. I would like to start by saying a special thank you to Gordie Larkins and Brian Yusten for making our Easter breakfast an incredible event. I also want to thank everyone who helped with preparation, serving, and clean up. The participation was outstanding. I truly enjoyed all the fellowship that went on Easter Sunday. It was a very special day for me to watch and enjoy everything going on. I rate it as one of the most special days in my life. Our church family is so blessed to have so many wonderful members.

We have had some health issues with our church family. I enjoyed hip replacement (well as much as you can enjoy pain and a big scar reminder). I had my second neck surgery which was unexpected. Then again so was the hip replacement. My doctor shared with me at my final checkup that my other hip is headed in the same direction to which I replied, I will get back to you much later. Fingers crossed and several extra prayers couldn't hurt either. We are all growing older and to get older you can't be timid. You need to strengthen your resolve and be ready for whatever comes your way. I used to be that athlete who jumped on the softball field, hockey rink, ran track and cross-country courses in Michigan and other states. I look back and remember all the pulled muscles, broken bones, and body parts being dislocated. It was fun at the time but now I must be careful rolling over in bed. My body makes noises that I don't recognize, some hurt and some don't. And I now wake up earlier just to allow myself more time to get out of bed.

But enough of the health stuff. We need to get ready for the warm weather. Look forward to fun in the sun even if it means we have to wear a sweatshirt to tolerate the temperatures. We live in Michigan for the variety of weather even if it all happens in the same day. That is our states charm. If you have ever been to the UP you know that Lake Superior never really warms up too much. I found that out firsthand one day. My parents had a large boat and we decided to enjoy some time in Whitefish Bay near Brimley. The depth gauge said that the boat was only 4 feet of water. But that was at the back end of boat. I figured it was safe to jump in and set the anchor by hand as I was asked to do. I jumped off with anchor in hand, I hit the water and I disappeared into the cold water. After a brief visit to the bottom, I jumped back on the boat not wanting to play anymore. Good thing the big man was looking out for me that day. I guess he knew that I had bigger fish to fry.

I want to finish this by saying that I have truly enjoyed the last several years serving our church family. I hope everyone enjoys the coming warmer weather. And to leave you with food for thought ... I have had some folks asking about doing an outdoor service and picnic. I am throwing that out if anyone has some ideas! Hint, hint!

Your Brother in Christ,

Scott



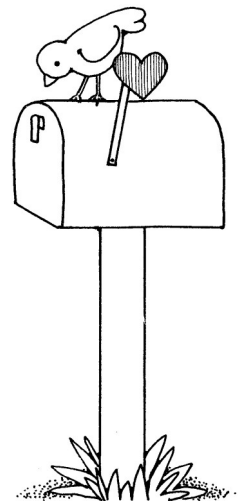
NEWS FROM SERVING TEAM

Our **April noisy offering** for Blessings in a Backpack was \$139.48. Our May 14 noisy offering will be for the Lutheran Disaster Response. The Lutheran Disaster Response reaches out to help with disasters both in the US and globally.

Thank you for your donations of cold cereals during Lent for the **Grand Ledge Food Bank**. 103 boxes of cereal were donated. What a great response! Thanks Again!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the **Meijer's Simply Give Program** the first quarter of this year. The Grand Ledge Food Bank was recently awarded \$16,940.00 through your generous support and the support of the community and Meijer. What a great impact this will have on restocking the shelves from week to week at the food bank!

This year the **Postal carriers** from Grand Ledge will be doing a food drive on Saturday, May 13. To participate all you need do is place non perishable food items in your mail box. The mail carriers will pick them up and bring them to the Grand Ledge Food Bank at the end of their route. Food Bank volunteers will be sorting shelving and boxing items on May 13, 14 and 15. If you would be interested in volunteering for this project contact Den Graeber (517-224-8888) for more information.



Thanks to Gordie Larkins and Brian Yusten and all that had any part in the Easter Breakfast! Good Food! Good Fellowship! What a great way to celebrate the Resurrection!

Blessings in a Backpack is looking for volunteers to help pack weekend food for children in the Grand Ledge School District. Immanuel is scheduled to pack on Wednesday, May 17 at 3:00p.m. for about an hour. Please contact Lyn Danes for more information or to volunteer: 517-243-4730 or email Daneslm97@gmail.com.



Appreciation for First Responders, Firemen and Police: May is appreciation month for First Responders, Firemen and Police. Immanuel will be showing our appreciation by putting together treat boxes for them. Boxes will be available in the church narthex from Sunday, May 7 through Sunday, May 21 for us all to bring in goodies. Suggested goodies include trail mix, snacks, granola bars, candy bars, protein bars, and sandwich crackers, etc. (be creative as long as all items are individually wrapped). Thank you posters will be available to sign. The Serving Team will deliver the snacks the week of May 22. Thanks!

Den Graeber
Serving Team Leader

LIVING WATER MINISTRIES

Living Water Ministries provides all of God's children the opportunity to experience intentional community centered in Christ. Through our programs faith is formed, leadership skills are developed, self-esteem and confidence are nurtured, compassion for others is emphasized, and joy is experienced.

Participants encounter the love of Christ in each member of the community and return home equipped as servants of God, to share that same love with others. These experiences are genuine, transformative and are changing the world. Living Water Ministries would not exist without the faith, sacrifice and service of hundreds upon hundreds of people just like you who have committed their time, talents and treasure to a mission and purpose they love.

Living Water Ministries is dedicated to sharing the gospel with all of God's children. We're passionate about it, and we're passionate about removing obstacles for children to attend our programs. By the end of our next camp season we project to have awarded over \$250,000.00 in scholarships since 2015! We need your help to replenish our fund that now awards approximately \$50,000.00 in scholarships annually.



This year, through the promise of a very generous gift that will match funds 1:1 for the next 5 months, Immanuel will be collecting for Living Water for the month of May. Special Giving envelopes will be available.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

A sense of community is a *feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through commitment to be together.* We have all experienced this sense of community. And often it is felt stronger when challenges arise and we are asked to step out of our comfort zones and do something.

For the past few years, a **Community Book Read** has taken place in October, around the topics of race, equity, diversity and inclusion. I was at a planning meeting last night with members from the Faith Community and school administration, to discuss books that had been suggested, and it was decided that the book we will read and discuss this year is, "Waking Up White," by Debby Irving. The author states, "[This] is the book I wish someone had handed me decades ago. My hope is that by sharing my sometimes cringe-worthy struggle to understand racism and racial tensions, I offer a fresh perspective on bias, stereotypes, manners, and tolerance." This book was also one of three suggested by the Women of the ELCA for "racial justice advocacy."

We will once again hold a discussion via Zoom, at Immanuel. There will be other sites in the community to do in-person discussions, as well. This year there may even be a special gathering of all who are involved, with this book read in the community, to meet one another, and share our experiences.

We hope you can join us this year.

Blessings, Blanche, Joni, Jan and Pastor Chuck



Dinner and a Show ~ May 7th

Treat yourself, a friend, your family or your “honey” to dinner and a show. And they’re both FREE!

The **dinner** is the potluck after morning worship, our celebration with Pastor Chuck prior to his sabbatical ministry. There is no better meal than a home-cooked meal.

The **show** is “With You There is Music.” Delta Community Choir’s 10th Anniversary Concert. What a show it will be with two brand new songs composed by Debra DeWitt, a GL native and former Immanuel member, plus numerous Immanuel members in the 55-voice choir!

So first, worship and a good meal at Immanuel Lutheran. Then, off to a great show at Our Savior Lutheran on St. Joe Hwy at 3:00 p.m. (We promise to keep you awake after your great meal!)



Luther League II Luncheon

Monday, May 8th, 1pm

Hibachi Grill & Sushi Restaurant

5837 Saginaw 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 May 5, if you are interested or have questions.

The Library is Open

Being introduced to the many areas of a congregation you have decided to join, might be a bit overwhelming at first. You are getting to know the people and the rhythm of the work being done, as well as where you might fit in. One place that is often overlooked is the library. Yes, Immanuel has a library!

The past couple weeks for a few hours, we have been cleaning, sorting and arranging the books in Immanuel’s library, and it is ready for you to visit. (Please keep in mind, it is a work in progress, as well.) There are many Bibles, Resource Books, Bible Studies, Daily Devotions (including Large Print), Children’s Books, and several CD’s with messages from well-known ministers. Some books are older and may need to be donated, as well as several Bibles that might be shared with other churches or Missions. There is also a collection of little books of photos, A Touch of William, which a member has given to the library as part of their ministry.

There is not a check out system, but if you find a book you would like to read, take it and return it to the box designated for returns, when you are finished. No timeline. Just enjoy!

And if you want to donate any books, please put them in the return box as well, so they can be placed on the correct shelf. Keep in mind our diverse world, including everyone, every religion, and every age.

Thank You!





You are invited!

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



Sabbatical Send-off Luncheon

Following Worship on May 7th

Please sign-up in the Narthex, or call the office to join in this send-off lunch for Pastor.



Community Meal

Monday May 8th, 5-6pm

All community and Immanuel folks are welcome to this monthly meal served in our fellowship hall on the second Monday of each month.

MAY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES




- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Haley Kunc | 10 Barb Paulins |
| 2 Margo Hoornstra | 13 Payton Burmeister |
| 2 Katelynn Wheeler | 13 Lorri Yusten |
| 3 Barbara Jetmore | 14 Joan Hoffman |
| 3 Mitchell Stoakes | 14 Jakob Proper |
| 3 Sandra Williams | 15 Judy Koos |
| 4 Britni Williamson | 16 Geoff White |
| 5 Sarah Larkins | 17 Dianna Dunn |
| 6 Amari Racine | 18 Gordy Woodman |
| 7 Mary Matzke | 19 Amy Larkins |
| 8 Alex Baribeau | 20 Mary Van Hoesen |
| 8 Holly Ketola | 22 Ethan Mandeville |
| 8 Alex Karkau | 24 Sandy Love |
| 8 Ellen McKenzie | 27 Caylee Blake |
| 9 Linda Kruth | 27 Marty Woodman |
| 10 James LeMay | 29 Marlin Kitchen |

Happy Anniversary!

- 1 Geoff & Kelly White
- 5 Den & Pat Graeber
- 12 Tyler & Erin Hubert
- 23 Mike & Lori Fischer
- 24 Robert & Elizabeth Kunc
- 30 Alan & Melissa Goschka





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Sewl Sisters Serving-Team 3:30 Support Team 6:30	2 7am Men in the Morning	3 Handbell practice 6:30	4 Immanuel Quilters 9am	5	6 AA Support
7 First Fruits Offering Worship with Communion 10am	8	9 7am Men in the Morning	10 Handbell practice 6:30	11 Immanuel Quilters 9am	12	13 AA Support
14 Worship w/ Communion 10am Noisy Offer Lutheran Disaster Response Mother's Day	15 Sewl Sisters 10:30am-3pm Council Mtg 6:30pm	16 7am Men in the Morning	17	18 Immanuel Quilters 9am	19	20 AA Support
21 Worship w/ Communion 10am	22	23 7am Men in the Morning	24	25 Immanuel-Quilters 9am	26	27 AA Support
28 Worship w/ Communion 10am	29 Office Closed 	30 7am Men in the Morning	31	If you have any questions related to upcoming events, please contact the Trisha at the Church Office 517.627.6310		