



THE MESSENGER

Immanuel Lutheran Church, ELCA
726 Fuller Avenue, Big Rapids, MI 49307

Website: www.immanuelbr.com

Facebook: @immanuelbr Instagram: ILCbigrapids

Phone 231/796-8273 Fax 231/796-9599

Sunday Morning Worship Service 9:30 a.m. Live on Facebook

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday – 9:00 am to Noon and 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm - Closed on Friday

Office Staff: Mary Larkin, Administrative Assistant is in the office Tuesday – Thursday 9 am – 4 pm. Shirley Hamelund, Office Assistant is in the office Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 9 am – 4 pm. The Church office is closed on Friday.

Office e-mail addresses:

Church: immanuelbigrapids726@gmail.com

Mary Larkin (Administrative Assistant) marylar726@gmail.com

Shirley Hamelund (Office Assistant/Receptionist) shirleyh403@gmail.com

MISSION: To inspire members to grow in loving devotion to Jesus Christ, caring concern for one another, welcoming outreach, and loving service to our neighbors.

VISION STATEMENT: Immanuel Lutheran Church will be known for welcoming hospitality, passionate worship, intentional faith development, risk-taking mission and service, and extravagant generosity.

APRIL 2023



Pastoral Schedule for April 2023 (in-person)

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| April 2, 2023 | Pastor Dan Ward |
| April 9, 2023 | Rev. Robert Garrels |
| April 16, 2023 | Lay Leader Lee Wolken |
| April 23, 2023 | Pastor Dan Ward |
| April 30, 2023 | Pastor John Brown—Episcopal |

(Live stream on Facebook)

Please call the church office (231) 796-8273 in case of an emergency. The referral will be passed on to a leader of the church.

APRIL Readings Schedule

(Readings from New Revised Standard)

April 2nd - Passion/Palm Sunday

9:30 am Worship - Pastor Dan Ward - In person worship & live stream on Facebook.



Readings:

Isaiah 50: 4-9a

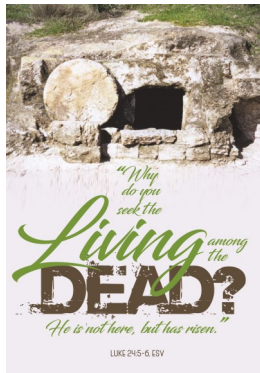
Psalm 31: 9-16

Philippians 2: 5-11

Matt 26:14—27:66

April 9 - Resurrection of Our Lord

9:30 am Worship - Rev. Robert Garrels - In person worship & live stream on Facebook.



Readings:

Jer. 31: 1-6

Psalm 118: 1-2, 14-24

Acts 10: 34-43

Matt 28: 1-10

April 16th - 2nd Sunday of Easter

9:30 am Worship - Lee Wolken, Lay Leader - in person worship & live stream on Facebook.



Readings:

Acts 2: 14a, 22-32

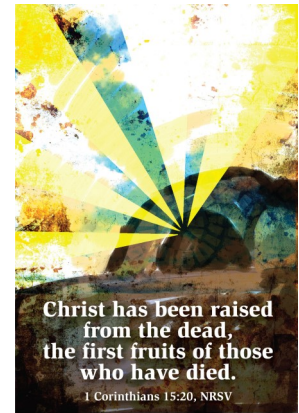
Psalm 16

1 Peter 1: 3-9

John 20:19-31

April 23rd - 3rd Sunday of Easter

9:30 a.m. Worship - Pastor Dan Ward- In person Worship & live stream on Facebook.



Readings:

Acts 2: 14a, 36-41

Psalm 116: 1-4, 12-19

1 Peter 1: 17-23

Luke 24: 13-35

April 30th - 4th Sunday of Easter

9:30 a.m. Worship - Pastor John Brown- In person Worship & live stream on Facebook.



Readings:

Acts 2: 42-47

Psalm 23

1 Peter 2: 19-25

John 10: 1-10

YTD thru February 2023

Ministry Fund

Giving - \$19,304

Expenses -\$18,547

Building Fund

Giving - \$10,607

Mortgage Payments- \$28,844

IMMANUEL ACTIVITIES



If you were left off this list, or if a birthday or anniversary is listed wrong, please contact the church office.

- 1 Robert Schweitzer
- 4 Beth Windquist
- 14 Shirley Hamelund
- 23 Gyddoon Bowen
- 28 Tammy Lindsey



- 13 Gil & Deb Flores
- 15 Richard & Bette Jo Brown

Meetings in person this month

- Staff meeting **Tues. April 4 at 10:30 am**
- Worship & Music comm. **Tues. April 4 at 2:00 pm**
- Maundy Thurs. Worship at St. Andrew's **Thurs. April 6 at 6:00 pm, potluck at 7:00 pm**
- Good Friday Worship/Immanuel **Fri. April 7 at Noon**
- Resurrection of Our Lord Worship **Sun. April 9 at Immanuel 9:30 am**
- Staff meeting **Tues. April 11 at 10:30 am**
- Council meeting **Sun. April 16 at 10:45 am**
- Tubabach concert (MSU) **Sun. April 16 at 4:00pm**
- Staff meeting **Tues. April 18 at 10:30 am**
- Shepherd's Hooks & Needles **Tues. April 18 Noon**
- Staff meeting **Tues. April 25 at 10:30 am**
- Hymn Plan committee **Tues. April 25 at 3:30 pm**



Ongoing prayers for: Jean Swarouth, Len Crystal, Nancy McReynolds, Virginia Schuberg, Leroy Larson.

Healing & Health Concerns for: Roger O'Dell, Judy O'Dell, Phyllis Obermier-Striho, Linda Borton, Marcy Nelson, Carol Wilson-Jungck, Charlie Schroeder, Bonnie Biers, Elaine White, Sara Koch Jordan, Beth Hamelund, Pastor Roseanne Anderson and Denny Greene.

Comfort:
Bob Krueger family
Rev. Jerry Switzer family
Danny Oleson family

World Concerns Prayers:
Our President and Leaders of the Nation
Racism
Prayer of guidance for our neighborhood churches
People hurting, suffering, homeless
People in poverty (hunger, homeless)
Military troops in the U.S. and abroad
Victims of Human Trafficking
Victims of natural disasters here & abroad
Victims of shootings, bombs, terrorist groups
Victims of hurricanes, flooding, earthquakes, volcanoes, devastating tornadoes (Kentucky) and wildfires
North Korea, Iran, Syria, Puerto Rico, Islamic community in New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Ukraine
Families of the mass shootings in US
Shootings & Suicides in returning veterans in Military & their families (general PTSD) (22 suicides every day)
Wounded Warriors



April 9, 2023



PARISH NURSE

APRIL

Continue to prepare yourselves during this Lenten Journey with Easter arriving soon! Spring has arrived and the robins and spring flowers have returned. Are you taking advantage of the warmer sunny days?

Our Health News for April:

1. April is Celebrate Occupational Therapy Month. An occupational therapist or occupational therapist assistant is a health professional who helps people perform activities of daily living throughout their lifespan. A child with a disability, for example, can participate in school or social activities, a person with a serious illness can relearn to regain skills, and an elderly person can learn to strengthen parts of the body so he/she can remain independent. Praise to occupational therapists and their assistants.
2. April is National Donate Life Month. About 121,000 people in the United States are awaiting an organ/tissue donation in order to survive. One organ donor can save 9 lives. If you have not signed up yet to be an organ/tissue donor (after you have no longer any need for them), go to the Secretary of State's office to get a "heart" on your drivers' license.
3. April is National Healthcare Decisions Day. This day is a reminder to encourage the public about advance health care planning which involves decision making about medical treatment when and if one can no longer communicate. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 70% of American adults are without an advance care plan. Think about it and if you do not have an advance care plan, ask your health care professional for the forms, then fill it out.
4. April is National Foot Health Awareness Month. Foot health is very important, especially for people who have diabetes. 1) Check feet daily, especially between the toes to insure that there are no blisters or cuts. 2) Wash feet daily and dry thoroughly, especially between the toes. 3) Apply lotion to the bottoms of feet and dry areas (but not between the toes). 4) Cut toe nails straight across (if you can't reach, ask a family member or podiatrist to do this). If you do have diabetes, be sure to see your podiatrist yearly.
5. April is Eye Health Safety Month. Take good care of your eyes by: 1) eating healthy-greens, eggs, nuts, beans, fish, citrus fruit, 2) quit smoking, 3) wear sunglasses, 4) use safety glasses when working with tools, etc., 5) look away from the computer screen periodically.

6) visit your eye doctor regularly.

Blood Pressure checks will be when needed.

"Set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed."

.. I Peter 1:13

Love In Christ,

Phyllis Lindsey, Parish Nurse

Giving envelopes are detained. A notice will be put out when we get them.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

AAUW Book Sale

AAUW of Big Rapids is collecting gently used books, CDs, and DVDs for its annual used book sale to be held **Fri. April 14 9am - 5pm & Sat. April 15 9am- 2pm** at the First United Methodist Church. A donation bin will be in the narthex until just before the sale. Proceeds from the sale fund scholarships for Ferris State University students. Call 231-598-0872 for more information.

Social Concerns committee is undertaking a joint program with Manna Pantry beginning with the month of April. You will see that a calendar is attached showing an entire year with a different product listed for each month. The focus will last for entire month. There is a tote near the office for donation. Bonnie Clark asked that we be cautious not to donate outdated products. Let's all lend a helping hand to Manna Pantry.

| | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|
| January: | canned luncheon (meat or chicken) |
| February: | pancake mix and syrup |
| March: | tuna |
| April: | macaroni or spaghetti & sauce |
| May: | canned pasta |
| June: | pork & beans and black beans |
| July: | boxed macaroni & cheese |
| August: | canned green beans |
| September: | canned corn |
| October: | canned carrots |
| November: | cranberry sauce & boxed dressing |
| December: | canned tomatoes |

Social concerns - Go and Do Likewise: We will support the Brookside grade school this year. A collection box will be in the narthex for donations from the Congregation. Such things as Kleenex, hand sanitizer, surface wipes will be needed.

Join our dynamic team of foster parents! We offer lots of support, training, and flexibility. Foster homes are needed for youth ages 8 to 17. We have need for respite care and short placements. Foster parents can be married or single, rent or own, and work full or part-time. Payment is provided. Please call Jodie Garner, 42nd Circuit Court—Family Division, 989-832-6398 for a packet of information.

Minutes
Church Council
March 12, 2023

Present: Dave Scott, Steve Neumann, Nedra Neumann, Phyllis Cousineau, Roger Barr, Judy O'Dell, Carol Wilson-Jungck.

Absent: Bonnie Biers, Mel Richardson, Tammy Lindsey

The Meeting was called to order at 10:55 AM by President Steve Neumann. The minutes from the February 12, 2023 meeting were reviewed. Judy O'Dell moved approval. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: A Written report was reviewed. Nedra, explained some of the entries and the report was approved.

Phyllis Lindsey reviewed the **Nurse's report**. A copy of her report is on file.

Committee Reports:

Worship Committee: Carol said she would have a fee's proposal for use of the church next month.

Social Concerns: Roger gave a verbal report on this committee. Carol had taken note's in Roger's absence and published them. A copy is on record.

Old Business: Constitution and by-laws changes are postponed until the April Meeting.

An interview with a potential Pastor is scheduled for April 15th at 2:00pm at the church.

New Business:

The electrical supply to the Amplifier may require replacement.

The Quick Books program for 2023 will cost \$549.00. Phyllis Cousineau moved to pay the cost. Motion carried.

The meeting was closed at 11:40 AM.

Next meeting will be April 16, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Roger Barr, Secretary

Ecumenical Lenten Worship Schedule – in person & virtual on Facebook

Thursday, April 6, 2023 Maundy Thursday Ecumenical Worship at St. Andrew's at 6 pm with potluck at 7 pm

Friday, April 7, 2023 Good Friday Worship at Immanuel at Noon

Sunday, April 9, 2023 Easter Service at Immanuel 9:30 am

Easter Brunch following worship

We have been invited to participate with St. Andrews Episcopal – at their Church on Maundy Thursday (**April 6**) at 6:00 pm with a potluck at 7:00 pm. Thereafter return to the sanctuary for the stripping of the altar. A 'washing of hands' will be included. Pastor Garrels will be offering a message and Pastor Jeremy will be participating as well. The community Good Friday (**April 7**) service at Noon has been changed to Immanuel. Pastor Radha will be preaching but the United Methodist church will provide readers and the choir director/accompanist for the community choir. Choir will rehearse here at Immanuel prior to the service (11:00).

Immanuel Lutheran Church

March Report of the Vision Committee and the Church Partnerships Team

Attached to this issue of the Messenger are two documents: Alternative Futures Worksheet. Results of the March 5, 2023, congregational conversation.

We had a great turnout for the March 5 congregational conversation. The main purpose of the conversation was to begin the congregational self-assessment process as we consider a possible partnership with United Church. This type of self-assessment process is recommended by the synod and the ELCA. You will note that participants indicated what they felt would be the benefits, issues, and questions to address as we begin this self-assessment process. Participants indicated that they are ready to make major changes in the best interests of the future of Immanuel, but they want more information on what the major changes are likely to be. One of the tables noted that "The very fact that we are here shows that we are willing to change." The Church Partnerships Team will now use the results of the March 5 congregational conversation to decide on next steps to move the exploration of a possible partnership with United Church forward. As the same time, the first meeting of the United/Immanuel Joint Study Team is being planned and the next session to study doctrinal and worship styles similarities and difference is scheduled.

The Vision Committee is responsible for continuing to explore the other alternative futures for Immanuel as outlined in the attached one-page document. Continuing to grow as a member led/pastor supported church (Alternative Future One) is important even if we develop a partnership with another church or choose other futures.

Immanuel Lutheran church
726 Fuller Avenue

Big Rapids, Michigan 49307-1827

231-796-8273

Immanuel@tucker-usa.com www.immanuelbr.com

March 13, 2023

RESULTS OF MARCH 5 2023 CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATION

CONGREGATIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT—POSSIBLE PARTNERSHIP WITH UNITED CHURCH

Note 1: A partnership with United could take a number of forms: (1) continue growing informal shared ministries and events, (2) covenant agreement (shared pastor and other formal agreements while maintaining separate identities; approval at synod and possibly ELCA level), or (3) merger (phased approach possible: covenant agreement now, perhaps merger later).

Note 2: We have a 3-year window to make decisions on Immanuel's future and begin the next chapter of Immanuel's development; we must make key decisions about our future in 2023. We have identified five alternative futures, of which a partnership with United Church is Alternative Future Two and is one of the most feasible and desirable futures for Immanuel. We should aim at celebrating our 150th anniversary in 2024 and 2025 as a milestone in Immanuel's next chapter.

A. Benefits of a possible partnership with United Church

1. More likely to be able to afford a full-time pastor.
2. More consistency and expanded congregational care with a shared full-time pastor.
3. More willing hands, more ministries, including expanded community services.
4. Possible return of choir and expanded music ministry.
5. Stronger possibility of a sustainable long-term future for Immanuel (and United).
6. We are practically next door to each other, and we know each other (friends, shared ministries already, book club, etc.).

B. Issues raised on March 5 about possible partnership with United.

1. Can we partner with United in some form and yet retain our Lutheran identity?
2. What are the differences in doctrine, communion, worship styles, funerals, etc.—can differences be accommodated? (We need to know where we might have to compromise and adjust, but we are willing to listen and change.)
3. The issue of having two facilities when only one may be needed in the future is sure to come up. At what point in our dialogue with United do we consider the options of maintaining two buildings with unique uses, merging into the use of the United facility, or merging into the use of the Immanuel facility? What are the pros and cons of each option?

4. If United is calling a full-time pastor, will Immanuel have a voice in the selection process (question of fit)?
5. Are there different positions on LGBTQ ministry (we should study ELCA position)?
6. Need to survey Immanuel members who are not currently attending worship services, and those attending worship services on Facebook, to get their opinions about a possible partnership with United.

C. Questions

1. What will be the decision-making process at Immanuel, United, our synod, ELCA, and United's denominations?
2. What are the major changes that need to be studied and discussed before decisions can be made (ministries, pastoral leadership, congregational care, worship styles, time and location of worship including beyond Sunday morning, finances, staffing, sharing or merging of facilities, etc.).
3. We made a choice to belong to Immanuel. How can we avoid having that choice taken away from us (relates to issue of maintaining our own identity)?

D. General comments

1. Response to Question 1: On a scale of 10 to 1, how willing are we to make major changes in response to the emerging realities for mainline churches and trends at Immanuel (declining membership, worship attendance, finances, ministries, family involvement). All tables chose 10, 9, or 8 with one 5 based on the question, "What do we mean by major changes?"
2. What choice do we have?
3. That we are here shows that we are willing to change.
4. We are committed to seeking the best future for Immanuel.
5. Something has to happen!

E. Reminder: Immanuel's five alternative futures

1. Alternative Future One: Member-led/pastor supported church (future we are creating now). Important to emphasize even if we develop partnerships with other churches.
- 2. Alternative Future Two: Partnership with United Church.**
3. Alternative Future Three: Partnership with St. Paul's Lutheran or another church.
4. Alternative Future Four: Sell Fuller Street assets and move to another location (may be feasible if desired depending on proceeds beyond paying off mortgage).
5. Alternative Future Five: Sell assets, disband as a congregation, find new church homes for members, donate proceeds to another organization as desired.

F. Immanuel's structure to explore possible partnership with United Church:

1. Church Partnership Team.
2. United/Immanuel Joint Study Team.
3. Congregational self-assessment.
4. Study of doctrinal and worship style similarities and differences.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
 Big Rapids, Michigan
 February 28, 2023

March 5 Congregational Conversation—Alternative Futures Worksheet

| Alternative Futures | Projects | Leader(s) |
|---|--|---|
| Alt Future One: Member Led/Pastor Supported Church (small but mighty) <i>(important to emphasize even if we develop a partnership with other churches or choose other futures)</i> | Ongoing ministries—future we are creating right now—worship services, various ministries. Explore rentals and shared use partnerships? Develop building as community cultural and resource center? Renovate kitchen, install elevator, and redesign lower floor? | Explore more rentals? _____ Research renovations? Steve and Nedra N. |
| Alt Future Two: Partnership with United Church Informal sharing of ministries, Or, covenant agreement while maintaining two separate identities (shared pastor, other formal understandings) Explore other future options, including merger | <u>Informal</u> —Shared Lenten services, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Dump and Run ministry, book club, etc. <u>Exploration of covenant agreement</u> —United/Immanuel joint study team; Pastor Garrels sessions on doctrine and worship styles, Immanuel congregational self-assessment | Church Partnerships Team, Pastor Bob, Lee W., Worship and Music Committee, Gunder, ?? |
| Alt Future Three: Partnership with St. Paul’s Lutheran or other church | Keep possibility open. David S. will make contact to test St. Paul’s interest. | Church Partnerships Team |
| Alt Future Four: Sell Fuller Street assets and move to a smaller location | Completed appraisal of value of Fuller Street assets without furnishings: \$930,000. Some margin after sale is likely. Further discussion? Clarifying deed restriction on sale—dialogue with Shuberg family has started | Carol W. secured appraisal, is in contact with Shuberg family |
| Alt Future Five: Disband as a congregation, help members find new church homes, donate proceeds of sale of Fuller Street assets as desired (to the extent that there is a margin after mortgage is paid off) | No plans. Alternative future we will strive to avoid. Further discussion? | |
| Other alternative futures? United Churches of Big Rapids (partnership of three or more churches)? Other? | ?? | |

2023 Council Members

Steve Neumann, President (231) 796-0956
Tammy Lindsey, Vice Pres. (231) 519-1212
Roger Barr, Secretary (231) 972-8276
Nedra Neumann, Treasurer (231) 796-0956
Dave Scott (231) 250-5067
Judy O'Dell (231) 823-2845
Melanie Richardson (231) 357-0863
Carol Wilson-Jungck (231) 670-3220
Phyllis Cousineau (231) 796-9574
Bonnie Biers (231) 796-1701
Council Liaisons: Roger Barr – Property
Mel Richardson – Social Concerns
Carol Wilson-Jungck – Healing Garden
Dave Scott – Finance
Steve Neumann – Worship & Music
Tammy Lindsey – Stewardship
Bonnie Biers – Church Partnership
Phyllis Cousineau – Healing Garden
Judy O'Dell—Church Life, W/ELCA

Committees and Organizations

Celebrate Immanuel (CIF)

Christian Education

Church Life

Carol Zimmerman, Chairperson (231) 796-2152
Kitchen Coordinator
Irene Schuberg, Funeral lunch (231) 796-7814

Finance

Nedra Neumann, Chairperson (231) 796-0956
Nedra Neumann, Treasurer (231) 796-0956
Roger Barr – Gifts/Memorials (231) 972-8276

Nominating Team (2023)

Property

Tim Vogel, chairperson (231) 796-3860
Healing Garden Min.
Carol Wilson-Jungck, co-chair (231) 670-3220
Heritage team:
Carol Zimmerman (231) 796-2152

Office Staff

Mary Larkin, Administrative Asst. (Tues.-Thurs.)
Shirley Hamelund, Office Asst. (Mon, Tues, Thurs.)
Phyllis Lindsey, Parish Nurse (schedule varies)

Intentional Faith Development

Social Concerns (Risk-Taking Mission and Service)

Roger Barr, Chairperson (231)972-8276
Lee Wolken –Habitat/Humanity (231)972-7756

Stewardship (Extravagant Generosity)

Lee Wolken, Chairperson (231) 972-7756
David Scott (231) 250-5067

Vision (and Ministry Leadership Network)

Gunder Myran, Chairperson (231) 972-7405
Lee Wolken (231) 972-7756

Church Partnership Team

Gunder Myran, Chairperson (231) 972-7405

Welcoming

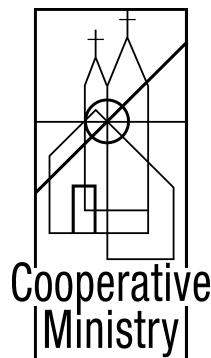
Phyllis Lindsey – Prayer circle (231) 796-6400
Dee Neumann-Prayer Circle (231) 796-8385
Webmaster- Mary Larkin (231) 796-8273
Leah Monger (231) 287-7022

Women of the ELCA

Dee Neumann, co-chair (231) 796-8385
Shirley Hamelund co-chair (231) 796-7763

Worship and Music (Passionate Worship)

David Scott, A/V team (231) 796-4618
Dee Neumann, Altar Guild (231) 796-8385
Carol Zimmerman, Altar Guild (231) 796-2152
Readers (Volunteer)
Phyllis Lindsey, Worship Asst.
and Intinction Asst. (231) 796-6400
Dee Neumann, Weddings (231) 796-8385
Shirley Hamelund, Weddings (231) 796-7763



Immanuel 
LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELCA

726 Fuller Ave.
Big Rapids, MI 49307
Address Change Requested

2023

