



# The Gleaner

Immanuel Lutheran Church

February 2021

*The Gleaner is a publication of:*

**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
320 S. Bradley St.  
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858

Phone: (989) 773-4204

Email:

office@immanuelmp.com

Website: immanuelmp.com

Pastor: Dana Hendershot  
Layout and Editing:  
Andrea Redmond

Immanuel has an online church directory. Visit our website and check it out!

Contact the office for your username and password.

**Mission**  
**Joyfully Christian.**  
**Humbly Serving.**  
**Boldly Loving.**



## A Letter from Pr. Dana.....

Friends in Christ,

I pray you take some time to look at all the opportunities we will be offering during the Lenten season. I'll explain most opportunities in detail throughout The Gleaner. I want to elaborate more here on the prayer stations that Andrea and I will be setting up in the fellowship hall starting Feb 27 (the first Sunday of Lent).

If you have been at Immanuel for a long time, it will be similar to the Lenten room we had set up years ago in the capital room. Some of you may remember the purple walls or the fire we started in there and it almost burned down!?

This idea sprouted from wanting to provide and share meaningful Lenten practices while staying safe. Those who wish to use the prayer stations without crowds can come and use them at any time. For those who wish to see some familiar faces as we gather to pray, I will be at the church Wednesdays from 5-6 p.m and will also be offering communion at this time each week.

We will have signs throughout the stations so that you will be able to guide yourself through the prayers each week. We have put a lot of thought and prayer into the creation of these stations and I hope you will come to experience them. They were created so you may grow deeper in prayer this Lent!

Before signing off, I will add that we have decided to remain online for Sunday morning worship. I am hoping to get a vaccine along with other staff members. Our names are out there just like many of you. We will continue to watch the numbers now that state restrictions have been lifted (a little). Thanks for your understanding and patience. Last year we were hoping to be back together by Easter 2020. Maybe it will be Easter 2021?

It is always lovely to see your faces at drive-thru communion. I look forward to being blessed with you at drive-thru ashes!

Let us journey together this Lent!

In Christ,

Pastor Dana Hendershot



# Lent at Immanuel



The prayer stations will be set up by February 21 (the first Sunday of Lent) and will be found in the Fellowship Hall. When Pr. Dana is onsite on Wednesdays from 5-6pm, she will also be offering communion to those who wish to receive it. Please be sure to wear your mask!



The program People Helping People is coined from a phrase that a good friend of Max and Emily's used to say to his family and friends, "We're just people helping people."

In partnership with Max and Emily's downtown they feed, on average, around 75 guests per week.

This year we would like to invite you and your families to a Lenten Almsgiving Challenge.

Week 1 (Feb 21-27): Give 25cents for every salty snack you have

Week 2 (Feb 28-March 6): Give 50c for every condiment in your fridge

Week 3 (March 7-13): Give 75c for each coffee mug you have

Week 4 (March 14-20): Give 5c for every spice you have

Week 5 (March 21-27): Give \$1 for each appliance you have (microwave, coffee pot, crock pot...)

Week 6 (Holy Week): Come up with your own meaningful challenge to give.

During Easter week you can either drop off your offering at Immanuel Lutheran - or go to our website click on [immanuelmp.com/give](http://immanuelmp.com/give) (make sure to choose "Lenten Almsgiving")

# Lent at Immanuel



As the Lenten season begins, we are reminded of God's words to Adam in Genesis 3:19, "you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (NRSV). As Lent ends, we turn to the final days of Jesus' life and his death, while Easter Sunday celebrates Jesus' resurrection. This five-part Lenten series will examine select ideas about human existence—including mortality, death, and afterlife—that we find in the biblical texts, asking: in what ways can these give us insight into the past, present, and future?

Watch the series at your convenience: [www.immanuelmp.com/afterlife/](http://www.immanuelmp.com/afterlife/)

(See page 5 for more information about this series.)

Lenten  
Devotionals

A link to our Lenten devotionals will be emailed out on February 10<sup>th</sup>. There will also be printed copies outside of the office beginning on Wednesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>. Please contact the office if you would like one mailed to you.

# Lent at Immanuel

## Afterlife: The Eternal Journey (A 5-part Lenten Series)

**Week One (Feb 21-27):** The author of the book of Ecclesiastes declares, “The same fate comes to everyone: to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good and to the wicked ....” (Ecclesiastes 9:2). Rather than imagining heaven and hell, the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament largely envisions only one postmortem destination for humans: a shadowy underworld called Sheol, which awaited all souls regardless of how a person might have lived their earthly life. This video will introduce the concept of Sheol, its manifold appearances in the biblical texts, and what it might tell us about how ancient Israelites understood both life and death.

**Week Two (Feb 28-March 6):** In the pages of the New Testament, we find numerous references to a place called Gehenna, such as when Jesus proclaims, “But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire (Greek: Gehenna)” (Matthew 5:22). If there is no such fiery underworld in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, from where did this idea come? The second video will explore the history of Gehenna, what it might teach us about how early Christians conceived of postmortem reality, and how it affected their views of life on earth.

**Week Three (March 7-13):** Hell is often imagined as a place crawling with demons, a fiery realm of eternal punishment ruled over by a fallen angel named Lucifer, the place where sinners are catalogued according to their sins (think Dante’s *Inferno*). Yet many of our ideas about hell and postmortem punishment come not from the pages of the Bible we read, but rather other early Jewish and Christian texts that were widely used throughout Christian history even if they were not considered canonical. In this video, we will spend time exploring some of these texts, such as the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

**Week Four (March 14-20):** Part four of the series returns to the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament and the book of Daniel, which includes the first clear reference to the idea of resurrection: “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2). Video four will discuss how the book of Daniel introduces a new idea about postmortem life into the biblical canon, where the idea of bodily resurrection might have originated, and how it changes early Jewish and Christian ideas about both earthly existence and postmortem life.

**Week Five (March 21-27):** What then about heaven? The fifth and final part of the series turns to the New Testament again, exploring the concept of the Kingdom of Heaven and the ways in which the New Testament writers connect life and death with hope.

# Ministry with Each Other

Hi, Immanuel Family!

It has been interesting trying ways to connect virtually. One of the ways we have tried to do some hands on activities is by putting together ADVENTure boxes that included weekly activities during Advent. This great idea was brought to us by Jan Eversole from another church. Thanks, Jan!

The ADVENTure boxes included some scripture readings and easy activities like making cookies and dropping them off to a neighbor and building an Advent wreath (all items included!) My wife, Claire, and our intern, Madeleine Welch, were a big part of putting these boxes together. Our team wasn't sure how many kits to make or how many people would participate. We decided to do an online sign up and we quickly realized that our Immanuel family and friends were excited to have something not-so-virtual to do. We ended up making and distributing 40 kits! Pastor Dana helped deliver several to families in our congregation. I think that was a very nice touch and provided another element of connection.

We are currently working on another set of kits for Lent. We will put out an online sign up soon so keep watch! I do want to note a couple of things. First, these boxes were originally thought up for our children and youth and families; however, you do not have to fit this category to get a box and participate. We would love to have all involved! One other things that I learned from the ADVENTure boxes is to ask for pictures. We will do that this time around. We want to see all of your fun and creativity!

Thanks for your patience and grace while we try to find ways to connect virtually and create ways to still have some hands on experiences. This has been quite the learning experience. I am glad to be part of a congregation that is flexible and willing to try new things!

TGBTG,

Craig Torgerson  
Director of Faith Formation



- |    |                 |
|----|-----------------|
| 1  | Judy Smith      |
|    | Diane Thomas    |
| 4  | Ted Lueder      |
|    | Lisa Wegener    |
| 9  | Linda Mellinger |
| 12 | Kathy Gallaher  |
| 16 | Whitney Eidahl  |
| 19 | Chuck Clise     |
| 19 | Mark Heinrich   |
| 20 | Roger Gilbert   |
| 21 | Emma Heinrich   |
| 22 | Ed Berthold     |
| 23 | Bonnie Berthold |
|    | Bill Gallaher   |
| 24 | Allen Shock     |
|    | Abyron Anderson |



# Worship Ministry



Please join us for ONLINE  
Worship Services  
on Sundays  
at  
9am on Facebook  
or  
10:15am on YouTube



**Drive-Thru  
Communion**  
at  
**Immanuel  
Lutheran Church**  
**February 28th**  
**11:00 - 11:30 am**

## Theological Discussions with Pr. Dana

If you are interested in a small  
group discussion, please join  
Pr. Dana's Theological  
Discussion on Thursdays at  
11am via ZOOM. (The link is on  
our website)

If that is not a convenient time,  
please email Pr. Dana  
([pastor@immanuelmp.com](mailto:pastor@immanuelmp.com))  
and she will set up another  
ZOOM discussion group based  
on interest!



If you're interested in  
receiving occasional  
texts of scripture,  
song and prayer  
from Pastor Dana,  
text "Trinity" to 474747.

## Share the Light



As we begin to have opportunities for  
vaccinations against Covid-19, we anticipate the  
"Light at the end of the tunnel." Pr. Dana would  
like to celebrate this light by lighting more and  
more candles each week during the liturgy.  
Please email or text Pr. Dana after you have  
received BOTH doses of your vaccine. (Your  
names will not be shared, but rather, will  
represent another candle that is lit.)

## Tax Break for contributions –people over 70 years-old

If you are over 70.5 did you know that you can give directly from your retirement account to Immanuel Lutheran Church and no pay taxes on the gift? Due to the tax changes that include a higher standard deduction and the elimination of the personal exemption it is possible the best tax benefit for contributions to the church is to give directly from your retirement account.

## Contributing Stocks or Bonds

To contribute capital gain property such as stocks or bonds to the church, per IRS Publication 526 you can deduct the Fair Market Value of the asset on your personal tax returns - not the basis in the asset. Immanuel has a brokerage account to facilitate the transfer of these assets directly. If you are interested, please contact the church for information or assistance.

### Financial Monthly Report: YTD as of December 31, 2020

Spending Plan 2020-2021: \$371,627  
Actual Expenditures: \$72,261.94  
Giving To Date: \$82,445.71

### Last year comparison: December 31, 2019

Actual Expenditures: \$79,251.40  
Giving To Date: \$94,994.10

### 2020 Giving Statements

Your 2020 giving statements have been emailed. If we do not have an email on file for you, sent them via snail-mail.

Please contact Andrea  
([office@immanuelmp.com](mailto:office@immanuelmp.com)) if you still  
need your statement.

## Immanuel Offers Electronic Giving

Immanuel Lutheran Church is pleased to offer an electronic option for making regular or special offerings.

Visit our website, [www.immanuelmp.com](http://www.immanuelmp.com) click "Give".

### 2021 Offering Envelopes

2021 Offering Envelopes are available in the church office for those of you who do not choose to use online giving.

If you would like to pick yours up, please contact Andrea in the office to make arrangements.

If you would like your envelopes, but are unable to pick yours up, please email or call Andrea and she will mail them to you!



# Ministry with the Community & World



Immanuel is currently hosting the Homeless shelter and will continue to do so through Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. Please sign up to help if you are able!

## The Noisy Offering

This month our Noisy Offering will be given to  
The Foster Closet of  
Isabella County.

These may be brought in to the church office, mailed in or given online!

Please contact the office if you have any questions!

## Community Input: Praises and Pinches

To be a healthy, faithful community, Immanuel needs to be open with what we expect in all areas of life. If there is anything in our community life that brings joy or causes concern, please share any feelings and questions. Thank you for taking the time to communicate ways we are doing well in our ministry at Immanuel and the areas that need attention. Your Mutual Ministry Team needs your feedback. If you would like a personal response to your "praise" or "pinch," please be sure to sign this form at the bottom.

To discuss a concern directly with the Mutual Ministry Team or one of the Team members, please indicate below.

**Praises:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pinches:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Desired Outcome:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Is it OK to publish in Gleaner?** \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No (Name must be posted if you wish for this to appear in Gleaner.)

A specific question I would like answered: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_