



# The Gleaner

Immanuel Lutheran Church

February 2023

*The Gleaner is a publication of:*

**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
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Immanuel has an online church directory. Visit our website and check it out!  
Contact the office for your username and password.

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



## Prayer Around the Cross

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall  
on Wednesdays during Lent at 5:30pm.

March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

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

Siblings in Christ,

In this short month of February, we will experience Ash Wednesday together on Feb. 22. We will offer drive-thru ashes at noon, and a worship service at 6 p.m., moving into the Lenten season.

This Lent, we will be Seeking: honest questions for deeper faith. The lectionary for Year A offers us many stories of Jesus encountering people who are seeking: Nicodemus comes to him in the veil of night, he approaches a Samaritan woman at a well, he heals a man born without sight.

In these stories, each person is seeking a new beginning, a different life, a deeper faith. What unfolds is an exchange filled with questions and exploration. Often, an unveiling occurs—assumptions are disrupted, a new perspective is revealed, mystery grows. And so, this Lenten series is founded on questions.

Many of the weekly questions feel restorative, “Can these bones live?” Some feel like a charge or challenge, “Who will you listen to?” Some questions are hopeful and curious, “How do we begin again?” The questions won't necessarily lead to answers, but they can help us find clarity and a new perspective. Ultimately, I pray they lead to a new beginning, a restoration, a wider grace.

Like the characters in our Lenten scriptures, we are also seeking many things: clarity, connection, wonder, justice, balance. We are seeking our calling, the sacred, and how to live as a disciple. Throughout the turbulence of the past few years, and even the current moment—many of us are asking big questions about our lives and our faith.

The worship team hopes this series will help us unpack some of those big questions in ways that are honest and faithful. Throughout this season, we hope you will continually ask yourself— What am I seeking? What is God seeking?

This Lent, you are invited to engage in the spiritual practice of seeking. We encourage you to stay curious, open, and nimble. We hope you will soften your assumptions and expand your perspectives. We pray that these questions will create a safe space to explore—to be drawn more deeply into the fullness of life, into the heart of God.

Seeking to go deeper,  
Pastor Dana Hendershot

If you would like to occasionally  
receive scripture/inspirational texts  
from Pastor Dana,  
please text “Trinity” to 474747  
to sign up.

# Ministry with Each Other



Just a reminder that Daylight Savings time begins on March 12. Don't forget to Spring Forward!



## Theological Discussions with Pr. Dana

\*\*\*These are on pause until Pastor Dana's return\*\*\*

**Upon return,** the plan is to read *The Universal Christ* by Richard Rohr: Many of us feel disconnected by difficult times, longing for ways to awaken God's love in ourselves and the world. The reality we face is simple yet difficult – the healing of the world hinges upon honoring the inherent sacredness of the world and every one in it. We hope that as you rediscover Jesus and learn to experience Christ in everything.



**Lonely? Sad? Discouraged?**

**Going through a tough time-- emotionally or spiritually?  
Struggling with a crisis or simply feeling down?**

Consider letting a Stephen Minister help. A Stephen Minister is a member of our congregation who is trained to listen, care, encourage, pray, and walk alongside you during difficult times. It's confidential, free, and very helpful.

To learn more, talk with Gail Mitchell.

# Ministry with Community & World

## thrivent

It is with GRATITUDE that Thrivent donated more than \$750 to help with the purchase of warm children's coats, blankets, boots, mittens, etc. for Christmas Outreach of Isabella County this past December. Thanks to many, including the LaBlances.

If you are a Thrivent member, please support continued success by logging in to Thriventchoice.com. Choice Dollars lets eligible clients with membership choose where Thrivent distributes a portion of it's funding each year. Your eligibility is based on insurance premium values. If you prefer not to go online, you can call: 1-800-847-4836- when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice" or "Choice Dollars". A representative will assist you and you may qualify for free \$. The dollars can be directed to Immanuel Lutheran in Mt. Pleasant or a designated charity of your choice. The password of our church is "God with us".

-This request for Thrivent donation must be made by the end of March. If there are questions call Carolyn Hoffman at 989-506-3763.

### The Care Store

is always in need of household items! When you buy one for your home, consider buying one for someone in need. Place these items on the shelf in the hallway by the office and we'll get them delivered to those who need them.



Immanuel will host the ICRH rotating homeless shelter from February 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>

We will, again, need volunteers to help us make this happen!

Please see our website to learn more!

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

# Business Ministry

## 2022 Giving Statements

Your 2022 giving statements have been emailed. If we do not have an email on file for you, we have sent it by "snail-mail" it to you. If we sent yours by email, but you would still like to receive a hard copy, please email Andrea at [office@immanuelmp.com](mailto:office@immanuelmp.com).

## Financial Monthly Report YTD as of December 2022

Spending Plan 2022-2023  
\$384,524

Actual Expenditures:  
\$82,069

Giving to Date:  
\$103,910

## 2023 Offering Envelopes

These are available in the narthex.  
If you are able, please pick yours up on Sunday  
OR  
if you are not able, please contact the office and  
we will mail yours to you!

## 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.

## Tax Break for contributions – people over 70 1/2 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.