



The Gleaner

Immanuel Lutheran Church

June/July 2023

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

Summer Office Hours:
Monday-Thursday 9-3:30

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.



Get ready for the VERY BEST WEEK OF THE SUMMER in 2023! Food Truck Party invites children to pray as Jesus teaches us in Matthew 6:11; "Give us this day our daily bread." These words serve as a reminder that everything we have comes from God — and that it's by turning to God in prayer that all our daily needs are met.

At the center of the Food Truck Party is a special food truck called "On a Roll." Here, Kids (or "Chefs") will learn about the Daily Specials (Daily Learnings), which are lines from the well-loved prayer that teaches us to turn to God to meet our needs. Chefs will learn all this through fun and engaging activities all centered around everyone's favorite thing.... food!

Food Truck Party VBS invites children entering kindergarten to 6th grade to get on a roll with God as a parade of Food Trucks rolls into their neighborhood for the summer's biggest party! Food Truck Party VBS will be July 24th- July 28th from 9am-12pm. Registration forms can be found at the following link (<https://immanuelmp.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1771351>) or using the QR code below. If you wish to volunteer in any capacity, please contact Thomas at thomas@immanuelmp.com. We hope you join us for this fun and food filled party!



A letter from Pastor Dana...

Friends in Christ,

At the end of April, I attended the Ecumenical Round for Faith and Science. I have been attending this event for eight years and I just happened to be the one in charge this year! The theme was, "Hope amidst the Climate Crisis," and we had about 31 people, 15 in-person and 16 virtually from the ELCA and PCUSA (Presbyterian).

I left feeling challenged to start giving an ecological tithe. My biggest take away was the very real need to simplify accessibility. For example, clean energy is not very accessible. So, how can the Church move the needle on this issue? I'd love to say we came up with great answers, but I couldn't deny a big shift in our conversation from clean energy to AI.

While we had motivating speakers and discussion around clean energy (e.g., solar, wind turbines, electric cars), it was clear that there is a timely urgency around issues of science and faith to technology and ethics. Consider ChatGPT. If you're unaware, please google it. While ChatGPT gets the limelight right now, other artificial intelligence (AI) advances are developing fast. You encounter it on a daily basis and likely don't even realize it. Alexa, turn off the lights!

In 2020, the church world was thrust into technology like never before. I'd say most congregations will always stream worship from here forward (until something new comes along...). In sharing our fears around ethics and AI, I was also happy to share with the group two God given gifts. I will admit though that there are more than two! I could and will worship with you during my recoveries, and others in this congregation can share that same story!

Here's what I shared with the group at the conference:

1. We had an assisting minister use ChatGPT to write the Sunday morning prayers. And it really did a good job. I did point out it may have written them, but it could not proclaim them.
2. We have a woman who has been worshipping with us from British Columbia (where there are not many worshipping communities) who will be moving here soon. She already feels a part of the congregation. She has joined theological discussions on Thursday via Zoom and has said, "I already feel like I know the church and you."

I don't know what struggles we will run into, but I do know that we can pray that God will use technology for love and spreading the gospel. I mean if it wasn't for the printing press, Luther would not have spread a German translation of the Bible so quickly into the hands of everyday people. I pray we embrace technology cautiously and find the ways it will help evolve the Church into what God is calling us to be.

In Christ,
Pastor Dana Hendershot

Ministry with Each Other



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 Pastor Dana, Chris Schuster, Fred Schuster, or Gail Mitchell.



We will be welcoming nine new members and will have six baptisms on Sunday, July 23!

Pastor's recovery

On June 1, Pastor Dana underwent surgery. She is now home and recovering under the care of her sister! She is still in a fair amount of pain, but is doing well.

There is a great line-up of Pastors who will preside in her absence:

June 4 – Rev. Bob Garrels

June 11 – Dr. Rev. Susan Sickelka

June 18 – Rev. Andreas Teich

June 25 – Rev. John Soyster

July 2 – Rev. John Soyster



Outdoor Worship

The worship team has decided to move worship outside for the summer months: June, July, and August. We will worship inside if the weather is questionable or raining.

Please bring a chair!
(We will have chairs available, too.)

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 pay no taxes on the gift? Due to the tax changes that include a higher standard deduction and the elimination of the personal exemption, you may receive the best tax benefit if you donate directly from your retirement account.

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 click "Give".

Financial Monthly Report – Unified Budget YTD as of April 2023

Spending Plan 2022-2023: \$384,524

Actual Expenditures: \$208,183

Income-To-Date: \$227,983

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 _____

Ministry with Each Other



The Care Store

The shelves at church for The Care Store are in need of more items!

Please consider picking up a few items at the store the next time you are there.

Let's help those in our community who most need help!

2023 Synod Assembly

From May 7-9, Pastor Dana, Ted Tuma and Saran Gilbert attended our synod's annual meeting, held here in Mt. Pleasant. Also representing Immanuel was Linda Wicander who is a member of the synod's executive committee.

The three days of meetings included worship, song, reports from synod committees, discussion, and voting. Bishop Satterlee also proclaimed the theme of the assembly as "It's all about Jesus"; and the theme was repeated in seminars and messages. The in-person assembly allowed people from across the Lower Peninsula to reconnect after not meeting in person for several years. Also, significant anniversaries of ordination were celebrated, including our own Pastor Dana being recognized for 15 years of ordination.

Critical items on the three-day agenda were budgets, proposed compensation for pastors, and next year's synod assembly. Budgets and reports for various committees were presented and approved, and proposed compensation was given to individual churches to take back to their congregational councils. The topic that generated the most discussion before coming to a vote was how to hold the 2024 synod assembly – whether in-person or virtually. When the question was called, the vote showed that next year's assembly would be virtual, primarily due to the projected costs.

The three days were productive for all of us representing Immanuel – and it showed us several things. First, how fortunate we are to be part of an energetic and alive congregation; second, how God continues to bless our congregation with significant resources, and third, how Immanuel continues to hear the Bishop's edict of "It's all about Jesus".

If you have more questions, please feel free to talk to Ted or Sarah in person, or email Linda as she travels.

Church Council Minutes –April 20, 2023

Present: Dan Digmann, Ted Tuma, Pr. Dana Hendershot, Mark Strandskov, Penny Endres, Linda Wicander, Rose Prasad, Sarah Gilbert

Absent: Stacy Couch, Gabe Goodrich

Guests: Steve and Jan Podolsky, Denise Kaiser

Opening Devotions: Pr. Dana

5 Minutes of Positive Talk

Sarah brought up the idea of Council members writing welcome notes to new members. Additional discussion of having greeters before and after service.

March Meeting Minutes

Two corrections – 1) Under Old Business, week that Leonard Smith began organist position. 2) Jan and Steve Podolsky.

*Minutes accepted with the above corrections.

Consent Agenda

Business Ministry Report-Ted said that the new refrigerator was ordered on this date for \$1972. It will be delivered by May 22 nd .

Consent Agenda accepted as written.

Tech/Coordinator of Youth Report

Pastor's Report

Pr. Dana will be leading a roundtable on the climate crisis as a part of the Faith and Science Initiative the last week of this month at the ELCA Churchwide office.

Financial Report

March was down by \$9,000, but April, thus far, is up \$53,000.- Financial report accepted as written.

New Business

-Spring clean-up is Wednesday April 26 th beginning at 3pm.

-Lenten offering raised \$890 for Mission Endowment.

-Pastoral Health Update – Pr. Dana shared that she will be undergoing a hysterectomy and a spleen removal. She said that she will wait until these are scheduled before announcing this to the congregation.

-Ministry leaders update council members reported which leaders are remaining in place for another year and which group may need new leaders.

-Budgets for the ministry teams are due June 1 st . Pr. Dana will email template to all the leaders. *

-Ministry Teams' annual reports are due July 1 st .

Old Business

-ICRH property update. Pr. Dana reported that ICRH has not made a decision as to whether to move ahead with Immanuel's property.

-Council retreat is Saturday April 22 nd from 9-1.

Other

Next Council Meeting – May 18 th

Assignments – Denise correct March minutes. Pr. Dana will email report templates.

Sarah moved to adjourn the meeting, Mark seconded. Beth adjourned the meeting at 7:11 pm and we closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Kaiser