



The Gleaner

Immanuel Lutheran Church

October 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.

Mission
Joyfully Christian.
Humbly Serving.
Boldly Loving.



2023-2024 Church Council

Sarah Gilbert, President
Linda Wicander, Vice-President
Beth Mundwiler, Past President

Staci Couch
Dan Digmann
Gabe Goodrich
Rachael Nelson
Rose Prasad
Mark Strandskov
Diane Thomas

Treasurers: Steve & Jan Podolsky

Thanks to Penny Endres & Ted Tuma,
who have just ended their terms on council!

Council Connections....

Thank you to all who are in the Immanuel family

In 1 Corinthians 15:58 Paul tells us “**Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.**” What does it mean to be steadfast? Definitions include to endure patiently, be reliable, be resolute, and not fickle or wavering. A member of the Ministry with Each Other committee defined it as “staying constant even when it’s not fun!”

Immanuel has been steadfast all year as we cope with, pray for, manage, adjust to, and grieve for Pastor Dana during her illness. We have to continue to be steadfast for several more months because Pastor Dana probably will not be back until January.

We’ve worked hard to keep Immanuel robust, healthy and welcoming but it hasn’t been easy. I sometimes think of looking out on a pond watching a duck float by. The surface is placid but the duck’s feet are moving like crazy to keep it afloat and moving forward. That’s us. Not every duck is alike, but neither are we at Immanuel. And we continue to move forward. And we should give thanks for everyone who has contributed to Immanuel through their time, talents, and treasures.

We give a huge thanks to our amazing staff who make it “seem like business as usual even though it isn’t! We give thanks for Andrea Redmond, Bill Gallaher, Thomas Strandskov, Sherry Pulverente and our new organist Leonard Smith. They work hard to keep us and the church running. What would we do without them?

We would like to thank Ted Tuma and Penny Endres for serving on Congregational Council. Their terms ended this year but they continue to serve Immanuel in many ways. We welcome Diane Thomas and Rachael Nelson to Congregational Council and look forward to their advice, wisdom, and service to Immanuel.

We also celebrate and give thanks for all who received Excellence in Service Awards: Ryan Douglas, Dave and Nancy Simon, Carl Graef, Cheryl Strandskov and Judy Emmons.

We have a special thanks Paul Kruska and Judy Emmons for their work as Financial Secretary and Treasurer. We give thanks to Steve and Jan Podolsky as our new Treasurers and to Ted Tuma as our Financial Secretary. Managing Immanuel’s finances is critical in keeping us steadfast.

Where would we be without our amazing Supply Pastors: John Soyster, Margaret Vredevelde, Andreas Teich, Susan Sickelka, David Sprang, Christina Bright, Dan Stoneback and Bob Garrels. They’ve kept us on course, fed our souls with interesting and insightful sermons and gave us reasons to stay the course and stay in Church. For those of us who have been here a long time, Pastors Vredevelde, Teich and Garrels are connections to our early days and serve as a reminder to stay steadfast! And think, too, of Pastor Soyster’s questions to the assembled last Sunday; “how many of you are charter members? How many of you have been here 10, 20, and 30?” To us, that also defines steadfastness. Each of you that raised a hand has stayed the course, been resolute and faithful. And for those of you who have not been here long, you also have stayed the course, been resolute and faithful.

And finally, thank you to the congregation for steadfastly giving and being generous. We have not had to worry about paying our bills and we were even able to add a 2% increase for our staff in the 2023-2024 budget.

Council Connections (continued...)

Looking Ahead

2023 has been and will continue to be a very challenging year for us. As we look ahead, there's still more work to continue to be Joyfully Christian, Humbly Serving and Boldly Living. Remember "we love because God first loved us." (1 John 4:19). We have to stand fast and not waver in our belief in what is important.

We are a Church that gives to the Community. We will host and staff two sessions of the ICRH and the ICRH will use our building for a third week. Christmas Outreach registration will begin soon. We are currently "stuffing the golf cart" for the CMU Food Pantry. In November, we will "stuff the Golf Cart" for the Middle School and High School teachers and staff. We are staying steadfast in our commitment to the community.

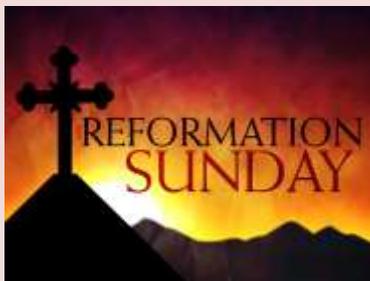
We are staying steadfast to ourselves with regular worship, Sunday School, Bell Choir, Chancel Choir and Adult Education Opportunities. Soon we will gather for "Beer, Brats and Hymns". Plans for Advent and the Children's Christmas program are underway. Beth is coordinating plans for the 2024 Youth Gathering in New Orleans.

We also must remember to pray for Dana as she endures the trial of illness. Pray for her family as they care for her and the puppies. Pray for her doctors and caregivers. Remember that God works through others and those others are steadfast in using their gifts for caring and healing. As Paul wrote in his letter to the Philippians,

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 4:6-7

In fellowship together,

Linda Wicander and Sarah Gilbert



Reformation Sunday recognizes and commemorates Martin Luther nailing the 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany in 1517. Remember to wear RED on October 29th!



All Saints' Sunday is November 5th. During worship, we will honor and remember those we've lost over the past year. Please submit names and photos to by Oct. 29.

There is a sign up list in the narthex and photos should be emailed to office@immanuelmp.com

CHRISTMAS OUTREACH of Isabella County

MUST LIVE IN ISABELLA COUNTY TO PARTICIPATE

REGISTRATION DATES

Mon - Fri Oct 30 - Nov 3

Mon - Fri Nov 6 - Nov 10

Registration is Open 8am-4pm

NEW
LOCATION
IN 2023

TO REGISTER CALL

989-773-4204

PLEASE NO EARLY CALLS

NEW LOCATION

DISTRIBUTION WILL BE AT

MOREY COURTS

NEXT TO ICE RINK & CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

5175 E REMUS RD • MT PLEASANT MI

SHOPPING DAYS DEC 15 & 16

COATS, HATS, MITTENS, BOOTS, CHILDREN'S BOOKS, LINENS,
CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS, STOCKINGS & HOUSEHOLD TOTES

Ministry with Each Other

FUNDRAISING FOR PASTOR DANA

We are a kind, loving and generous congregation that is eager to help Pastor Dana. Many have been asking if we will be doing fund raising activities to help Pastor Dana with her medical bills and other expenses. For the next few months, we WILL NOT do any fundraising because the Personnel Committee and Pastor Dana are working through her insurance plan and her disability coverage to determine what will be covered. We DO NOT want to jeopardize her coverage in any way by sending money to her and/or her insurance companies.

We want to protect her and provide for her during this illness. The best way to do that right now is to let her disability plan and insurance cover her costs.

We can still help her in other ways. Please keep sending cards and keeping Pastor Dana in your thoughts and daily prayers. For a more visible reminder, wear a bracelet (available in the Narthex) and/or purchase a t-shirt or sweatshirt from Bonfire. Please see details about purchasing a shirt.

Sarah Gilbert and Linda Wicander

Supporting Pastor Dana

If you would like a visible way to support Pastor Dana, wear a bracelet (available in the Narthex) and/or purchase a t-shirt or sweatshirt from Bonfire. We're encouraging people to wear the shirt/sweatshirt to church to show our support of Dana.

Please use the link below to purchase a shirt.

www.bonfire.com/store/immanuel-lutheran-church---mt-pleasant-mi/?utm_source=copy_link&utm_medium=store_page_share&utm_campaign=immanuel-lutheran-church---mt-pleasant-mi&utm_content=default&fbclid=IwAR3yA3rsUecFnzUAPDMhBxoS-BdWqamT-hIXLJWl8gckprUxEcSpBZcwrQ



3	Sarah Gilbert
4	Paul Geisthardt Kathy Smith
5	Cindy Keller
9	Craig Kreiner
10	Abby Geisthardt Josie Muniz
11	Holly Hoffman
12	Cheryl Strandskov
14	Roxanne Lueder
16	Dana Mielke
17	Eric Podolsky
19	Pete LaBlance Natalie Douglas
23	Patty Jo Bugh
28	Pat Podoll



We will be taking photos and collecting information in the narthex on Sunday, October 8th following worship!

Please help us to make these long overdue updates!!

Ministry with Each Other

Women's Retreat- November 3-4

Please join us as we discover "Who am I? - Who Has God Called Me to Be?". All women 18 and over are welcome. It begins at 7pm Friday and ends following dinner on Saturday around 6pm. We will be going to Eagle Village and stay overnight at their "hotel" style rooms. There will be 2 to a room and we will be provided a snack and 3 meals on Saturday. You will have time to walk the trails, relax and fellowship with each other. The cost is \$70 and will be payable to Immanuel Lutheran. Questions??? Contact BethMundwiler bmundwiler@gmail.com



Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
Philippians 4:6

During this time of Pastor Dana's absence, you may wonder whom to turn to in order to share a concern in prayer. Our Stephen Ministers are available after each service to pray for and with you should you so wish. They will be located at the front of the church on the left of the altar immediately following the service.

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!



"Stuff the Golf Cart" donations can be made through Sunday, October 8th!



Sunday School
Sundays at 11:00am

Bell Choir Rehearsal
Sundays at 1:00pm

Chancel Choir Rehearsal
Wednesdays at 6:00pm



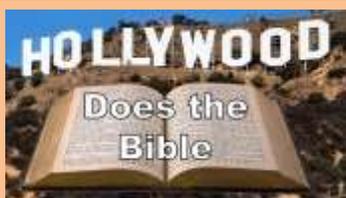
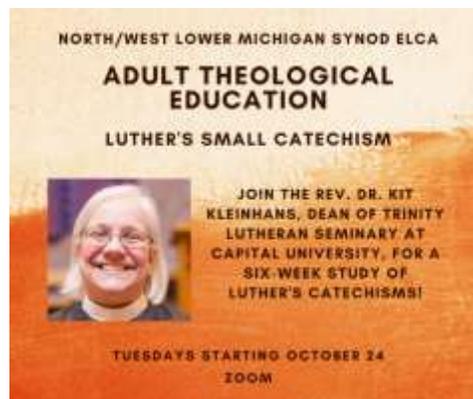
A Celebration of Life for Helen Deaton will be held on Sat, November 11th at 11am at Immanuel

Ministry with Each Other



The Blood Drive that Immanuel had scheduled for September 28 was cancelled due to a Red Cross staff shortage.

We have rescheduled our Blood Drive for **Dec. 11th**. Please mark your calendars!!!



**October 15, 22 & 29 – after worship
with Pr. John Soyster**

This short series compares the text of the Bible with the way some films present familiar Scripture stories. Along the way, we'll talk about what the Bible does and does not say and the relationship between the letter and the spirit of the text. All are welcome.

Dear Friends at Immanuel,

On September 30, I took my last ride for the *Great Cycle Challenge* to fight kids' cancer! All of you who made generous donations to this cause deserve a giant THANK YOU. Every time my legs felt a little tired or sore, I thought of what Jack is going through. And your support saw me reach and exceed my goals of 300 miles and \$5000. I rode **319** miles and, as of today, your donations to Team Jack total **\$5,809!**

The GCC page will be active until the end of October, for those who would still like to donate. You can easily find the link to that page from my website: www.johnsoyster.com

Thanks again!!!
Peace!
Pastor John

P.S. I consider all donations in support of my ride as also gifts in memory of my son, Jason Soyster (1983-2023).

When Luther wrote that familiar question, "What does this mean?" he meant it! He wanted Christians to understand their faith and to see how God was at work in their lives, in the church, and in the world. Join the Rev. Dr. Kit Kleinahns, Dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University, for a six-week study of Luther's catechisms. Let's dig deep into what God means *for us!*

Before she was Dean at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Dr. Kleinahns taught religion, including Lutheran Confessions and History of Christianity, at Wartburg College for 25 years. A fifth-generation Lutheran pastor and a brilliant theologian and Luther scholar, Dr. Kleinahns cares about her students, the Church, and what it means to be Lutheran today. She has a pastor's heart and is capable of both the deeply esoteric and the foundationally concrete.

The class will meet on six consecutive Tuesday evenings: October 24, 31, November 7, 14, 21, 28 from 7:00 – 8:15pm ET. This course is open to all adults, both laypeople and rostered ministers, and is free of charge. Sessions will be recorded and available to registered participants. **Registration is required and will close on October 19, 2023.**

To register:
www.mittensynod.org/events/adult-theological-education/

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”.



Immanuel will host the ICRH rotating homeless shelter from Oct. 29-Nov 5

Volunteers and food donations will be needed. Sign up links will be sent out in the near future!

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 _____

Church Council Minutes –August 2023

Present: Ted Tuma, Sarah Gilbert, Dan Digmann, Gabe Goodrich, Penny Endres, Linda Wicander, Mark Strandskov, Rose Prasad

Absent: Beth Mundweiler, Staci Couch

Meeting called to order at 6:03 by Ted Tuma, serving as acting council president.

Gabe Goodrich provided the opening devotions and prayer.

July meeting minutes were accepted as corrected.

Consent agenda items were accepted as submitted.

Thomas Strandskov's report as Tech Coordinator and Coordinator of Youth was accepted as submitted.

Steve and Jan Podolsky presented the financial report. They were thanked for their diligence and efforts to continue to make updates to their reporting to make the financials more understandable.

New Business:

Tasks for the annual meeting and picnic were reviewed; final tasks will be confirmed at the September 21st Council meeting.

The annual meeting agenda was confirmed and will be ready to be included in the meeting packet prepared by Andrea Redmond for distribution to the congregation.

Denise Kaiser has agreed to serve as Chair for the Community and World committee.

A request from Sherry Pulverente to add a banner to the front signage was discussed. She had given council several choices and council selected the best choice. After discussion, it was decided that the banner could be added to the website and to the Immanuel Facebook page but would not be a banner in front of the church.

Old Business:

Steve and Jan Podolsky reviewed the budget with council and pointed out the changes that would happen due to Pastor Dana's leave and long-term disability. They also pointed out the changes in supply pastor costs, again due to Pastor Dana's leave.

Rachel Nelson has agreed to serve a three-year term on Congregational Council. Sarah Gilbert, Ted Tuma, and Beth Mundweiler are continuing to search for a second new member. Penny Endres and Ted Tuma are ending their three-year terms and will be leaving council.

Pastor Dana continues with chemotherapy, has now lost her hair, and is receiving her LTD payments.

The annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, September 24th following worship at approximately 11:15.

Excellence in Service awards are ordered and short biographies are ready to be read for each recipient. Judy Emmons is the Congregational Council recipient.

The next council meeting will be Thursday, September 21st at 6 pm with Mark Strandskov sharing devotions.

Sarah, Ted, and Beth will continue to search for council members. Penny Endres will coordinate the food for the picnic, and Gabe will find fellow grillers.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Gilbert, acting as secretary.