



The Gleaner

Immanuel Lutheran Church

February 2024

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.



Prayer Around the Cross

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

February 21, 28 & March 6, 13, 20

A Letter from Pr. Dana.....

Friends in Christ,

It was a holy welcoming on Sunday (1/21). I enjoyed text messages the next day about all the places confetti ended up. I had some on my bathroom counter, and as I write this, it's still sitting there because every time I look at it, it brings me joy. I am overjoyed to be back in your presence and hope that what we are planning for Lent this year feeds you with overwhelming love.

Sunday morning, January 21st was definitely an Easter moment for me (even though we're headed into Lent).

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday (2/14). Our Ash Wednesday bulletin says, *"During Lent the people of God reflect on the meaning of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. The sign of ashes suggests our human mortality and frailty. What seems like an ending is really an invitation to make each day a new beginning, in which we are washed in God's mercy and forgiveness. With the cross on our brow, we long for the spiritual renewal that flows from the springtime Easter feast to come."*

As ashes are marked on our forehead with love, we will launch into a whole church study. You're welcome to go as deeply with the study as the Spirit is calling you. This is also a glorious opportunity to invite your friends and family who may not worship with us to participate. This is a study I did on my own during treatments. It helped ground me daily when I needed a steadier footing.

It is written by a Missouri Lutheran Pastor. He was inspired to read through the words of Jesus (often red letters in the Bible) and came up with a 40-day life changing experience he titles, "Red Letter Challenge." Each week has a different focus based on Jesus' teachings: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, & Going. I pray that this 40 day "life changing experience" blesses you even more than it blessed me.

In Christ,
Pr. Dana Hendershot

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



March 24 – 10am
Palm Sunday service

March 28 – 6pm
Maundy Thursday service

March 29- 6pm
Good Friday service

March 31- 7am
Easter Sunrise service

March 31- 8:30am
Easter Breakfast

March 31- 10am
Easter Festival Service

Lenten Opportunities at Immanuel

The Red Letter Challenge

Following Jesus should be practical and straight forward.

There are hundreds of books and bible studies on following Jesus, but few are practical and proven. Jesus modeled a whole life and even told us how to follow Him in HIS OWN WORDS (the red letters found in many Bibles). **The best way to follow Jesus is simply to follow the words of Jesus.** Red Letter Challenge eliminates the fluff and has helped thousands of people grow closer to God in only 40 days.

There are a number of ways to participate this year. You get to decide how deeply you want to dive into this Red-Letter Challenge. It is also a wonderful opportunity to invite a friend to participate!

- Sunday mornings, we will learn and hear about the weekly themes.
- Pick up the 40-day challenge book at church, *Red Letter Challenge*, and read the daily devotionals.
- Join a small group to dive deeper into relationship with one another and the weekly themes.

Devotionals

The *Red-Letter Challenge* book has 40 days of devotionals. You are invited to pick one up at the church and follow the calendar posted on what days to follow.

Small Groups

We will be offering many opportunities to join a 40-day small group. You are welcome to stick with the same one each week, or if your schedule gets crazy feel free to switch what time you attend. Each of the small groups will study the same weekly content. You will be able to sign up at church or online beginning January 28.

Lenten Service




Prayer around the cross on Wednesday evenings throughout Lent 5:30 p.m.

Lenten Almsgiving

To be announced soon.







Lenten Opportunities at Immanuel

2024
February

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			 <p>Drive-Thru ashes 12:00 P.M. Worship 6:00 P.M.</p>	Intro Day	Day 1	Day 2
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	 <p>Week of being</p>	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9
Day 6						
25	26	27	28	29		
Day 10	Day 11	Day 12	 <p>Week of forgiving</p>	Day 14		
Day 13						

Lenten Opportunities at Immanuel

2024
March

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
					Day 15	Day 16
3	4	5	6 Week of Serving 	7	8	9
Day 17	Day 18	Day 19	Day 20	Day 21	Day 22	Day 23
10	11	12	13 Week of Giving 	14	15	16
Day 24	Day 25	Day 26	Day 27	Day 28	Day 29	Day 30
17	18	19	20 Week of Going 	21	22	23
Day 31	Day 32	Day 33	Day 34	Day 35	Day 36	Day 37
24	25	26	27	28 Maundy Thursday 6:00 P.M. 	29 Good Friday 6:00 P.M. 	30
Day 38	Day 39	Day 40				
31 Easter 7 & 10 A.M. 						

Ministry with Each Other

GREAT News for Immanuel Village!

Immanuel Village has received grant approval from the Affordable Housing Program (AHP) through Federal Home Loan Bank for extensive renovations. The building improvements will provide updated, safe, secure and affordable apartments for, potentially, the next 15 years.

At least \$15,000 will be spent in each apartment upgrading kitchens, bath areas, windows and doors. Our friends at Samaritas, who provide property management services to The Village, were instrumental in researching and applying for this major grant funding.

Immanuel Village is a work of mission outreach of Immanuel Lutheran Church. It operates as Isabella Non-Profit Housing Corporation, a private corporation. Its board of directors consists of a majority of Immanuel Lutheran Church Members who are charged with keeping Immanuel Village operating according to its intended mission.

Immanuel members, who you know, are now serving as board officers for Immanuel Village

They are:

Chuck McCollom, LeRoy Swenson, Amy Powell & Paul Kruska

Dear Immanuel Family,

We would like to thank you for your thoughtfulness, support and comfort during this difficult time. It has meant a lot to our family and is much appreciated.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,
The Berthold Family



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.



The QR code may be used to:

1. Fill in a connection card for those who are new to our community.
2. Fill out a prayer request.
3. Share a gift electronically.

Ministry with Community & World

Give Something That Means Something- Give Blood!

Immanuel's Red Cross Blood Drive was a great success ~ 27 units collected! With grateful hearts we thank Penny Endres, Karen Graef, Mark & Joan Johnson, John Keller, Paul Kruska, Harry Plouff, Andrea Redmond, Shirley Rowley, Ted Tuma, Mike Turner and his Red Cross staff. Folks helped set up and take down, provided refreshments, registered and took care of the blood donors. What a difference we can make!

- 1 Judy Smith
- Diane Thomas
- 9 Linda Mellinger
- 11 Alexandra Couch
- 12 Kathy Gallaher
- 19 Chuck Clise
- 20 Roger Gilbert
- 23 Bonnie Berthold
- Bill Gallaher
- 24 Allen Shock
- 28 Shirley Rowley



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 4th-11th

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

Please see our website to sign up!

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 Community & World



Christmas Outreach

Coordinating the Community for Christmas Giving

Christmas Outreach of Isabella County demonstrates the remarkable spirit that defines our community. The generosity and compassion that radiates through our neighbors is a magic that weaves through the fabric of Isabella County. This event, born over four decades ago by a single church, now engages the whole community. It is a tradition that embodies the true essence of togetherness.

The journey begins long before the festive season, with grant writing, soliciting donations, shopping, and planning by an amazing and diverse team. The Boots department has already started buying for next year. Coats buy more than 1700 coats and now over 700 snow pants per year. Linens orders hundreds of king, queen, and twin sheets and the community donates many gorgeous blankets. First Presbyterian Church purchases and collects hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves so that everyone can stay warm. Many hats and scarves are handmade. Every child gets a book, and thanks to the Mid-Michigan Woodworkers Club of Isabella County a handmade wooden toy. Guests can select from a charming selection of Christmas Ornaments, all of which are donated. And last, but not least every child, from infant to teen is given a stocking, and adults with no children are given a gift bag.

In October and November, our community truly comes alive. The announcement on WCZY, My104.3, and the Christmas Outreach Facebook page marks the beginning of something extraordinary. This year, these announcements were essential as we once again moved to a new location, Morey Courts. Thanks to the unwavering support of Amy Bunting and the entire Morey Court team, this was a highly successful move. Also in late fall, a small team of dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly to register almost 600 households, ensuring that our neighbors, who may need a little help with Christmas, can make an appointment for shopping during Outreach distribution.

And suddenly it is mid-December and Christmas Outreach happens. Over just four days this year, a force of over three hundred volunteers transformed Christmas Outreach into a resounding success. We were especially grateful to Sowle Mayflower, The Beal City National Honor Society students, and our truck and trailer drivers who moved us in and out of Morey Courts in about an hour. Our three hundred-plus unsung heroes took on various roles, from moving tables and setting up departments to singing joyously, hauling out cardboard, and loading guests' cars with holiday cheer. The sheer magnitude of their collective efforts is awe-inspiring.

This year brought a new dimension as we undertook the challenge of assembling 525 bins filled with essential household products. The community's boundless generosity allowed us to fulfill this endeavor, proving that together, there's nothing we cannot achieve. The assembly line, masterfully orchestrated by members of Lions, Rotary, Retired Teachers Association, United Way, and students from Sacred Heart, was a testament to the power of collaboration.

Because our schedule was tight, providing volunteers with food over all four days was essential. A big thanks to the many local restaurants who bigheartedly donated food, coffee, water, and paper products. Their generosity, like yours, is a vital thread in the tapestry of this extraordinary community effort.

What sets Christmas Outreach apart is the diversity of individuals who come together, transcending age, religion, race, employment and retirement, and political affiliations. All work hand-in-hand, embodying the true meaning of community. Former guests, now volunteers, share their gratitude by giving back, and even Santa Claus, a former guest himself, spreads joy with every stuffed animal he distributes.

To witness the miracle of Christmas Outreach is to witness the power of community love. If you haven't experienced it firsthand, I urge you to join us in 2024 at Morey Courts.

Ministry with Community & World

The Christmas Outreach Supporters

Community Businesses

- B2 Outlet
- Big Apple Bagel
- Biggby Coffee
- Big Top Rental Clare, MI
- Burger King
- Cop's & Doughnuts
- Culvers
- CFX, 95.3
- Dominos
- Dozers
- Dunkin Donuts
- Epicenter
- Gordon Food Service
- I-Ride
- Isabella County Recycling Center
- Lion's Chili Dinner
- Mac TV
- Max & Emily's
- Menards
- Merchandise Outlet
- Morey, Courts
- Morning Sun
- Ric's Food Center
- State Farm
- Texas Roadhouse
- Sowle Mayflower
- WCZY, My104.3

Community Organizations

- Cebelak Foundation
- Chippewa River District Library
- Faith Weavers
- Kiwanis
- Lions
- Melissa & Doug LaBelle Foundation
- Mid-Michigan Woodworkers Club of Isabella County
- Mount Pleasant Area Community Foundation
- Optimist
- PEO

- Retired Teachers Association
- Rotary Lions
- Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- United Way of Gratiot and Isabella County
- Weidman Quilters
- Women Who Care
- Zonta

Faith Organizations

- Central Free Methodist Church MP
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints of MP
- First Presbyterian of MP
- First United Methodist Church of MP
- Immanuel Lutheran Church of MP
- Sacred Heart of MP
- Shepherd Methodist Church
- St. Joseph the Worker Parish, of Beal City
- St. Vincents of Shepherd
- Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of MP

Schools

- Beal City National Honor Society Students
- Central Michigan University Medical School Students
- Mt. Pleasant High School Choir
- Sacred Heart Students
- Shepherd Schools
- Shepherd Bus Drivers

Community Volunteers

- Over 330 Volunteers
- Over 300 individual donations

Numbers served:

507 Households
406 Men 595 Women 1001 Adults
368 Boys 356 Girls 724 Children
1725 Guests

Business Ministry

2023 Giving Statements

Your 2023 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.

Financial Monthly Report YTD as of December 2023

Spending Plan 2022-2023
\$384,308

Actual Expenditures:
\$64,813

Giving to Date:
\$94,382

2024 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.