



The Gleaner

Immanuel Lutheran Church

April 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.



Chippewa Watershed Donation and Tree Planting

I am happy to announce that we raised a total of: \$860! The executive director already ordered the trees. They are getting three species with our donation. American basswood, swamp white oak, and American plum. Alleluia! All these trees will be 3-4 feet tall when they receive them.

There is a planting day scheduled if you'd like to join. It's on Saturday, April 20th starting at 9:00 a.m. All the information is on their [website](https://cwc-mi.org/event/tree-planting-mill-pond-natural-area-3/) (<https://cwc-mi.org/event/tree-planting-mill-pond-natural-area-3/>) and [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/ChippewaWatershedConservancy) (<https://www.facebook.com/ChippewaWatershedConservancy>).

The website states:

Join us on Saturday, April 20th at 9:00 AM at Mill Pond Natural Area for a tree planting work party! Part of our work plan for this preserve includes the restoration and reintroduction of native plant species.

During this work session we will be planting more than 350 trees and shrubs that will someday grow up to replace ash trees that were lost in recent years to emerald ash borer.

This event is BYOS – Bring Your Own Shovel. Limited numbers of shovels will be available, but if you can bring your own that will be extremely helpful!

Inexperienced? We will show train you on the proper method to plant a tree before we turn you loose. Parking for this event is at Chipp-A-Waters Park (1403 W. High Street). Mill Pond Natural Area is located immediately east of the park.

Please be aware that access to this property can be challenging for some because of the terrain and may involve climbing over numerous downed trees. This tree planting event is funded in part by a grant from the Consumer's Energy Foundation with additional funding provided by Immanuel Lutheran Church of Mt. Pleasant.

A letter from Pastor Dana...

Friends in Christ,

Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen indeed, Alleluia!

It was a joyous Easter Sunday. We had five baptisms and we were back to pre-pandemic numbers in worship. We laughed at the Star Wars droids that surprised us during the children's sermon and sang whole-heartedly that, "Jesus Christ is Risen, today." I am giving thanks to God for the gift of these high holy days—days we are called to set apart.

There are also certain celebrations that we set apart. We put a lot of time and care into these events—weddings, funerals, Christmas, Easter, Graduations, Birthdays, Anniversaries and for me, the annual fourth of July bash! We prepare, plan, invite, and often dress our best for these special days. Indeed, these are special celebrations that we put more effort and time into—we set them apart.

But, often when it's over, we move onto life as normal and look forward to the next special event. I recently invited us to think about Easter a little differently. I preached, "Easter is more than something we celebrate every spring. It is something we experience in our everyday lives, all year long. The death of something we love which God transforms into healing and new life."

We experience the miracle of healing in so many ways!

From a cut

From a surgery

From a divorce

From the death of a loved one

From abuse

From mistakes we've made

So, as we make another loop around the sun, pay attention to your Easter moments. Write them down when they happen. Then next Easter, get out your list and celebrate all the Easters in your life! Alleluia!

In Christ,

Pastor Dana Hendershot



Pastor Dana will be out of town at our churchwide offices for an Ecumenical Round Table for Faith, Science, and Technology from April 15-22.

Thomas will be out of the continent from April 16-26.

Safe travels Pr. & Thomas!

Ministry with Each Other

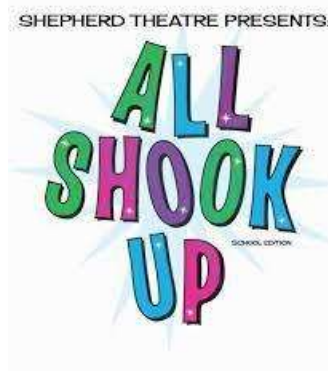
Thank you to all who attended the Easter Breakfast!

We raised \$1124 to go towards the ELCA Youth Gathering this summer in New Orleans! We appreciate your support and couldn't get there without your help!

- Immanuel Youth Group

Shout out to our amazingly talented youth!

We had 5 fantastic youth perform in 2 musicals this last month and they did amazing! Abbie was in Shepherd's "All Shook Up" and Isabel, Luke, Sophia, and Audrey were in MPHS's "Beauty and the Beast". Thank you to all that came out and supported them!



Upcoming Youth Fundraisers

Starting in April, the Youth are selling stock again for our trip to New Orleans! If you would like to help support our trip to the ELCA National Youth Gathering, talk to Beth or one the youth at our table!

We're also bringing back the Rummage Sale! If you have items you would like to donate to our Sale, you can drop them off and sort them in the Fellowship Hall starting on June 2. The sale will take place in the Fellowship Hall from June 6-8th. Spread the word!!



- 4 Ben Strandskov
- 9 Carol Erickson
- 11 Dawn Moss
- 12 Larae Fedor
- 16 Ann Ferguson
- 18 Mike Piatek-Jimenez
- 20 Thomas Mellinger
- 21 Gary Ramsower
- Thomas Strandskov
- 29 Jan Eversole

Family Reading Night at Immanuel

Please join us on Tuesday, April 16 at 6pm as we welcome local author, Dominic Thrasher (aka Mikey Sheahan-Stahl) to Immanuel to share his new children's book with us! This event will take place in the Fellowship Hall and is open to the community.

Please share with this friends and family!



Business Ministry

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.

Financial Monthly Report – YTD as of February 29, 2024

Spending Plan 2022-2023:
\$384,308

Actual Expenditures:
\$153,600

Income-To-Date:
\$182,049

Church Lawn Mowing

Volunteers are needed to mow at the church.

For more than twenty years, members of the church have mowed the lawn. The church has several riding lawn mowers including two zero-turn machines. The front lawn is mowed about 25 times each season while the back lawn is mowed about 15 times.

We mow in teams. The front takes about two hours to mow and the back about the same two hours. A group of two people on riding mowers and one person doing the trim work can be done in an hour and a half.

A mowing schedule will be published in mid-April. We hope to assemble about six groups to do the mowing.

If you are able to help with the mowing, please contact Chuck Clise at 989-330-4751.

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

Prayer Shawl Group

The Prayer Shawl Group has been a quiet but vital part of Immanuel's ministry team for decades. You may have even been a recipient of a prayer shawl or have a pocket prayer cloth. The team's numbers have dwindled over the years due to the age of its members and it needs assistance!

Can you knit or crochet?...are you getting God's nudge to you can be a part of this team which gives others the ability to pass on pocket prayers cloths or prayer shawls? Please contact Annette Foster at 989-400-6567 as she heads this ministry and would love to have your help!!!

Can't knit or crochet but still getting the nudge to help with this ministry? Consider donating to the prayer shawl fund so more yarn can be purchased. Thank you so much!

Women's Brunch

Come join us for breakfast on Saturday, April 13 in the Fellowship Hall. No need to bring anything, just yourself- for fun, fellowship and time with God.

Please contact the office by email if you are planning to attend, so we can plan for food. Questions??? Contact Beth at:

bmundwiler@gmail.com

Sunday Helpers needed!!

Each Sunday, we need volunteers to serve in the following capacities:

Altar Guild, Assisting Minister, Coffee Host, Greeters & Ushers.

Please sign up by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/?go=c.SignUpSearch&eid=08C6C8DCF5C8F6630C&cs=09CBBAD98FC58B167B0A640F5BC09BCDFDB5>

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.



Women's History Month

Along with St. Patrick's Day, and the technical start of spring, March also brings us Women's History Month. I was lucky to have a very strong role model in my mother growing up. There was never a question that I could do whatever I wanted for a career; however, at least when I was younger, I don't think anyone would have guessed being a pastor was my vocational path. As luck would have it, Pastor Rich knew I had a call to ministry long before I did, and his response to my wondering out loud about ministry was a smile and a "It's about time you figured that out."

As I look back, it's funny that while I never had any female pastor role models, I never even considered that there were faith traditions where that was not allowed. These days, I find it a bit shocking that even though women were the ones who first experienced the resurrection and were the first to preach the good news that Jesus is Risen, there are still so many faith traditions who seek to silence women in the church and various other parts of society.

Of course as I grew older I became more aware of the struggle of women in various vocations and how many of us still do not earn the same income as our male counterparts, not to mention the differing societal expectations and sometimes outright harassment that women face in their vocations (even and sometimes especially in the church). We've come a long way but we still have a very long way to go!

As we celebrate Women's History Month, we look back at some pivotal moments both in our county and our church:

- Women were given the right to vote in a constitutional amendment passed by congress on June 4, 1919. This amendment was ratified by 36 states on August 18, 1920 and certified August 26, 1920.
- Part of the Lutheran Church in America (a predecessor church of the ELCA), Elizabeth Platz was the first ordained Lutheran woman in America. After graduating from Gettysburg Seminary, she worked as a lay minister at the University of Maryland-College Park for the five years prior to her ordination on November 22, 1970.
- Part of the American Lutheran Church (another predecessor church of the ELCA) Barbara L. Andrews was ordained on December 22, 1970.
- In our synod, I celebrate that we are getting closer to a 50-50 split in the number of active pastors and deacons. Of our pastors within the first three years of their first call, it's an even split.

More information about the history of women in the ELCA can be found on the ELCA's website:

<https://www.elca.org/50yearsofordainedwomen>. Another great resource is *Voices Long Silenced: Women Biblical Interpreters Throughout the Centuries* by Dr. Joy Schroeder and Marion Ann Taylor (<https://bit.ly/3T4AATx>). Dr. Schroeder led this semester's Adult Theological Education Course, which was a wonderful and deeply insightful learning experience. I personally learned a lot of new things about often overlooked theological women and highly recommend her book, on which the course was based, to everyone.

Throughout the year, but especially this month, I encourage you to reflect on the ways you can support the women in your life. If you happen to know a woman in ministry, please let them know you appreciate them. Pray for them and their ministry. Support their ideas, seek their input, and echo what they say by name: "as Pastor/Deacon Jane Doe said..." As women in our world continue to fight for justice, equity, and inclusion, we give thanks for the women who have gone before us and pray for continued growth in our world. Happy Women's History Month!

The Rev. Chrisy Bright
Assistant to the Bishop and Director of Candidacy

Council Minutes from February 15, 2024

Present: Sarah Gilbert, Linda Wicander, Beth Mundwiler, Staci Crouch, Gabe Goodrich, Mark Strandskov, Rachael Nelson, Diane Thomas, Pastor Dana
Absent: Dan Digmann, Rose Prasad,
Guests: Jan Podolsky, Steve Podolsky

Opening Devotions - Staci

5 minutes of Positive Talk Beth reported the Youth were not able to go to Springhill but did have a good time tubing at Snow Snake

January Meeting Minutes -Accepted as written with correction to Art Auction

Consent Agenda

- a. Business Ministry – report
- b. Ministry with Each Other – report
- c. Worship and Music - report
- d. Community and World – no report

Reports accepted as written.

Tech and Coordinator of Youth Report

Report accepted as written.

Pastor's Report

Accepted as written. Pastor Dana reported we received the Synod grant for Sherry's position.

Financial Report

Congratulations to Team Podolsky for a very comprehensive report on our finances and our various accounts. Our financial picture is still good.

Discussion of moving some of the funds to a higher interest account or into certificates of deposit. Pastor Dana will meet with Terrie Zitzelberger to discuss our position.

Motion: Invest up to and including \$100,000 as money to be put in up to a six-month short-term investment like a Certificate of Deposit with advice from Terrie Zitzelberger and Dave Simon.

Moved: Mark, Seconded Beth. Carried.

Old Business

ICRH Feb 5 – 12 at Immanuel – Lots of Children, volunteers and food. The staff was very good.

- a. AED Trainings – Rachael is exploring using Professional Development funds to become a trainer.
- b. Recruitment for serving during worship. Things seem to be going well but Pastor Dana suggested we bring the issue to Worship and Music.
- c. Audit – Sarah Gilbert is looking into our options.
- d. Lenten offering – Donations to purchase trees for the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy. Trees to be planted in April.

New Business

Synod Assembly – May 11. Pastor Dana, Beth Mundwiler, and Sarah Gilbert will represent Immanuel. Linda is attending as a member of Synod Council and the Executive Committee. Linda reported **registration opens February 15 and closes on April 8. No late registrations will be accepted.** Synod Council and Synod Staff will need volunteers for the Tech Team (Tech Help Desk, Zoom Moderators, YouTube Moderator) and the Check-in Team (Assist with Zoom Check-in on the morning of Synod Assembly).

- a. Council Ministry responsibilities/budgets/mission statements. Pastor Dana is continuing to research the mission statements. Reminder to make sure Ministry chairs receive budget information. Reminders to all ministries and committees that they are to be fiscally responsible. Many of the budgets might be overinflated and just because they have money in the budget doesn't mean they should spend it all.
- b. Council Retreat – April 27 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Executive Committee will set the agenda.
- c. Annual Calendar – Beth is working on an annual calendar for Council. Team Podolsky reported this information would be very helpful.
- d. New Council members and terms of Existing Members. Sarah will email the current document to all council members. Mark is serving his first term and will run again. Beth's second term ends this year and she will rotate off council.

Next Meeting – Thursday, March 21, devotions – Pastor Dana

Assignments – Sarah will continue to contact accountants for auditors, email the current list of council members and terms, and Register for Synod Assembly -Dana will report to Business Ministry that doors need to be fixed, she will contact Terrie Zitzelberger, she will continue to research the mission statements, proceed with Lenten Alms giving and add volunteering to serve during worship to the Worship and Music Ministry meeting agenda.

Adjournment – Mark moved, Staci seconded, to adjourn. Carried

Closing prayer – Pastor Dana

Respectfully submitted
Linda Wicander, Vice President