

IMMANUEL SPEAKS  
APRIL 2026



Dear Friends in Christ,

Out of all the resurrection accounts, the Gospel of Mark's resurrection story has always been my favorite. I also think it happens to be the oddest. The women arrive at the tomb on Sunday morning with spices to prepare the body of Jesus for burial and they ponder who will roll the stone away for them. They come to the tomb and find that the stone had been rolled away. They are met by an angel who tells them not to fear for the Lord Jesus has risen. The angel then tells them to go and tell the disciples that Jesus goes before them and will meet them in Galilee. So far so good. Jesus is risen and will meet his disciples in Galilee. But then in one verse everything changes. We come to the final verse of Mark's gospel, and hear that the women leave the tomb and say nothing because they are afraid.

What an odd ending! The women say nothing because they are afraid. And this is where Mark leaves us! There are no resurrection appearances in Mark like there are in Matthew, Luke, and John. Compared to the other resurrection accounts, Mark is odd, the story doesn't seem complete.

However, it is still my favorite. The reason for this is because the ending is left open, with Christ going before for his disciples to Galilee. There is fear at the end of Mark, and yet there is hope. Jesus is alive and loose in the world with a promise. Jesus promises to go before and meet his disciples in Galilee. Jesus will meet them in their fearful and chaotic world with his love and peace.

Like the women at the tomb and the disciples who barricaded themselves away from the world in fear; we too continue to experience fear in our life. For some it may be failing health or a bad medical diagnosis or maybe it is the fear of death. The list of things we can fear in this world can go on and on. And because of those fears we can feel alone and abandoned. We can feel like there is no hope.

However, the message we hear this Easter is that Jesus has risen, he is with us, and will go before us in the world. We are not left alone to face the trials of life by ourselves. Our Savior who conquered the power of sin and death has promised to be with us now and always. Gathered around Word & Sacrament and in the faces of our brothers and sisters in Christ, our Savior is with us with the promise that there is nothing in all of creation that will separate us from life with him. The popular Easter hymn *I Know that My Redeemer Lives* would put it this way, "He lives to silence all my fears, He lives to wipe away my tears, He lives to calm my troubled heart, He lives all blessings to impart."

My friends in a world of fear, the angel at the empty tomb continues to proclaim to us do not be afraid for God is Immanuel, God with us, now and always! Christ has risen! He has risen and continues to walk with us! Alleluia!

Happy Easter,

Pastor Joel

March 8, 2026

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### 1. Pastoral Acts

- 64 pastoral visits
- 2 funerals: (Feb. 18) Erma DeGrote; (Feb 20) David Hovda

### 2. Worship

-Clara City Care center

-Feb 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>

-Lenten Theme: Places of the Passion. Sunday, Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> Ash Sunday; The Courts of the Temple & Upper Room: A Place of Preparation. Wednesday, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>; The Upper Room: A Place of Service. Wednesday, Mar. 4<sup>th</sup>; Gethsemane: A Place of Strength. Wednesday, Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>; The Betrayal: A Place of Eternal Love. Wednesday, Mar. 18<sup>th</sup>; The Courtyard of the High Priest: A Place of Renewal. Wednesday, Mar. 25<sup>th</sup>; The Trial Before Herod & Pilate: A Place of God's will. Sunday, Mar. 29<sup>th</sup>; Palm Sunday: A Place of true Kingship & Service. Thursday, Apr. 2<sup>nd</sup>; The Last Supper: A Place of forgiveness. Friday, Apr. 3<sup>rd</sup>; Golgotha: A Place of Simple Love. Sunday, Apr. 5<sup>th</sup>; The Empty Tomb: A Place of Remembering.

-Mid-week Lenten services on Wednesday at 7pm with meal starting at 5:30pm

-1<sup>st</sup> communion instruction for all interested at 6pm on Wednesdays (Feb 25-Mar 25) in the fellowship hall.

### 3. Education/Youth

-Sunday School

-Bowling on February 22<sup>nd</sup>

-spring curriculum ordered.

-Confirmation/Youth

-Confirmands assisting with Lenten services

-Cosmic bowling on February 21

### 4. Mission & Outreach

-community meal March 1st: pizza hotdish, corn, French bread and homemade cookie; served 186.

-Received thank you note from DeGrote family and memorials from Erma's Funeral.

-Blessing box: donations always appreciated. Have been filling it up a lot lately.

### 5. Continuing Education/Pastoral Self-Care

-Looking into continuing ed, will finalize plans towards end of Lent. Boundaries workshop in May.

## Immanuel Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2026

**Present:** Gabby Rognlie; Lucas Doeskin; Glen Miller; Carissa Pederson; Laine Reiger; Derek Rand; Laurie Dieken; Kat Schwitters-Treasurer

**Absent:** Terry Noble; Pastor Joel Gueningsman

**Meeting called to Order:** By Derek Rand President

**Reports: Secretary's Report:** Reviewed by all. Motion made by Glen M. to pass; seconded by Lucas D.; motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Kat reported on the various expenses this month. Nothing out of the ordinary and that there is a positive balance so far this year due to some early year donations. Repairs made for the women's bathroom downstairs and for the heating in the basement. Discussion of need to have two people sign checks for the church. Motion made by Gabby R. to have the Treasurer plus Derek sign checks; motion seconded by Carissa P.; motion carried.

**Pastor's Report:** Much activity during the month of April. Funerals; Care Center visits; Lenten services; 66 pastoral visits. Motion made by Lain R. to accept Pastor's report ; seconded by Lucas D.; motion carried.

**Committee Reports: Endowment Committee:** Rep—Laine R.- noted they had met and have opened up the land for a new renter for 1 year, at this time. Potential for 3-year lease. Ben Peterson is in charge of this aspect. Monies/donations given for the Community Meal; Ridgewater Ministries and other organizations. For more information contact a Council member or Endowment Committee member.

**Congregational Life:** Rep—Carissa P.--Had 55 sign up for I Can Only Imagine 2 film-50 attended due to weather issues. Will serve Pancake Meal at Lenten service as men did not have theirs this year. Looking at trip to Belview Winery.

**Media:** Rep—Derek R.--Will be getting 2 new cameras as the current ones are having issues. Will have 3 cameras instead of two and they will get hard wired in.

**Old Business:** None presented.

**New Business:** Money Counters: April—Gabby & Laurie ---

May—Glen & Lucas

June—Carissa & Derek

**Next Meeting:** April 12<sup>th</sup> at 10 am following church service in the Fireside Room.

**Adjournment:** Motion made by Carissa to adjourn; motion seconded by Laine; motion carried.

**WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR APRIL**

Maundy Thursday, April 2: (7:00 p.m.)	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Karly Bratsch Altar Guild: Carissa Pederson
Good Friday, April 3: (7:00 p.m.)	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Addison McNeil
Easter Service, April 5: (6:30 a.m.)	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Kresson Bratsch Lay Reader: Cindy Meyer Altar Guild: LuAnn Kruger
Easter Service, April 5: (9:00 a.m.)	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Arianna McNeil Lay Reader: Michele Shubert Altar Guild: LuAnn Kruger
Sunday, April 12:	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Andrew Gueningsman Lay Reader: Duane Dieken Altar Guild: Ann Hovda
Sunday, April 19:	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Alyson Strommer Lay Reader: Beth Gaebe Altar Guild: Kathy Speiser
Sunday, April 26:	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Kayden Prekker Lay Reader: Judi Boike Altar Guild: Sara Sabe

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**TREASURER NOTES FOR 2026**

2026 General Fund Budget: \$262,000  
2026 General Fund Income Needed as of 2/28: \$225,559

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**OPEN RADIO BROADCASTS FOR 2026**

we have many open radio broadcasts for the year of 2026. If you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast during the year, please contact the church office at 847-2138, or talk to Kathy Speiser or Pastor Joel. The cost is \$100 for each broadcast. The following dates are open:

May 31	June 14, 21, 28	July 5, 12
August 2, 9	September 13, 20	October 11, 18, 25
November 1, 15	December 13, 20, 27	



**Palm Sunday, March 29: 9:00 a.m. Worship Service with Communion/  
 Sunday School Kids Singing  
 10:00 a.m. Light Breakfast Served after Worship  
 10:00 a.m. Sunday School Kids Making a Craft**

**Maundy Thursday, April 2: 5:30-6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Supper  
 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship  
 Service/First Communion**

**Good Friday, April 18: 7:00 p.m. Good Friday Worship Service**

**Easter Sunday, April 20: 6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service w/Communion  
 Coffee and Donuts Served In Between Services  
 9:00 a.m. Easter Service with Communion  
 No Sunday School or Fellowship Hour**

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**MAUNDY THURSDAY SUPPER, APRIL 2ND**

Maundy Thursday, April 2: 5:30-6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Supper  
 Menu: Hotdogs, chips, and dessert  
 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship Service with Communion  
 First Communion

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**ATTENTION CONFIRMATION STUDENTS**

Confirmation Classes will start again on Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. Supper will be served at 6:00 p.m. with class beginning at 6:30 p.m.

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**ISSACHAR TRIBE UP FOR MAY 2026**

Below we have printed the Tribe Membership for May 2026. The chairperson will be calling you in the near future, asking you to help serve Immanuel in some way. Start thinking today about what you and your family can help with. If everyone takes one job, the “needs” list will be filled. Thank you!

Rueben Tribe

- Jeremy Bratsch Family
- Al and Gloria Refsland
- Rodney and Tammy Jaenisch
- John and Kathy Fritz
- Wayne and Annette Rosen – Tribe Leaders
- Ken and Joyce Klaassen
- Randy and Traci Grussing
- Steve and Denise Miller
- Issac Gosseling

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**COMMUNITY MEAL**  
**SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 5:00-6:00 p.m.**

The Community Meal is Sunday, April 12th. On the menu is: pork loin, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetable and a dessert. We will be serving to go orders in the alley way and also serving in the Fellowship Hall. Please comment on the Facebook page with the number of meals you are wanting. Everyone is welcome and the meal is free.

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**3 Ways to Give Online-NEW to Immanuel!**

**Safe, Secure, and Convenient!**

**1. Download the FREE Vanco app to your phone.**

- Search **Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement** on your app store.
- Search for **Immanuel Lutheran Church of Clara City**. (Make sure you choose **CLARA CITY**-there are many different ILC's)
- You will need to sign up to create a login. Then, you can give from the app anywhere...anytime!



**\*\*\*\*\*OR\*\*\*\*\***

**2. Scan the QR code below** with your phone camera to give to General Fund, Building Fund, Sunday School kids, or Youth (7th-12<sup>th</sup>) Fund.

- Scroll to choose your desired fund.



-You can give once or set up recurring gifts. You may use credit/debit card (3% charge that you can choose to pay or take off of your offering) or via your bank account at 1% charge.

**\*\*\*\*\*OR\*\*\*\*\***

**3. Church Website.** (NOT FACEBOOK). Visit us at: <https://www.ilc-claracity.org/>

- Click **'Online Giving'** at the top of the page and choose your desired fund. Follow the instructions online.

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**We want to make church giving convenient for you. If you have any questions, please contact Kat Schwitters at (320)-894-2658. Please consider giving to Immanuel in order to continue the work we do here.**

# April

2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 5:30 Maundy Thurs. Supper 6:30 Choir Practice. 7:00 Maundy Thurs. Worship	3 7:00 Good Friday Worship	4
5 6:30 Easter Sunrise Worship/Comm. 7:30-9:00 Coffee 9:00 Easter Worship/Comm.	6	7 1:00 Quilting	8 6:00 Confirmation Supper 6:30 Confirmation	9	10	11
12 9:00 Worship/Comm. 10:00 SS/Coffee 5:00-6:00 Community Meal	13	14 1:00 Quilting	15 6:00 Confirmation Supper 6:30 Confirmation	16	17	18
19 9:00 Worship/Comm. 10:00 Sunday School/Coffee	20 1:30 Joy Bible Study  CCCC Birthday Party	21 1:00 Quilting	22 6:00 Confirmation Supper 6:30 Confirmation	23	24	25
26 9:00 Worship/Comm. 10:00 Coffee/ Sunday School	27	28 1:00 Quilting	29 6:00 Confirmation Supper 6:30 Confirmation	30		

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
PO Box 236  
Clara City, MN 56222