

IMMANUEL SPEAKS
JUNE 2022



Dear friends in Christ,

Just a few days ago we celebrated Memorial Day, the unofficial/official start of summer. It is a time of transition. School is out and the kids are home for the summer. The weather is getting nicer and nicer and it is time to have a little more fun isn't it? For many it means taking time away from work to enjoy: vacations, fishing, outdoor activities, gardening and the beauty and wonders of God's creation. After all, there are roughly 13 weeks before school starts and the weekly grind begins again for many.

As the month of June opens, in the life of the church it is also a time of transition. I began my sabbatical (a time of rest, renewal, & study) and will be out of the office until September 5th. Luann has arranged pulpit supply for the summer and we have created a visitation team to give communion and visit while I am away. In the case of emergency or death and you need pastoral care, I will be available, so please don't hesitate to call.

We also transition from the season of Easter to the Pentecost season. On Sunday June 5th we will hear those familiar words spoken by Jesus to the disciples, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 2:8).

As we transition into summer life we are reminded that like Jesus' original disciples, we who have been called into relationship with God have been filled with the Holy Spirit and sent to be Jesus' witnesses here in Clara City, Chippewa County, Minnesota, and to the ends of the earth. So what exactly does that witness look like? Here is my answer. We tell God's story and our story and we live out God's story.

First we tell our story. In Acts chapter 17 the apostle Paul is in Athens sharing the good news. As he prepares to speak to the people he takes a tour of the city and notices how religious the people of Athens are. He notices all of the different temples, shrines, and altars to different gods. Then he comes upon an altar to an unknown god. Paul then sees an opportunity. This unknown God whom the people of Athens worship Paul knows. And so what does Paul do??? He tells his story about his encounter with God to the people. He shares his story and experience of God with the people of Athens.

What does it mean to be a witness? We tell our story like the apostle Paul. We share our experience of God with others. 15 years ago when I was in Seminary in my intro to preaching class one of the first assignments was to tell our faith story. The professor described the situation as an elevator speech. You are on an elevator with another person and you have 30 seconds to share your faith, what would you say.

It was a help exercise 15 years ago and is still helpful today as it continues to remind me that I have a story to share. And the amazing thing about the message I and we all have to share is it isn't rocket science.

Like the apostle Paul we are called to simply share our experience with God so that others might come to know God's amazing love, grace, forgiveness, and compassion. We can all tell a story can't we? Then guess what, we all have an elevator speech, a story, a witness to share!

Secondly, we live God's story. So what does that mean? I think we can answer those questions with one little yet very great and powerful word: LOVE. In John 13, on the night before Jesus was crucified he would give his disciples a new commandment; "I give you a new commandment, that you love another. Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

As Christ has loved the world to the point of and beyond death itself; we are called to follow that example. So what in the world does that look like? In Matthew 25 Jesus tells the parable of the sheep and goats and we hear the call to: feed, provide drink, welcome, clothe, care for the sick, to visit the prisoner. It is all about loving our neighbor as we love ourselves. Every night as we sit down to dinner as a family we pray the prayer "Come Lord Jesus be our guest..." But did you know there is a second verse to this common table prayer. It goes like this, "Blessed be God who is our bread; may all the world be clothed and fed." The second verse continues to remind me that we have a calling to fulfill. As our gracious God showers us abundantly with all we need for this body and life, our call is to also be generous and abundant with what we have so that all the world might have their basic needs met and know God's love for them.

My friends, we are in a time of transition: from spring to summer, from the season of Easter to the season of Pentecost. We are reminded that like those first disciples and those who have gone before us, we are called to be witnesses to God and God's amazing grace. We have a story to share in both word and deed! Go, be witnesses here in Clara City, Raymond, Maynard, and Chippewa County! Go, be witnesses at the lake or ball field. Go, be witnesses throughout Minnesota, the U.S. or wherever your summer travels may take you!

In Christ,

Pastor Joel

Pastor's Report to Church Council (April 13th to May 10th)
Rev. Joel Gueningsman
May 10, 2022

Pastoral Acts

- **46 in person/phone pastoral visits; presided at 1 funeral: Orville Meints**

Worship

- **3 Mid-week worship services at care center.**
- **Holy Week Schedule**
 - **Maundy Thursday with first communion at 7pm. 6 first communion students.**
 - **Good Friday Tenebrae service at 7pm**
 - **Easter Sunday at 630am & 9 am.**
- **Graduate Recognition & Mother's Day May 8th**

Education/Youth & Family

- **Confirmation**
 - **Class resumed April 27th instead of April 20th due to funeral visitation at church.**
 - **Final class was May 4th, as we completed our journey through the narrative of the New Testament.**
- **7-12 bowling on May 1st in Montevideo, see facebook for pictures**
- **End of the year Sunday school celebration on May 15th**
- **Stingers game June 6th. See congregational life members for more info**

Mission & Outreach

- **Community meal May 1st. Served 230 something. On the menu: pulled pork, cheesy hash browns, California blend veggies, & desert. Next community meal June 5th.**

Wider Church

- **Synod Assembly, online, Saturday June 11th from 9am to 6pm**

Continuing Education/Pastoral Self-Care

- **I will be on vacation Wednesday May 25 to Friday May 27th for my children's birthdays.**
- **Sabbatical May 30th to Sept 5th**

**IMMANEUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES
MAY 10, 2022**

Attending: Jane Niemeyer, Michael Pankratz, LuAnn Kruger, Ross Pederson, Pastor Joel, Michele Shubert

Others: Katherine Schwitters

Absent: Jim Jaenisch, Andrea Prekker, Isaac Gosseling, Harold Goedgedrag

Pastor Joel led devotions – John 13 “As I have loved you, you shall love one another”.

LuAnn called the meeting to order.

The agenda was M/S/P.

The Secretary’s report was reviewed and M/S/P.

The Treasurer report: As of April 30, 2022, the checking account has a balance of \$30,478.24. Savings account has \$93,779.35. Katherine Schwitters will be on vacation June 15th-29th.

Committee Reports:

Endowment: Discussion on tiling of farm land. Myron provided his thoughts on what might be needed, what we should be prepared for. Maps were pulled from history to know what is already there, etc. The Congregational for Life Committee asked for \$5000.00 for events and activities being planned. M/S/P. God’s Work Our Hands Committee requested \$4000.00 for Food For Kidz. M/S/P.

Sunday School: VBS is May 21-22. 20 kids signed up, can sign up day of, 5 stations, skits, singing, lunch, and program at 2:00 on Sunday.

Congregational For Life: Family Fun Day on May 15th following church service at city park. Stingers Event on Monday, June 6th. Tickets \$10 per person. T-Shirt Fundraiser – “Be The Light” t-shirts for sale now. Grey and Blue. Youth size to Adults are \$15, XXL to XXXXL \$17. Bean Bag Event at Legacy North Park on June 15th. Green Lake Boat Cruise has been reserved for Sunday, July 31st.

Pastor’s Report: See report in Newsletter.

Old Business:

Property Update:

1. Signs- still working on.
2. Flag Brace – still working on.
3. Need to lay granite fines and put shed in place.
4. Parsonage window clean up when it dries up.
5. Courtyard door – Willmar Electric coming to check out.
6. Wasp and boxelder bug problem – Plunkett’s has been contacted and we are on their list.
7. Ken Beyerl is checking on replacing window in quilting room.
8. Ken Beyerl is contacting French Glass about replacing elevator doors.

New Business:

1. Visitation Committee – 7 people on the committee. Will have contact with shut-ins twice a month.
2. Sabbatical Plan – Have pulpit supply for all Sundays, CCCC has weekly service. Taken care of.

Next Church Council Meeting is Tuesday, June 14th, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

No further business was offered. Meeting was adjourned. M/S/P.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michele Shubert
Council Secretary

+++++

TRIBE MEMBERSHIP FOR JULY 2022

Below we have printed the Tribe Membership for July 2022. The chairperson(s) will be calling you in the near future asking you to help serve Immanuel in some way. Start thinking today what you can volunteer to help with...oh, and please say yes! If everyone takes one job, the “needs” list will be filled. Thank you so much!

Issachar Tribe

- Chuck and Bec Hinderks
- Jesse and Andrea Prekker
- Tami Prekker – Tribe Leader
- Keith Harms
- Dave Rosendahl
- Bob and Sharon Jaenisch
- Jim and Lori Schmaedeka
- Bob and Alice DeGrote
- Tom and Diane Pieper
- Brian and Becka Bratsch

+++++

2022 OFFERINGS COLLECTED IN MAY

Sunday, May 1	\$3557.03
Sunday, May 8	\$2446.00
Sunday, May 15	\$2640.00
Sunday, May 22	\$1016.00

+++++

**For Upcoming Events, Happenings, and Weekly Updates – Please check Immanuel’s Facebook Page!
All events, times and changes will be posted there!!**

HAPPENINGS AT IMMANUEL!

Mark Your Calendars!

Sunday, June 5: Community Meal! From 5:00-6:00 p.m. The menu is: grilled chicken breast, potato salad, coleslaw and dessert. We will be serving to go orders in the church alley way and also in the church basement. Everyone is welcome and it is free!

Monday, June 6: Stingers Baseball Game! We will be going to the Stingers game in Willmar. The meal will be served from 6:00-7:00 p.m. All you can eat hotdogs, hamburgers, and brats. Cost of tickets: \$10 for adults, kids under 4 free, and 5 years of age thru 12th grade are \$5.00. You can sign up at fellowship hour, or also in the church office.

Wednesday, June 8: Pre-K - 6th Grade Bowling! From 6:30-9:00 p.m. At the Montevideo Bowling Alley. Price is \$1.00 per game. Bring an adult and join us for your turn to bowl. Any questions, contact LuAnn Kruger!

Wednesday, June 15: Bean Bag and Yard Game Events! Starting at 6:30 p.m. We will meet at the park by Clara City Care Center to play bean bag and yard games. Great fun for all ages!!

Wednesday, June 22: Coffee For Gals! From 2:00-3:30 p.m. All women of Immanuel and their friends are invited to come for laughter, fellowship and of course, treats and coffee! Please come and bring a friend!!

Sunday, July 31: Green Lake Boat Cruise! Immanuel will be going on a boat cruise around Green Lake in Spicer. It is so fun to get on the boat and relax as you cruise all around Green Lake. Of course, there will be food and beverages! Watch for the sign up information in the bulletin and July's newsletter!

Saturday, September 17: God's Work, Our Hands! We will once again have a Food for Kidz packing day, and everyone from 5 years old to 100 years old is invited to help. There is a Giving Tree set up in the back of the sanctuary to pay for ingredients we pack. Please grab a tag or donations in any amount are appreciated!

T-Shirts Available For Purchase: "Be the Light" t-shirts will be available to purchase at Immanuel Lutheran Church, as a fundraiser for Congregational Life Committee Events. You may order after worship in the fellowship hall. The cost is youth to XL is \$15.00, adult 2XL to 4XL is \$17.00!

THE TIME IS HERE

Pastor's Joel's sabbatical begins on May 30th and will continue through September 5th. He will be back in the office on the 6th of September. Throughout the summer, we have been able to secure pastors for all but two Sundays thus far. Calls are out for these Sundays and I feel confident we will find someone, if not, on to Plan B! I have some ideas for that as well!

During this sabbatical time, Pastor Joel will continue to be available for physical or mental health emergencies. If you have general questions, Kathy will continue to work Tuesday and Thursday mornings in the church office. Feel free to leave a message on the church office answering machine or call me at 320-905-4195.

A "sabbatical" is not something most of us are familiar with, but according to information provided by the Synod, the concept is grounded on the biblical idea of Sabbath rest. I view it as an opportunity for Pastor Joel to spend time with his family, rebuild his energy and spiritually renew himself. It gives us a chance to continue to grow those seeds of love, for our Lord and each other that he so enthusiastically tries to nurture in us.

We are thankful that Pastor Joel will be staying at Immanuel. Please continue to keep him and his family in your prayers.

For the next 3 month, let's all work together in giving him space as a pastor, and appreciate him as a friend, community member and fellow Christian.

LuAnn Kruger
Church Council President

June

2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 9:00 Worship/Com. 10:00 Fellowship 5:00 Comm Meal	6 6:00 Meal at Stingers 7:00 Stingers Game	7	8 6:30-9:00 Bowling for Pre-K thru 6 th Grade	9	10	11 LaVonne Priebe Funeral
12 9:00 Worship/Com 10:00 Fellowship Hour	13 1:30 Joy Bible Study	14 7:00 Church Council	15 6:30 Bean Bag/Yard Game Event	16	17	18
19 9:00 Worship/Com 10:00 Fellowship Hour	20	21	22 2:00-3:30 Coffee for Gals In Fellowship Hall	23	24	25
26 9:00 Worship/Com 10:00 Fellowship Hour	27	28	29	30		

