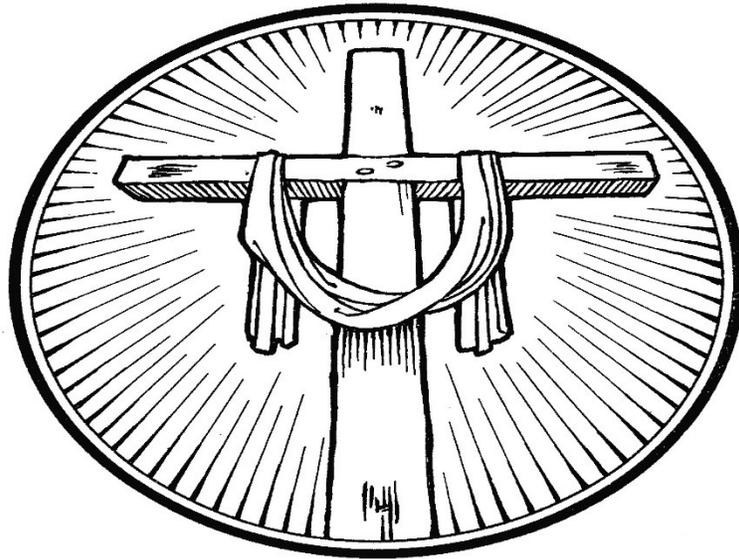


IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
IMMANUEL SPEAKS
MARCH 2026



Siblings in Christ,

On Wednesday, February 18th, we entered the season of Lent. During this season of Lent, we are invited into the discipline of Lent: self-examination and repentance, prayer and fasting, sacrificial giving and works of love as we journey to the cross with Jesus.

Our first spiritual practice of Lent is self-examination and repentance. Lent is very clear about the truth of humanity's problem. We have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We were created from the dust of the earth and because of sin; death has entered into the world and to dust we shall return. The Lenten season is also very clear about God's love for us. Yes, we are dust and to dust we shall return, but God speaks another word to us. A word of life. Through the cross and resurrection of Christ our sin is forgiven and death is defeated and we are given the gift of eternal life. One way to practice this spiritual discipline of self-examination and repentance is to use a catechism or hymnal as most contain some order of confession and absolution/forgiveness. I invite you to use that order within your house or among a group of friends.

Our second spiritual practice of Lent is prayer. So often we can take God for granted. Our schedules are so full it seems like there is never any down time. And yet one of the remarkable things we see about Jesus during his life, is that he was never too busy to stop and pray to his Father. We too have that invitation to grow deeper with God each day. Luther in the small catechism would write, "Our Father who art in heaven. What does this mean? God tenderly invites us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are His true children, so that we may ask Him confidently with all assurance, as dear children ask their dear father."

So how do we do this? A daily devotional doesn't have to be an hour, it can be if you want. Mine is normally between 5-20 minutes depending upon the day. So what can we use to deepen our prayer life? Once again we can go to a catechism, hymnal, or devotional material. If you do the morning and evening prayer, and have some kind of prayer at your meals, you would pray 5 times a day. Or another option would be to use one of the devotionals like God's pause from Luther Seminary: <https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/>, or our daily bread: <https://odb.org/> or something similar on the internet. The point is how might we grow in deeper relationship with God in our lives just as Jesus did in his.

This brings us to our final Lenten spiritual practice: fasting and sacrificial giving and works of love. Notice I have these two together. The practice of fasting especially not eating red meat during Lent was directly tied to almsgiving to the poor. Christians would spend less on things like fish and take what they didn't spend and give it to the poor, as a reminder that Christ has compassion on all people especially the ones in need.

So how do we do this? Well, what would you like to give up for Lent? Pick something and then keep the money that you would have spent on it and use it for the benefit of others. We could also extend this to just more than money. How could we fast in terms of our time and talent from our regular schedules and use our time and talents in service to someone else?

Lent is a journey to the cross as we hear the old old story, of Jesus and his love. But it is more than a story. This season continues to remind us of how Jesus calls us to pick up our cross and follow him so that we might continue to grow in love of God and love of neighbor. May we all walk in the way of the cross!

Pastor Joel

February 8, 2026

1. Pastoral Acts

- 20 pastoral visits
- 2 funerals: (Jan 19) Amber Johnson; (Feb 6) Charlotte Korn
- 1 baptism: (Jan. 18) Beau Dieken

2. Worship

- Clara City Care center
 - No worship since Christmas Eve due to covid & flu.
- Lent begins Wednesday, February 18th. Meal at 5:30pm, Ash Wednesday worship at 7pm
 - Mid-week Lenten services on Wednesday at 7pm with meal at 5:30pm
 - 1st 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 22nd
- Confirmation/Youth
 - completed units 5 & 6 on worship and Lord's prayer. Will finish up the year after Lent with the sacraments
 - Confirmands will assist with Lenten services
 - Youth Valentine's Day Dinner & Newlywed game on February 14 at 7pm
 - Cosmic bowling on February 21

4. Mission & Outreach

- community meal February 1st: chicken alfredo, mixed veg, breadstick and homemade cookie; served 174.
- Received thank you notes from Heritage Haven & Ridgewater Campus Ministries.

5. Continuing Education/Pastoral Self-Care

- I will be on vacation Jan. 12th to 17th, Kathy has contact information for pastoral coverage if needed.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
February 8, 2026

PRESENT: Derek Rand; Gabby Rognile; Laurie Dieken; Murlaine Reiger; Lucas Doesken; Glen Miller; Kat Schwitters (Treasurer); Pastor Joel

ABSENT: Carissa Pederson; Terry Noble

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: Derek Rand

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Motion made to pass Secretary's Report by Gabby; seconded by Lucas; carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kat reviewed current Programs and Projects funds noting most recent change was movement of \$5000.00 from Building Fund to the Cemetery Fund. Repair of sewer line for \$275. Butch Hasbrook was paid for December snow removal. MN Paid leave benefit (most recent MN law for family leave) is taken out quarterly not monthly. Reminded that we need approximately \$22,000/month income to meet expenses. She is in discussion with the Endowment Committee in providing funds for some areas of missions that have been coming out of the General Fund. She presented info on Digital Hymnal system with discussion of this program. Motion made to accept Treasurer's Report made by Lucas; seconded by Glen; motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Pastor Joel has been able to return to the Care Center as visitor restrictions have been lifted. Has had 2 funerals recently and has been visiting those who have been ill.

OLD BUSINESS: New Council Members: Murlaine Reiger & Carissa Pederson. Exiting Council members—Cheryl Colby & Randy Grussing

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Officer Appointments: President: Derek Rand; Vice President: Gabby Rognile; Secretary: Laurie Dieken; Treasurer: Kat Schwitters
- B. Committee Appointments:
 - i. Youth Committee—Gabby Rognile
 - ii. Property & Management Committee—Lucas Doesken & Terry Noble
 - iii. Endowment Committee—Murlaine Reiger
 - iv. Congregational Life Committee—Laurie Dieken
 - v. Media Committee—Derek Rand
 - vi. Cemetery Committee—Glen Miller
 - vii. Carissa to be assigned
- C. Money Counters:
 - a. For February—Terry & Carrissa (Lucas & Laurie to assist as needed)
 - b. For March—Derek & Murlaine
- D. Next Meeting: Sunday, March 8, 2026, 10 am
- E. Lenten Meal: Church Council will serve the Lenten Supper on Wednesday, March 4th.
- F. No Pancake Supper this year due to multiple factors influencing attendance.
- G. Thank You's from Heritage Haven and the Lutheran Campus Ministry received.
- H. Happy Birthday & gift card presented to Pastor Joel.
- I. Motion made to adjourn by Lucas; seconded by Murlaine; motion carried.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
FEBRUARY 1, 2026

Meeting called to order by Derek Rand following the church service. Quorum was established.

Brief introduction of the Annual Report was provided by Pastor Joel.

AGENDA: Motion made; motion seconded; approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The Treasurer's Report was moved up in the agenda due to the need for the explanation of a correction in benefits due to Pastor Joel that was completed this year. Kat Schwitters, Treasurer, thanked everyone for their contributions throughout the year and especially at the end of the year. She explained that Pastor Joel had not been receiving benefits to his retirement account and his HERC (Housing Equity Retirement Contribution) account since he began his ministry at Immanuel. She explained that to correct this issue \$25,000 had been moved from a CD to his Synod benefits account. The amount was based on Synod guidelines and years of service. Going forward, these benefits would be included in his salary and benefits. No questions were noted. Motion made to accept Treasurer's Report; motion seconded; carried to pass Treasurer's Report.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2026: Budget for 2026 was presented. No questions or concerns brought forward. Motion made to accept the 2026 Budget; motion seconded; carried to accept Budget for 2026.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Motion made to accept the Secretary's Report.

OLD BUSINESS: None identified other than the benefits for Pastor Joel. No concern brought forward.

NEW BUSINESS: Pastor Joel explained the beginnings of the Family Promise outreach beginning to be established in Montevideo. This program provides emergency housing to families and helps them become established and to become independent. This would involve providing meals to the people for one month of the year. It is a new ministry and they are looking for volunteers.

Election of officers. Ballots were handed out and counted. New members to the Council are: Murlaine Reiger and Carissa Pederson. Nominating Committee members are: Ross Pederson; Andrea Prekker; LuAnn Kruger; and Chuck Hinderks.

Motion made to adjourn; motion seconded; passed.

Respectfully submitted: Laurie Dieken, Secretary



This Lenten series is drawn from Luke’s account of our Lord’s Passion. Each week, a different section of the Gospel is read; and each week, Luke will take us to a different place—the *Places of the Passion*. Throughout the series, we are invited to gaze in wonder on the spiritual work that our Lord does in those places. Jesus will share His strength in our times of weakness. When Jesus enters a place, He never leaves it as He found it. The most troubling places in our lives become the most amazing places of God’s grace when Jesus visits them.

Sunday, Feb. 19th Ash Sunday; The Courts of the Temple & Upper Room: A Place of Preparation

Wednesday, Feb. 25th; The Upper Room: A Place of Service

Wednesday, Mar. 4th; Gethsemane: A Place of Strength

Wednesday, Mar. 11th; The Betrayal: A Place of Eternal Love

Wednesday, Mar. 18th; The Courtyard of the High Priest: A Place of Renewal

Wednesday, Mar. 25th; The Trial Before Herod & Pilate: A Place of God’s will

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MARCH COMMUNITY MEAL
SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 5:00-6:00 P.M.

Our next Community Meal is Sunday, March 1st. On the menu is: pizza hotdish, green beans, French bread and cookies. We will be serving to go orders in the alley way and also serving in the Fellowship Hall. Please comment on the Facebook page or call the church office at 847-2138 with the number of meals you are wanting. Everyone is welcome and the meal is free.

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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR SUNDAYS THE MONTH OF MARCH

Sunday, March 1: Acolyte/PowerPoint: Peyton Jaenisch
Lay Reader: Kathy Fritz
Altar Guild: Ann Hovda

Sunday, March 8: Acolyte/PowerPoint: Hayden Emkes
Lay Reader: Judi Boike
Altar Guild: Sara Sabe

Sunday, March 15: Acolyte/PowerPoint: Landon Emkes
Lay Reader: Carissa Pederson
Altar Guild: Ken & Jan Beyerl

Sunday, March 22: Acolyte/PowerPoint: Jana Rand
Lay Reader: Gary Meyer
Altar Guild: Michele Shubert

Sunday, March 29: Acolyte/PowerPoint: Austin Olson (Palm Sunday)
Lay Reader: Laine Rieger
Altar Guild: Judy Gosseling

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TREASURER NOTES FOR 2026

2026 General Fund Budget: \$262,000.
2026 General Fund Income Needed as of 1/31/26: 251,339.

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ATTENTION THRIVENT MEMBERS

Please remember to designate your Thrivent Choice dollars to your congregation. Each Thrivent member can apply for two action grants of \$250.00 each year. Any questions, please contact your Thrivent representative.

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FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION

Kids, would you like to receive Holy Communion? Parents, is your child/children interested in receiving Holy Communion? There will be five First Communion instruction sessions this year. They will be February 25, March 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. **You only need to attend one of these sessions.** Any questions, please to Pastor Joel.

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DAN TRIBE UP FOR APRIL 2026

Below we have printed the Tribe Membership for April 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.

- Ross and Brenda Harms
- Dave and Carol Groff – Tribe Leaders
- Rod and Barb Miller
- Curt and Diane Meints
- Rose Berghuis
- Dennis and Donna Roberts
- Byron and Pam Sulflow
- LuAnn Kruger
- Mark and Kim Miller
- Jordan and Lydia Freese

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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR LENTEN SERVICES

Wednesday, February 25:	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Altar Guild:	Ali Neville Kathy Speiser
Wednesday, March 4:	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Altar Guild:	Madelyn Gueningsman Ann Hovda
Wednesday, March 11:	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Altar Guild:	Paityn Colby Sara Sabe
Wednesday, March 18:	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Altar Guild:	Greta Johnson Ken & Jan Beyerl
Wednesday, March 25:	Acolyte/PowerPoint: Altar Guild:	Tia Schwitters Michele Shubert

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OPEN RADIO BROADCASTS FOR 2026

We have many open radio broadcasts for the year of 2025. 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 \$100.00 for each broadcast. The following dates are open:

- | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| April 5, 12, | June 14, 21, 28 | July 5, 12, 26 | August 2, 9 |
| September 13, 20, 27 | October 11, 18, 25 | November 1, 15 | December 13, 20, 27 |

LENTEN SERVICES AND SUPPER

Join us for Midweek Worship Services and suppers during the Lenten season. We gather for a meal starting at 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, then meet in the sanctuary for the Lenten Worship Service with Communion at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 4: 5:30-6:30 p.m. Lenten Supper – Church Council
Menu: BBQ’s , coleslaw, chips, and bars
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service with Communion

Wednesday, March 11: 5:30-6:30 p.m. Lenten Supper
Menu: **Open**
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service with Communion

Wednesday, March 18: 5:30-6:30 p.m. Lenten Supper – Lutheran Women
Menu: Hotdish, homemade bread, Jello, egg coffee and cookies
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service with Communion

Wednesday, March 25: 5:30-6:30 p.m. Lenten Supper – Congregational Life Committee
Menu: Pancakes, French toast, sausage and beverage
7:00 p.m. Lenten Service with Communion

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

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

Easter Sunday, April 20: 6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service with Communion
9:00 a.m. Easter Worship Service with Communion

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NO COFFEE FOR GALS – the month of March.

QUILTING – Meets every Tuesday at 1:00 p.m., weather permitting.

NO CONFIRMATION THE MONTH OF MARCH – Confirmation students will be Worship Assistants during the Lenten Season.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN WILL BE SINGING – Sunday, March 29th at the 9:00 a.m. Worship Service.

3RD AND 4TH GRADERS – will be Worship Assistants on Sunday, March 1st. They will also be serving coffee.



HOLY WEEK SERVICES AT IMMANUEL

Sunday, March 29: Palm Sunday

9:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Worship Service with
Communion
No Sunday School

Thursday, April 2: Maundy Thursday

5:30-6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Supper
7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship Service with
Communion

Friday, April 3: Good Friday

7:00 p.m. Good Friday Worship Service

Sunday, April 5: Easter

6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise Worship Service with
Communion
9:00 a.m. Easter Worship Service with Communion
No Sunday School or Fellowship Hour

HE HAS RISEN, HE HAS RISEN INDEED!

Happy Easter

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-12th) 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.

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.

March

2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 Worship/Comm. 10:00 SS/Coffee 5:00-Community Meal	2	3 1:00 Quilting	4 5:30 Lenten Supper 6:00 1 st Communion Instruction 7:00 Lenten Service	5	6	7
8 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 SS/Coffee 10:00 Council Meeting	9	10 1:00 Quilting	11 5:30 Lenten Supper 6:00 1 st Communion Instruction 7:00 Lenten Service	12	13	14
15 9:00 Worship/Comm. 10:00 SS/Coffee	16 1:30 Joy Bible Study	17 1:00 Quilting	18 5:30 Lenten Supper 6:00 1 st Communion Instruction 7:00 Lenten Service	19	20	21
22 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 SS/Coffee	23	24 1:00 Quilting	25 5:30 Lenten Supper 6:00 1 st Communion Instruction 7:00 Lenten Service	26	27	28
29 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 Coffee/No Sunday School Palm Sunday	30	31 1:00 Quilting				

