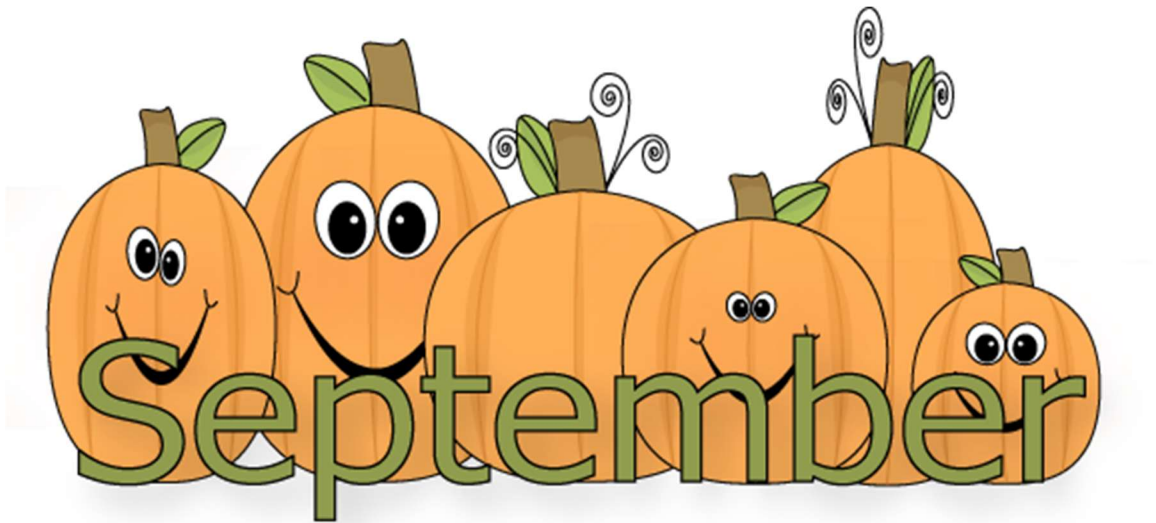


IMMANUEL SPEAKS
SEPTEMBER 2025



Dear Friends in Christ,

As we begin this new programming year together, I would like to share these words with you from the prophet Isaiah. In the 55th chapter of Isaiah God gives this invitation, “Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.”

We have all heard it said, “Nothing in life is free, there has to be a catch, or there must be some strings attached.” Sheldon Cooper in the comedy *Big Bang Theory* would put it this way after being asked by his neighbor Penny to be a part of their secret Santa group, “Wait, you are going to buy me present? Why would you do such a thing? I know you think you’re being generous, but the foundation of gift-giving is reciprocity. You haven’t given me a gift, you’ve given me an obligation.”

I think we all know what it is like to feel like Sheldon and Penny. Yes, there are times when we do or say something like Penny when she gave a Christmas gift to Sheldon. I think we can all recall a time when we were generous, when we simply said or did something because that is who we are. But there are also times we have said or did something expecting something in return. We identify with Sheldon who receives the gift and now feels obligated for different reasons to respond in kind. No matter how much we may try to avoid it, whether we are aware of it or not; we live in a transactional world where nothing is truly free.

However, my friends, this is not the way God’s love works. God speaks these words of invitation from Isaiah 55 to a people who are in exile.

Time and time again God sent prophets to guide the people, but the people didn't listen. And because of the peoples' hard heartedness, God allowed foreign countries to conquer them and take them into exile.

Now if God operated how the world works, in a transactional way, then the people of Israel would have had three strikes pretty quickly. After all, 12 of the Old Testament books are attributed to prophets. This means by the time they end up in exile they would have swung and missed 12 times, if they were playing baseball. Now, we all know what happens when you have three strikes!!! You're out!!!

Now Imagine if the umpire told the batter, "I know it's strike three, but we're not leaving here until you hit a home run." We would think that umpire is out of his mind, that is not how the game works, that isn't how life works, nothing is free.

But notice the picture painted of God in these verses. God is not transactional but is pure boundless love. Even though the people of Israel messed things up time and time again, look at what God has to offer, and the best part is that there are no strings attached. God loved them for who they are. And the good news for us is that God loves us for who we are. He invites his people to come to him and receive the abundant and eternal life that he attends for all.

Beloved of God, it is truly an exciting time of the year as our fall programming kicks off and we experience the boundless love God has for us and the world. And so, whether you are in church every Sunday, whether it is been a while, or whether you have never stepped foot in a church before, the invitation is the same. It is for you, and you, and you, and even me. God extends his invitation to come and eat for free. God comes to fill you with love and grace!

In Christ,

Pastor Joel

Pastor's Report to Council (June 11th to August 10th, 2025) Rev. Joel Gueningsman
August 10th, 2025

1. Pastoral Acts

- 61 pastoral visits
- 1 baptism: Tyler Michael Bluhm (July 13th)

2. Worship

- Clara City Care center
- June 18th; July 1st & 16th
- Rally Sunday will be Sunday, September 7th.

3. Education/Youth

- Sunday School
 - VBS July 20th through 23rd from 5pm to 7:30pm
 - wonderful week of vbs! Thank you to all the volunteers for making the week possible.
- Confirmation/Youth
 - Mission Trip to Omaha July 27th to August 1st
 - Mission Trip was wonderful experience. Youth will be serving a thank you meal on Rally Sunday and a presentation at some point this fall.
- Confirmation
 - Meeting Wednesday, September 3rd @ 7pm.
 - First night of confirmation (Church history/Catechism Year) Wednesday, September 9th @ 6:30pm.

4. Mission & Outreach

- Pie and Ice Cream social at Care Center, Sunday July 13th. Well attended, thank you to all the volunteers for helping!
- community meal moved from August 3rd to the 10th.

5. Continuing Education/Pastoral Self-Care

- faith+lead courses

Immanuel Lutheran Church Council

Meeting Minutes for August 10, 2025

PRESENT: Derek Rand, Lucas Doesken, Glen Milller, Randy Grussing, Gabby Rognlie, Pastor Joel

ABSENT: Cheryl Colby, Terry Noble, Laurie Dieken, Kat Schwitters (Treasurer)

Meeting called to order by President Derek.

SECRETARY’S REPORT: No discussion; M/S/P.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: No reports given.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Written report reviewed. June and July 2025 General Fund Income: \$24,016.49. June and July 2025 General Fund expenses: \$39,525.51. M/S/P to approve treasurer’s report.

PASTORS REPORT: Reviewed, no discussion.

OLD BUSINESS: 1. Church kitchen remodel. M/S/P to correct meeting minutes “donated by Janet Forstrom” to “donated by the Forstrom family.” 2. Parsonage Maintenance. Waiting on call back about ceiling repair.

NEW BUSINESS: 1. Chad Rand added to Media Fund & CD. M/S/P. 2. Reviewed mail. 3. LuAnn organizing a evening with the Looney Lutherans this fall.

Motion made; seconded; and passed to adjourn. Next Council meeting, Sunday, September 14th, at 10 a.m.

+++++

TREASURER NOTES FOR 2025

2025 General Fund Budget:	\$253,930
2025 General Fund Income Needed as of 7/31/25:	\$148,570

+++++

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER

Sunday, Sept. 7	PowerPoint/Acolyte:	Austen Olson
	Lay Reader:	Annette Rosen
	Altar Guild:	Sara Sabe
Sunday, Sept. 14	PowerPoint/Acolyte:	Karly Bratsch
	Lay Reader:	Ken Beyerl
	Altar Guild:	Ken & Jan Beyerl
Sunday, Sept. 21	PowerPoint/Acolyte:	Addison McNeil
	Lay Reader:	Judi Boike
	Altar Guild:	Michel Shubert
Sunday, Sept. 28	PowerPoint/Acolyte:	Kresson Bratsch
	Lay Reader:	Carissa Pederson
	Altar Guild:	Judy Gosseling

+++++

TRIBE UP FOR OCTOBER 2025
DAN TRIBE

Below we have printed the Tribe membership for October 2025. The chairperson will be calling or texting you in the near future, asking you to help serve Immanuel in some way. Start thinking about what you can volunteer to help with. If everyone takes one job, the “needs” list will be filled.

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

+++++



Rally SUNDAY

FUN FOR THE FAMILY
SEPTEMBER 7TH 2025



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS DURING
9AM SERVICE

BINGO IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL AFTER
CHURCH

LUNCH AT 11AM, PROVIDED BY THE
YOUTH THAT WENT ON THE MISSION
TRIP



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
CLARA CITY MN





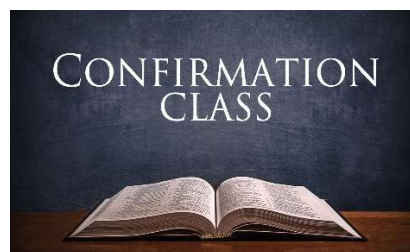
We have a few open radio broadcasts for the year 2025. If you would like to sponsor any of these, please call the church office at 847-2138 or talk to Pastor Joel or Kathy. The cost for a broadcast is \$110.00. Thank you to everyone that has sponsored a radio broadcast and for continuing to support this ministry outreach! The dates are: October 12, November 2 and 16, December 14, and 28.

+++++



The Community Meal is Sunday, September 7th, from 5:00-6:00 p.m. The menu is: pizza hotdish, breadstick, vegetable, and dessert. We will be serving to-go meals in the alley way and in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign up on Immanuel's Facebook page or call the church office with the number of meals you need. Everyone in the community is invited!

+++++



Calling all confirmands (7th-9th) & parents. We will meet on Wednesday, September 7th at 7pm to talk about the upcoming confirmation year. Our first class will be Wednesday, September 14th from 6:30 pm to 8 pm. See you there!



Calling all quilters—Quilting will start again in September. We will be gathering on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 1pm in the fellowship hall.

+++++



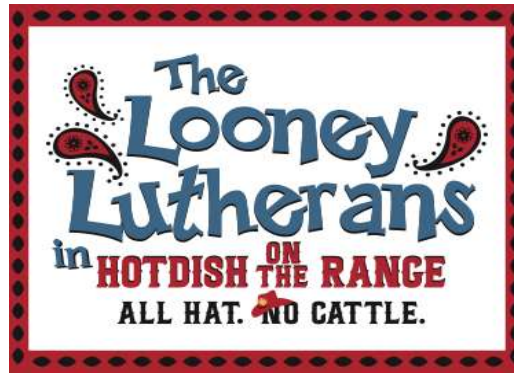
Krohn's "Mercy Trailer"—is collecting (new and slightly used) pots, pans, towels and wash cloths for Sharing and Caring Hands for the homeless. There is a box in the back of the church. Deadline is Wednesday, September 17th.

+++++



The women of Immanuel will meet on Wednesday, September 24th from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. All ages are welcome! Come for laughter, fellowship, fun and of course, treats! Hope to see you there!

+++++



The Looney Lutherans are again coming to Clara City! The date is Saturday, October 18th at the MACCRAY High School. Mark your calendars! The details are coming together, so watch the bulletin and the October newsletter for information on ticket purchases, times and etc.

+++++

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.

September

2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Happy Labor Days! Office closed	2	3 7:00 p.m. Confirmation Meeting	4	5	6
7 RALLY SUNDAY 9:00 Worship/Comm. 10:00 SS/Coffee 11:00 Meal 5:00 Community Meal	8	9 1:00 Quilting	10 6:00 Confirmation Supper 6:30 Confirmation	11	12	13
14 9:00 Worship/Comm union 10:00 SS/Coffee 10:00 Church Council Meeting	15	16	17 6:00 Confirmation Supper 6:30 Confirmaton	18	19	20 Schipnewski Wedding
21 9:00 Worship/Comm union 10:00 SS/Coffee	22	23 1:00 Quilting	24 2:00 Coffee for Gals 6:00 Confirmation Supper 6:30 Confirmation	25	26	27
28 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 SS/Coffee	29	30				

