

IMMANUEL SPEAKS
FEBRUARY 2026



Sisters & brothers in Christ,

Attention everybody!!! It is February, and you all know what that means. On the 14th it will be Valentine's Day!!! Now is the time to get out and get those gifts for your spouse, fiancé, or significant other to show them how much you love and appreciate them. Looking back, I remember one Valentine's Day in particular when I was in eighth grade. Being a teenager I thought I had found the girl of my dreams and so as Valentine's Day rolled around I showered her with gifts. When she got to school in the morning there was a necklace in her locker. During first period she received some carnations. Later on during the day she found a huge teddy bear in her locker. After lunch the local florist came with more flowers and one of the biggest heart balloons I have ever seen. Looking back, I have to laugh at all of the ways I tried to show this girl that "I loved her".

Valentine's Day is a wonderful day to remind one another of that love that we have. But it is also a day on which we can also reflect on God's great love for us. What is love? John in his first letter to the early church would write this, "In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins." As we celebrate Valentine's Day and we thank one another for the gift of love, John reminds us of the Greatest Valentine's Day gift we will ever receive, our Lord and Savior!

On February 18th we will once again begin our Lenten journey. Beginning with Ash Wednesday and throughout the 40 days of Lent we will see the height and depth of God's love for us and creation! God loves us so much that Jesus sets his face to Jerusalem knowing full well what is going to happen there. Rejected, Jesus continues to proclaim God's love. Upon the cross Jesus speaks words of forgiveness to those who persecuted him. To a dying convicted criminal, Jesus promises paradise. And as John the Baptist foreshadowed early on, at the cross we behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world; who rose again destroying the power of death so that we may have eternal life.

My friends, out of all the Valentine 's Day gifts we receive; the cross is the greatest gift of all. And so, as we go about our shopping and trying to find the perfect gift to show those special people in our life how much we love and appreciate them; remember the greatest Valentine's Day gift that God has given you. Remember his great love for each and every one of you!

In Christ,

Pastor Joel

January 10, 2025

1. Pastoral Acts

- **56 pastoral visits**
- **2 funerals: (Jan 9) Robert Jaenisch; (Jan 10) Stewart Dansby**
- **2 baptisms: (Jan 10) Scarlett Grussing; (Jan. 11) Marlee Schwinghammer**

2. Worship

- Clara City Care center
 - Dec. 24th; no worship so far in January with covid at the care center**
- Christmas Schedule: SS Christmas program Dec. 21st @ 9am; Christmas Eve Dec. 24th @ 5pm; Christmas Day Dec. 25th @ 9am.**
 - Thank you to Sunday school staff, students, Darci, all of the singers, ushers, readers, communion servers, and media members for leading and enriching our worship during the Christmas season!**

3. Education/Youth

- Sunday School**
 - Christmas program practice is underway; program on Dec. 21st @ 9am. Followed by Happy Birthday Jesus party by the Sunday school.**
 - No Sunday school Dec. 28th & January 4th**
- Confirmation/Youth**
 - No Confirmation Dec. 24th & Dec. 31st. Will return Jan. 7.**

4. Mission & Outreach

- community meal Jan. 4th: chili, cinnamon roll, and fresh veg; served 162.**
- Collecting meal items for thanksgiving and Christmas dinner; if you know of someone who needs a meal basket contact the office.**
- Christmas Day community meal at Immanuel**
 - Thank you to all the volunteers led by Donna & Dennis!**
- WELCA purchasing and delivering gifts for shut-ins**

5. Continuing Education/Pastoral Self-Care

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

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

January 11, 2026

PRESENT: Derek Rand; Gabby Rognile; Laurie Dieken; Terry Noble; Lucas Doesken; Glen Miller; Cheryl Colby; Kat Schwitters (Treasurer) **ABSENT:** Randy Grussing **GUEST:** Lonnie Hanson from Cemetery Committee

Meeting Called to Order by Derek Rand.

Lonnie presented info on status of the columbarium. Bids for solar lighting near the building were requested with Meuller Electric taking the work. Lonnie also checked into having a stained-glass window placed. Cost is prohibitive at this time as concrete would need to be wet cut along with creation of the window and then installing the window. Request made for additional funds to work toward this goal as minimal burial plots have been purchased this year with costs for mowing and snow removal continuing. Motion made to place \$5000.00 into Cemetery Fund from Building Fund to replenish funds. Motion made by Gabby; seconded by Terry; motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kat reviewed the 2025 Budget and Expenses. Other than the funds that had to be used for Pastor Joel's past benefits—the Church was approximately \$1100.00 over 2025 Budget. This is significant in how we have attempted to pare down expenses and how the congregation is demonstrating good stewardship and generous donations. Kat has also completed updating Portico for salary and benefits for Pastor Joel for the 2026 year.

For Pastor Joel to complete his taxes the accountant needs to have Fair Market Value (FMV) for the parsonage completed for 2025 by the Council. Motion to identify a FMV of \$9000.00 for 2025. Motion made by Terry; seconded by Glen; motion carried.

Motion made by Laurie; seconded by Gabby to have Kat place \$60,000.00 into a 3-to-6-month CD, dependent on best interest rate and/or when funds may be needed. Motion carried.

Motion made by Gabby; seconded by Glen to accept the 2025 Budget and Expenses as well as the 2026 Budget to be presented at the Congregational Annual Meeting. Motion carried.

Motion made by Cheryl; seconded by Lucas to increase the mileage reimbursement rate to the Federal IRS 2026 rate of 72.5 cents per mile. Motion carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Report from the meeting of 12/12/2025 was reviewed. Motion made by Lucas; seconded by Terry; motion carried.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Very busy December with Christmas activities and services along with 56 pastoral visits. Will be on vacation from January 12th to the 17th. Pastoral coverage has been arranged.

OLD BUSINESS: Motion made by Gabby to have Noisy Offering for the first quarter to go to MACPAC Program. Seconded by Cheryl; motion carried.

Money Counters for February -Terry with new council member; **March**-Derek with new council member.

NEW BUSINESS: Derek will check with Kathy to identify members on various committees. He will check in with the Nominating Committee to identify their progress to identify people who agree to be on the slate for open positions for various vacancies. Thank you's received from Ridgewater Ministry and Food Shelf for donations.

CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING SET FOR SUNDAY FEBRUARY 1, 2026, FOLLOWING CHURCH SERVICE. ALL COMMITTEES TO HAVE THEIR ANNUAL REPORTS TO THE OFFICE BY JANUARY 14, 2026.

NEXT MEETING: Congregational Annual Meeting on February 1, 2026, following the church service. All confirmed members can vote. Next Church Council Meeting: February 8, 2026, following the church service.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion made to adjourn by Terry; seconded by Glen; motion carried.

December 2025 General Fund Income: \$56,722

December 2025 General Fund Expenses: \$48,164.

Financials as of November 2025

2025 General Fund Income Budget: \$253,930.00 Actual was \$236,083

2025 General Fund Income Needed as of 12/31/25: \$1,090

THANK YOU CONGREGATION!

More information will be at our Annual Meeting and Annual Report.

2026 General Fund Budget: \$262,000

Financials as of December 2025

December 2025 General Fund Income: \$56,722

December 2025 General Fund Expenses: \$48,164.

Katherine Schwitters

Church Treasurer

Worship Assistants for February 2026

Sunday, February 1 - PowerPoint/Acolyte: Arianna McNeil
 Lay Reader: Beth Gaebe
 Altar Guild: Michele Shuber

Sunday, February 8 - PowerPoint/Acolyte: Andrew Gueningsman
 Lay Reader: Judi Boike
 Altar Guild: Ken and Jan Beyerl

Wednesday, February 18 - PowerPoint/Acolyte: Kayden Prekker (7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service)
Altar Guild: LuAnn Kruger

Sunday, February 22 - PowerPoint/Acolyte: Jamison Flaherty
 Lay Reader: Ken Beyerl
 Altar Guild: Ann Hovda

Wednesday, February 25 - PowerPoint/Acolyte: Ali Neville (7:00 p.m. Lenten Service)
Altar Guild: Ann Hovda

February Community Meal
Sunday, February 1, 5:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Our next Community Meal is Sunday, February 1st. On the menu is: fettucine alfredo with chicken, vegetable, breadstick and dessert. We will be serving to go orders in the alley 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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First Communion Instruction

1st Communion Instruction – Kids, would you like to receive Holy Communion? Parents, is your child/children interested in receiving Holy Communion? There will be four First Communion Instruction Sessions this year. They will be Wednesday, March 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. **You need to attend one of these sessions.** If there are any questions, please talk to Pastor Joel.

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Lenten Service Suppers

Lent is right around the corner! Join us for Midweek Worship Services and suppers during the Lenten season. Beginning **Ash Wednesday, February 18th, we will gather for a meal starting at 5:30 p.m.** We will be serving Lenten suppers ahead of our Lenten Worship Services. If you, or a group would like to put on a meal, these are the Wednesday night dates that are open:

Wednesday, March 4, 11, 18 Thursday, April 2 (Maundy Thursday)

Please let the church office know what night you would be willing to prepare and serve the Lenten supper. Also, let them know the menu so it can be published in the bulletin. Thank you!

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Mannasseh Tribe Up For March 2026

Below we have printed the Tribe Membership for March 2026. The chairperson will be calling you in the near future asking you to help serve Immanuel in some small 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.

Mannasseh Tribe

Glen Miller	Malinda Klaassen
Gary and Lori Kruger	Gary and Deb Nelson
Allan Dieken	Terry and Judy Noble
Shane and Stephanie Swenson	Roger and Linda Wilkens
Lonnie and LuAnn Hansen – Tribe Leaders	Andrew Dahl

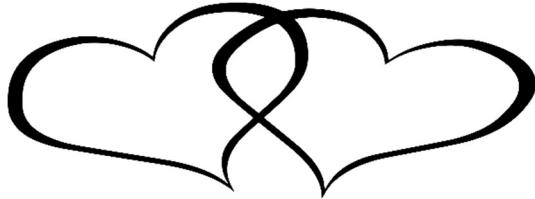
Open Radio Broadcasts for 2026

We have many open radio broadcasts for 2026. If you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast during the year, please contact the church office at 847-2138, or stop in the church office, or talk to Kathy or Pastor Joel. The cost is \$110 for each broadcast. The following dates are still available:

February 22	March 1, 8, 15, 29	April 5, 12, 19, 26
May 10	June 14, 21, 28	July 5, 12, 26
August 2, 9, 23, 30	September 13, 20, 27	October 11, 18, 25
November 1, 8, 15	December 6, 13, 20, 27	

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Valentine's Dinner and Show!



Please join us for our Valentine's Dinner and Show on February 14, at 6:30 p.m.!! Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. with the Newlywed Game starting at 7:30 p.m. The menu is: salad, lasagna, dinner roll, cheesecake or chocolate cake. This is all happening in Immanuel Lutheran's Fellowship Hall. Tickets are \$25.00 per person and may be purchased from any 7th – 12th grader, after church in the Fellowship Hall or at the church office. This is a fundraiser for Immanuel's youth! All are welcome!

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Immanuel's 2025 Annual Meeting **Sunday, February 1st at 10:00 a.m.**

Immanuel Lutheran Church 2025 Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 1st, right after the Worship Service. The meeting will be in the sanctuary. You may pick up a 2025 Annual Report booklet in the back of the sanctuary.

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Ash Wednesday Worship Service with Communion

Ash Wednesday is on Wednesday, February 18th. We will be serving a meal at 5:30 p.m., with the Worship Service starting at 7:00 p.m. This begins our Lenten season, with Lenten services being held every Wednesday evening starting in February and March at 7:00 p.m., with a Lenten supper starting at 5:30 p.m.

February

2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 Worship/Comm. 10:00 SS/Coffee 5:00 Comm. Meal	2	3 1:00 Quilting	4 6:00 Conf. Supper 6:30 Confirmation	5	6 2:00 Charlotte Kom Funeral	7
8 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 SS/Coffee 10:00 Church Council	9	10 1:00 Quilting	11 6:00 Confirmation Supper 6:30 Confirmation	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 7:00 Ash Wednesday Service/Comm. No Confirmation	19	20	21 Bridal Shower in Basement
22 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 SS/Coffee 10:00 Endowment	23	24 1:00 Quilting	25 5:30 Lenten Supper 7:00 Lenten Service No Confirmation	26	27	28