

IMMANUEL SPEAKS
OCTOBER 2025



Dear friends in Christ,

Oct. 26th will mark the 508th anniversary of the reformation. As we gather for worship, we will celebrate the reformation message, “the righteous shall live by faith” (Romans 1:17). But what exactly does this message mean?

To understand this, we need to delve into church history. Martin Luther grew up within a tradition where you were taught that you had to earn your salvation. You had to be righteous. You had to live a godly life otherwise, God who is righteous, would punish you for your sins. Luther later in his life would share these thoughts on Romans 1:17, “I hated that word, ‘the righteousness of God,’ by which I had been taught according to the custom and use of all teachers...that God is righteous and punishes the unrighteous sinner.”

Luther knew that he was to live a godly life, to strive to follow the example of Christ in word and deed. However, he could never escape the feeling that he was a sinner, that he had not done enough to atone for his sins. And because he had not done enough, he knew that God would punish him for his sins.

But as time went by Luther came to a new understanding of what the apostle Paul meant by “the righteous shall live by faith”. While earning his doctorate and teaching as a professor at the University of Wittenberg, he came to see this passage in a new light. Luther would write, “At last mediating day and night, by the mercy of God, I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that through which the righteous live by a gift of God, namely faith. Here I felt as if I were entirely born again and had entered paradise itself through the gates that had been flung open.”

Luther came to understand that this passage from Romans is not talking about how we must fill all the requirements of the law or God will punish us. Rather he came to understand that the righteous will live by faith, that is, they trust in the grace, mercy and forgiveness given to them in Christ’s life, death, and resurrection.

Picture this way. In Matthew 20:1-16 Jesus tells a parable of a vineyard owner who hires workers early in the morning for the usual daily wage. The vineyard owner returned to the marketplace four more times during the day, at: 9 a.m., noon, 3 p.m., and 5 p.m. to hire more workers. He told those workers he would pay them the normal daily wage.

At the end of the day the vineyard owner pays the workers; starting with those who began work the latest. He gives them a full day’s wage. The ones who began early in the day expected to receive more being they worked longer, but in the end they got the same, a full days wage. And so they begin to grumble about fairness, they endured the heat of the day and worked longer. But the vineyard owner tells them he is doing nothing wrong, they agreed for the usual daily wage. As for those who worked less and yet received the same, the vineyard owner asks, “Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?” (Matthew 20:16).

What we see in this parable is what Luther came to understand. It isn't about our works or what we do, or what we think we deserve. Rather it is all about the generosity of God. Simply put, it is all about grace. Those who worked for a shorter time did not get what they deserved. Rather, they received grace from the vineyard owner. They were given what they didn't deserve. In the same way, we who are sinners do not get what we deserve; rather we receive grace; we get what we do not deserve, namely forgiveness and a place in the family of God.

My friends, this is the good news we hear as we celebrate the reformation. We do not have to earn our salvation. We do not have wonder whether God loves us, or whether we have done enough to make God love us. Our sin, our failings, our shortcomings, will not separate us from the love of God. For as we turn towards our heavenly Father we find that Christ has made us righteous! The apostle Paul wrote, "The righteous shall live by faith." May we continue to live by that faith! May we continue to trust in those promises that God has made to us in our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ!

Happy Reformation!

Pastor Joel

September 14th, 2025

1. Pastoral Acts

- 46 pastoral visits

-1 funeral: Rose Mary Schroeder (Aug. 20); 1 committal service: Russell Sunderland (Aug. 22).

2. Worship

-Clara City Care center

-Aug. 13th & 27th, Sept. 10th.

-Rally Sunday, Sunday, September 7th.

-return of fellowship hour, teacher meet & greet, bingo, thank you meal and presentation from the youth who attended the Omaha mission trip.

-Affirmation of Baptism, Oct. 26th @ 9am

3. Education/Youth

-Sunday School

-1st day of Sunday school (lesson) Sept. 14th

-Trunk or Treat Oct 26th @ 4pm

-Confirmation/Youth

- Confirmation Meeting Wednesday, September 2nd @ 7pm.

-First night of confirmation (Church history/Catechism Year) Wednesday, September 9th @ 6:30pm.

-Youth events in the works, keep an eye on newsletter/bulletin/facebook.

4. Mission & Outreach

-community meal moved from August 10th; next one on Sept. 7th.

-Looney Lutherans (community ed. Scholarships) on Oct. 18th.

-Trunk or Treat on Oct. 26th.

5. Continuing Education/Pastoral Self-Care

-faith+lead courses

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

September 14, 2025

PRESENT: Gabby Rognlie; Laurie Dieken; Terry Noble; Lucas Doesken; Glen Miller; Cheryl Colby; and Kat Schwitters – Treasurer

ABSENT: Derek Rand; Randy Grussing

Meeting called to order by Gabby R. as Vice President.

REPORTS: Secretary's Report was presented; reviewed with motion made by Glen M. to approve; seconded by Laurie D. and passed.

Treasurer's Report was presented by Kat S. Much discussion over new health insurance plans that have been newly presented as a part of the overall part of the benefits and salary for pastors. Determined to have Kat and Laurie D. meet with Rachel and Pastor Joel to discuss their options and determine what works best for them and their family.

Review of income and expenses completed.

CD coming due with motion made to renew CD for another 4 months. Motion made by Terry N. to approve; seconded by Glen M. and passed.

Treasurer's Report-Motion to approve by Cheryl C.; seconded by Lucas; D. and approved.

No Pastor's report as he was called away for family reasons.

OLD BUSINESS: Maintenance of the parsonage: Progress is being made in some areas and still waiting for some repairs to be completed.

Noisy Offering: 3rd quarter will go to the Immanuel Youth; 4th quarter will go to the Chippewa County Food Shelf.

Counters: October: Cheryl C. and Laurie D.; November: Gabby R. and Glen M.

Meeting adjourned with motion made by Glen M.; seconded by Terry Noble; passed.

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, October 5th at 10:00 am at the Fireside Room.

HAPPENINGS AT IMMANUEL

THE LOONEY LUTHERANS – are coming to the MACCRAY Auditorium on **Saturday, October 18th**! Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the show starts at 7:00 p.m. The Looney Lutherans are a trio of wacky gals who use music, comedy, and some help from the audience to share their age-old wisdom for living a long and lively life, the Lutheran way. The name of the performance is “ Hotdish on the Range. All Hat. No Cattle”. This event is sponsored by Immanuel Lutheran Church. This is a fundraiser for the MACCRAY Community Education scholarships. **Tickets can be purchased at the MACCRAY High School office, or at the door. The cost is \$20.00. Come and enjoy this hilarious show! Laughter is the best medicine!!**

FAMILY BONFIRE – on **Sunday, October 12th** from 4:00-6:30 p.m., at the Ken and Jan Beyerl home in Clara City. We will have hot dogs, brats, sauerkraut, pretzels with beer cheese, s’mores and beverages. Bring your own lawn chairs. The last Bean Bag Tournament will be held also. Come for a time of fellowship, fun, and of course, food! Ken and Jan’s address is 700 5th Street NW.

FREE COMMUNITY MEAL – from 5:00-6:00 p.m. on **Sunday, October 5th**. The menu is: scalloped potatoes and ham, vegetable and dessert. We will be serving to go orders in the church alleyway and also serving in the Fellowship Hall. Please comment on the Facebook page with the number of meals you are wanting. Everyone is welcome!

PASTOR’S APPRECIATION SUNDAY – is **Sunday, October 12th**. We will celebrate Pastor Joel during the worship service. A celebration reception will be served in the Fellowship Hall after the worship service. Please join us to honor Pastor Joel and to thank him for all he does for each of us, our congregation and our community. All are welcome!

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY – is on **Sunday, October 26th** at the 9:00 a.m. Worship Service. The following Confirmation Students will be confirmed: Gavin Gueningsman, Alivia Strommer and Andy Rand. A reception will be held after the worship service in the Fellowship Hall. Come and celebrate with the newly confirmed members!

TRUNK OR TREAT – on **Sunday night, October 26th** from 4:00-6:00 p.m. in Immanuel’s parking lot. Trunk or treat is when you decorate your trunk or vehicle, wear costumes (if you want to), park in a parking lot and pass out Halloween treats to kids in their Halloween costumes. Sound like fun! We are looking for people to participate with this. The more vehicles we have the more fun it will be for the Trick or Treaters! There will also be a free hotdog supper provided. A spooky time will be had by all!! All are welcome!

QUILTING – has started up again for the fall and winter season. We meet the **2nd and 4th Tuesday** of the month at 1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

COFFEE FOR GALS – meets the 4th Wednesday of each month. We will meet on **Wednesday, October 22nd** at 2:00-3:30 p.m. We meet in the Fireside Room for laughter, fellowship, and treats.



WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

Sunday, October 5	PowerPoint/Acolyte: Lay Reader: Altar Guild:	Arianna McNeil Pastor Joel Carissa Pederson
Sunday, October 12	PowerPoint/Acolyte: Lay Reader: Altar Guild:	Andrew Gueningsman Gary Meyer LuAnn Kruger
Sunday, October 19	PowerPoint/Acolyte: Lay Reader: Altar Guild:	Alyson Strommer Laine Rieger Nancy Gosseling
Sunday, October 26	PowerPoint/Acolyte: Lay Reader: Altar Guild:	Kayden Prekker Cindy Meyer Sara Sabe

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SIMEON TRIBE FOR NOVEMBER 2025

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

Corrie and Kathy Swenson
Larry and Jane Niemeyer
Gary and Cindy Meyer
Curt Knapper
Keith Harms
Steve Sunderland
Duane and Michele Shubert
Ken and Jan Beyerl – Tribe Leaders
Austin and Amber Hilbrands

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OPEN RADIO BROADCASTS FOR 2026

Yes, 2026 is right around the corner! Listed below are the open radio broadcasts for 2026. If you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast, please contact the church office at 847-2138, or talk to Kathy Speiser or Pastor Joel. The cost is \$110 for each broadcast. Thank you to all of you that have supported this outreach of Immanuel Lutheran Church!

January 4, 11, 18	July 5, 12, 26
February 1, 8, 15, 22	August 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
March 1, 8, 15	September 13, 20, 27
April 5, 12, 26	October 11, 18, 25
May 10, 24, 31	November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
June 7, 14, 21, 28	December 6, 13, 20, 27

We still have two Sundays available for sponsorship in 2025. They are: December 14 & 28.

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FINANCIAL UPDATE FROM TREASURER

2025 General Fund Budget:	\$253, 930
2025 General Fund Income Needed as of 8/31/20:	\$130,130

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HOSPICE VOLUNTEER TRAINING

CentraCare Hospice currently has a high need for volunteers in your area, and we invite you to consider learning more about this opportunity. As a volunteer, you will be able to enrich the lives of others during their final journey on this side of heaven.

Our fall volunteer training will be held at our Hospice Office in Willmar on Tuesday, October 14 and Thursday, October 16. The 2-day training we will give you a comprehensive look at our hospice concept of care including communication and caring skills, symptom control and pain management, an overview of our complementary therapies, and so much more.

CentraCare hospice is looking for men and women of all backgrounds who have hearts of compassion and a genuine interest in helping others. We do have a high need for veteran volunteers. For questions or more information please call Deb VanBuren at CentraCare Hospice, 320-231-4433. Or visit CentraCare Hospice online at www.centracare.com/hospice.

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OCTOBER 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:00 Supper 6:30 Confirmation	2	3	4
5 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 SS/Fellowship/ Church Council 5:00 Community Meal	6	7	8 6:00 Supper 6:30 Confirmation	9	10	11
12 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 SS/Fellowship 4:00 Bonfire Pastor Appreciation Day	13	14 1:00 Quilting	15 No Confirmation	16	17	18 7:00 Looney Lutherans at MACCRAY Auditorium
19 9:00 Worship/Comm 10:00 No Sunday School 10:00 Fellowship Hour	20	21	22 2:00 Coffee for Gals 6:00 Supper 6:30 Confirmation	23	24	25
26 9:00 Confirmation Sunday Worship/Comm 10:00 SS/Fellowship 4:00 Trunk or Treat, Free Hotdog supper	27	28 1:00 Quilting	29 6:00 Supper 6:30 Confirmation	30	31 Happy Halloween!	

