

# IMMANUEL SPEAKS

## AUGUST 2020



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*Immanuel Lutheran Church, PO Box 236, Clara City, MN 56222*

**Dear Friends in Christ,**

**What must we do to perform the works of God? What do we have to do to be accepted? What do we have to do to belong to God's family? What must we do to have the food that endures for eternal life? These are the questions that the crowds ask Jesus after the feeding of the 5,000 in John.**

**In many ways we still ask those questions today. And depending upon who you talk to, you will get a different answer. What must we do to perform the works of God? What must we do to have the food that endures for eternal life? Well, if we live a good Christian life, if we keep the Ten Commandments, if we love one another, then, then we achieve and receive these things. Our natural inclination as humans is to think that we have to do something; there has to be some effort on our part to achieve our salvation.**

**It is like when we were teenagers. I remember my high school years, and the different groups and clicks. In order to belong to them, to be a part of them, you had to act a certain way, talk a certain way, and dress a certain way. You adjusted your behavior and appearance in order to belong.**

**However, the problem with that line of thinking is in answering the question when have we done enough to be accepted and belong with that group? And so naturally when it comes to our relationship with God and our salvation we can ask that same question. Have I done enough to get into God's good graces? Luther dealt with this struggle for much of his life. When he entered the monastery, he outshined all the other monks in good works. He attended to his daily duties with great care, he prayed, he fasted, he studied scripture, and yet in the end he never felt like he had done enough. He knew that he was a sinner, and that no matter how great a life he lived he was far from perfect.**

**And I think the same could be said for our lives. As sinners, we can never fully live up to the life which God intends. We fail to love God with our whole heart, soul, and mind, and we fail to love our neighbors as ourselves. I know myself that I often fall short of the mark.**

**What must we do to perform the works of God? What do we have to do to be accepted? What do we have to do to belong to God's family? How do we work for the food that endures for eternal life? Our natural inclination is to think we have to do something. And yet as sinners we will always fall short of the goal.**

**But thanks be to God our salvation is not left in our hands. My friends look at Jesus' answer to these questions of belonging in John 6. He tells the crowd, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."**

**Jesus in John six reminds us that there is nothing you have to do to be a part of God's family, there is nothing you have to do for your salvation. There are no works that you have to perform for I have already done it all for you. Through my sinless life, through my death on the cross, and through my victory over death and the grave, I have defeated the**

power of sin, death and the devil. I have claimed you as my own. Come believe, put your trust in me.

The crowds looked for something they had to do, but Jesus redirects them to see things in a different light. He invites them to see that salvation is not something that we have to earn, but that it is pure grace. It is like when we get a Christmas present or birthday present, there are no strings attached, it is a sign of love and affection from the giver.

This my friend's is what God's love is all about. Jesus invites us to come and believe in him and to receive all that is his. Every time we gather through word, sacrament, and Christian community God reaches out to us and embraces us as his beloved children.

My friends, what must we do to perform the works of God? What must we do to have the food that endures for eternal life? The answer is nothing. God has given that to us already. All we simply have to do is trust and believe. All we simply have to do is open wide our hands and receive the bounty of our gracious and loving God!!!

In Christ,  
Pastor Joel



It is that time of year again. In a little over a month fall programming will begin again at Immanuel. With that being said if you are interested in teaching or helping with Sunday school, or are interested in being a small group/mentor for confirmation please give me a call in the office.

Pastor Joel

**Council Meeting Minutes**  
**July 13, 2020**

Attending: Ross Pederson; Sandy Scanlon; Gary Meyer; LuAnn Kruger; Jim Jaenisch; Pastor Joel

Absent: Josh VanDerPol; Kathy Fritz; Isaac Gosseling; Duane Jaenisch

Meeting was called to order by President Ross Pederson at 7:45 p.m.

Devotions: Matthew 13. God will bring about the harvest wheat. Pastor Joel discussed of sowing with weeds. Farmer said leave them grow together you will save them both.

**Agenda:**

**Reports:**

Secretary Report: Minutes from the June 8 meeting reviewed one correction July 17 to June 17 for outdoor services. M/S/P to approve Secretary's Report.

Treasurer's Report: not available.

**Committee Reports:**

Sunday school: Rachel was looking into curriculum for social distancing and/or classroom education.

God's Work Our Hands was talking about the helping community members with tasks and general jobs people need help with.

**Pastor's Reports:** see attached; The drive in services were discontinued for equipment needed to be returned, and unpredictable weather. Discussion of virtual education over classroom education for Confirmation, Sunday school, VBS. Pastor Joel vacation July 17 to July 21.

**Old Business:**

- Church signs need attention. Gary will check on pricing of complete sign replacement of both signs.
- Church services will resume on Sunday mornings unless there is a dramatic outbreak. Discussion of groups, using church facilities again like, AA, Circle groups, etc.

**New Business:**

- Discussion of donations.
- A new Blackstone cooking grill was donated for multiple cooking events (worked well with the July Community meal for the Burgers).

Council M/S/P to adjourn at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Jim Jaenisch

**Pastoral Acts**

40 in person/phone pastoral visits; 1 funeral: Wendel Pieper (June 10<sup>th</sup>)

**Worship**

Drive-in services held in church parking lot for the month of June into the first week of July. Due to unpredictability of weather (rain/hot & humid) and loss of sound system decision made to discontinue services for the remainder of July

-A big thank you to Derek Bluhm for the use of his sound system

-A big thank you to Duane & Tania Jaenisch and Josh Vanderpol & Kirsten for help in setting up sounds system and trailer

-A big thank you to council for ushering

-Thank you to Darci & singers: Gary Meyer, Carissa & Addie Pederson for helping to lead worship

Drive-in service added for the month of June, possibly into July depending upon the recommendation of local health officials

Returned to in-person worship in Sanctuary June 21<sup>st</sup>

-CDC/MN Department of Health covid-19 plan placed on all church doors, and was sent out in June newsletter

Daily devotions posted daily on Immanuel Lutheran facebook page

**Education/Youth & Family**

WELCA Bible study @ PPP still on hold due to coronavirus

I have slowly started resuming out-door in person visits. Weather has not been the greatest between the heat and humidity and rain. Have sent an email to see if clergy can do outdoor visits @ nursing home, nursing home has started family visits outdoors.

Green Lake Bible Camp has posted materials for at home summer camp, will begin posting that information on Immanuel facebook page.

**Mission & Outreach**

Community meal June 7<sup>th</sup> served around 180.

Community meal July 12<sup>th</sup> served around 145.

**Wider Church**

Lakeland conference sent \$2,000 to our companion synod in South Africa to help with various needs: covid-19 response, food aid, and monies for churches as they respond to challenges of ministry and wading through the results of a disputed bishop's election.

**Pastoral Self-Care**

Will be on vacation Saturday July 17<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday July 21<sup>st</sup>

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*Our next Community meal is Sunday, August 2 from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. On the menu: Sloppy Joes, Baked beans, Sweet corn and Dessert. We will be serving to go orders in the church alley way again. Please comment on the Church's Facebook page or call the office at 320-847-2138 with the number of meals you are wanting.*

Below we have printed the **tribe's membership for September, 2020**. The chair person (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! We have been having a lot of trouble filling the few jobs we need help with each Sunday and if everyone takes one job, the 'needs' list would be filled.

Thanks!

**Tribes up for service in September 2020**

***Chairperson: Duane and Michele Shubert***

- Ross and Brenda Harms
- Duane and Tania Jaenisch family
- Brenda Kabisch family
- Glen Miller
- Gary and Deb Nelson
- Larry and Jane Niemeyer
- Al and Sharon Satre
- Duane and Michele Shubert family
- Steve Sunderland



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2020 Offerings collected for the month of July: \$3,526.00

<u>Date</u>	<u>Offering</u>
Wednesday, July 1	\$740.00
Sunday, July 5	\$450.00
Sunday, July 12	\$795.00
Sunday, July 19	\$470.00
Sunday, July 26	\$1,071.00

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**God's blessings to these couples on their special days:**

- Dave and Carol Groff 55 years on August 28
- Jim and Linda Rhode 54 years on August 21
- Keith and Sharon Harms 51 years on August 30
- Roger and Linda Wilkens 50 years on August 14
- Doug and Jayne Jarett 49 years on August 28
- Bruce and Cindy Berghuis 43 years on August 13
- Gary and Cindy Meyer 40 years on August 30
- Steve and Tammy Tammen 38 years on August 28
- Alan and Lori Petersen 37 years on August 20
- Mike and Michele Prekker 35 years on August 3
- Loren and Nancy Gosseling 35 years on August 23
- Tim and Sara Sabe 32 years on August 20



