

IMMANUEL SPEAKS
JUNE 2026



Dear friends in Christ,

Just a few days ago we celebrated Memorial Day, the unofficial/official start of summer. It is a time of transition. School is out and the kids are home for the summer. The weather is getting nicer and nicer, and it is time to have a little more fun isn't it? For many it means taking time away from work to enjoy: vacations, fishing, outdoor activities, gardening and the beauty and wonders of God's creation. After all, there are roughly 13 weeks before school starts, and the weekly grind begins again for many.

As the month of June opens, in the life of the church it is also a time of transition. We transition from the season of Easter to Pentecost. On Sunday May 24th, we heard those familiar words spoken by Jesus to the disciples, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 2:8).

As we transition into summer life we are reminded that like Jesus' original disciples, we who have been called into relationship with God have been filled with the Holy Spirit and sent to be Jesus' witnesses here in Clara City, Chippewa County, Minnesota, and to the ends of the earth. So, what exactly does that witness look like? Here is my answer. We tell God's story and our story, and we live out God's story.

First we tell our story. In Acts chapter 17 the apostle Paul is in Athens sharing the good news. As he prepares to speak to the people he takes a tour of the city and notices how religious the people of Athens are. He notices all of the different temples, shrines, and altars to different gods. Then he comes upon an altar to an unknown god. Paul then sees an opportunity. This unknown God whom the people of Athens worship Paul knows. And so what does Paul do??? He tells his story about his encounter with God to the people. He shares his story and experience of God with the people of Athens.

What does it mean to be a witness? We tell our story like the apostle Paul. We share our experience of God with others. 15 years ago, when I was in Seminary in my intro to preaching class one of the first assignments was to tell our faith story. The professor described the situation as an elevator speech. You are on an elevator with another person, and you have 30 seconds to share your faith, what would you say. It was a help exercise 15 years ago and is still helpful today as it continues to remind me that I have a story to share. And the amazing thing about the message I and we all have to share is it isn't rocket science. Like the apostle Paul we are called to simply share our experience with God so that others might come to know God's amazing love, grace, forgiveness, and compassion. We can all tell a story can't we? Then guess what, we all have an elevator speech, a story, a witness to share!

Secondly, we live God's story. So, what does that mean? I think we can answer those questions with one little yet very great and powerful word: LOVE. In John 13, on the night before Jesus was crucified he would give his disciples a new commandment; "I give you a new commandment, that you love another. Just as I have loved you, you should also love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

As Christ has loved the world to the point of and beyond death itself; we are called to follow that example. So what in the world does that look like? In Matthew 25 Jesus tells the parable of the sheep and goats and we hear the call to: feed, provide drink, welcome, clothe, care for the sick, to visit the prisoner. It is all about loving our neighbor as we love ourselves. Every night as we sit down to dinner as a family we pray the prayer "Come Lord Jesus be our guest..." But did you know there is a second verse to this common table prayer. It goes like this, "Blessed be God who is our bread; may all the world be clothed and fed." The second verse continues to remind me that we have a calling to fulfill. As our gracious God showers us abundantly with all we need for this body and life, our call is to also be generous and abundant with what we have so that all the world might have their basic needs met and know God's love for them.

My friends, we are in a time of transition: from spring to summer, from the season of Easter to the season of Pentecost. We are reminded that like those first disciples and those who have gone before us, we are called to be witnesses to God and God's amazing grace. We have a story to share in both word and deed! Go, be witnesses here in Clara City, Raymond, Maynard, and Chippewa County! Go, be witnesses at the lake or ball field. Go, be witnesses throughout Minnesota, the U.S. or wherever your summer travels may take you!

In Christ,

Pastor Joel



May 17, 2026

1. Pastoral Acts

- 24 pastoral visits

-2 baptisms (April 26th): **Natasha Nicole Koenen & Melina Marlys Koenen**

-2 weddings: (April 25th) **Nicole Kruger & Nicholas Rosin**; (May 9th) **Evan Shubert & Madyson Elliott**

2. Worship

-Clara City Care center

- April 22nd & May 6th

-Mother's Day May 10th

-Flowers order for the women of the congregation. Reception following worship: Carmel rolls, scrambled eggs & a flower project/gift for women.

-May 17th graduate recognition

-God's blessings and congrats to Breanna Dirksen, Sam Miller, & Peyton Schlagel on your graduation! Reception to follow worship.

3. Education/Youth

-Sunday School

-Singing in church on Mother's Day, May 10th

-Last day of Sunday School May 17th

-VBS scheduled for Sunday June 14th to Wednesday June 17th

-Sing up to attend or volunteer using a QR code or on the church's Facebook page.

-Confirmation/Youth

-Completed the sacraments and our church history/catechism year on April 15th

-7th-12th grade outing to ropes course in Henderson & the big candy store on June 24th

-Cost is \$65, youth fund will cover the rest. Text or call Trista or Rachel if interested.

4. Mission & Outreach

- community meal May 3rd: Pasture a plenty hotdogs, coleslaw, chips, and cake.
- Blessing box: donations always appreciated. Normally fill it 1 to 2 times per week.
- Met with Paul Hanson, Director of Development at Green Lake about capital campaign.

5. Continuing Education/Pastoral Self-Care

- Powers & Boundaries workshop May 5th.
- Continuing ed May 14th in St. Cloud
- Vacation Sunday May 10th (Gary will lead) & May 24th (Addisyn will lead)
- Synod Assembly June 5th-6th

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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR JUNE

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| Sunday, June 7 | Acolyte/PowerPoint: Lay Reader: Altar Guild: | Orion Day Gary Meyer LuAnn Kruger |
| Sunday, June 14 | Acolyte/PowerPoint: Lay Reader: Altar Guild: | Landon Emkes Laine Rieger Ann Hovda |
| Sunday, June 21 | Acolyte/PowerPoint: Lay Reader: Altar Guild: | Jana Rand Cindy Meyer Kathy Speiser |
| Sunday, June 28 | Acolyte/PowerPoint: Lay Reader: Altar Guild: | Tia Schwitters Michele Shubert Sara Sabe |

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TRIBE UP FOR JULY
MANNASSEH TRIBE

Below we have printed the Tribe Membership for July 2026. The chairperson will be calling you in the near future, asking you to help serve Immanuel in some way. Start thinking today what you and your family can help with. If everyone takes one job, the “needs” list will be filled. Thank you!

Cody and Trista Rand Family
Dan and Traci Miller Family
Marvin and Judi Boike
Jim and Lori Schmaedeka
Josh and Cindy VanDerPol – Tribe Leaders
Steve and Tammy Tammen
Janyce Mittag
Bryce and Ann Orwick
Norman and Linda Andresen
Loren Gosseling

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OPEN RADIO BROADCASTS FOR 2026

We have many open radio broadcasts for the year 2026. 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 \$110.00 for each broadcast. The following dates are open:

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

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*Happy
Father's
Day!*

FATHER'S DAY IS SUNDAY, JUNE 21ST!

We will be celebrating all father's at Immanuel on Father's Day! We will have a special gift for each of you! Psalm 32:8: I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My loving eye on you.

TREASURER NOTES FOR 2026

2026 General Fund Budget: \$253,150

2026 General Fund Income Needed as of 4/30/2026: \$175,059

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COMMUNITY MEAL
SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 5:00-6:00 P.M.

The Community Meal is Sunday, June 7th from 5:00-6:00 p.m. The menu is: Chicken breast, with sides and dessert. We will be serving to go meals in the alley way and in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign up on our Facebook page or call the church office at 847-2138, with the number of meals you will need.

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A THANK YOU NOTE FROM ANN HOVDA

Dear Church Family,

I feel the need to tell each and every one of you a special thank you for thinking of me during my recent illness. It took our family by surprise. I have lost the ability to remember who did what during this time, so it is with this note, I thank you for cards, calls, texts, spending the night with me, drives to ER, Urgent Care, getting my car back home, food, visits, and all the prayers that I felt each day. Not to mention the kindness shown to my girls, Kristina and Katherine. It is humbling to know that so many care. I know I will never, ever forget it. I still grieve David but feeling the warmth from all of you helps to bear the burden.

Fondly,
Ann Hovda



**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN
CHURCH OF CLARA CITY
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

**JUNE 14TH-17TH
5:45PM - 7:00PM**

Light Supper 5:15pm-5:45pm



Register by scanning
the QR codes provided
or by going to
Immanuel Lutheran
Church facebook page



ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT
RACHEL AT 952-237-2831

Watch for details on Immanuel's Facebook page or in the church bulletin.

June 2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|---|----------|--------|----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 9:00 Worship/Comm 5:00-6:00 Community Meal | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 9:00 Worship/Comm 5:15 Light Supper 5:45-7:00 Vacation Bible School | 15 5:15 Light Supper 5:45-7:00 Vacation Bible School | 16 5:15 Light Supper 5:45-7:00 Vacation Bible School | 17 5:15 Light Supper 5:45-7:00 Vacation Bible School | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 9:00 Worship/Communion Happy Father's Day! 10:00 Church Council Meeting | 22 | 23 | 24 2:00-3:30 Coffee for Gals | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 9:00 Worship/Communion | 29 | 30 | | | | |
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