

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH - OSHKOSH

LAMPLIGHTER

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.” Psalm 119

Pastor John E. Seelman - Cell (920)495-3259 Office (920) 233-1379

immanuel-oshkosh.org

November 2020

“The Lord is my strength and my shield. In him my heart trusts, and I am helped. My heart also celebrates. With my song I will give thanks to him.” Psalm 28:7

Twenty seven years ago was a special Thanksgiving Day. After a delicious dinner, I left for work around 5:30. I was about two hours into my shift when I received a somewhat frantic call from home. I was about to be blessed with another child. Although I was assured that all was well when I left, my little “turkey” was about to be born. This year is even more special because his birthday coincides with Thanksgiving Day. Each year I give thanks, not just for him, but for all four children that I’ve been blessed with. In addition, I am blessed with two daughters-in-law and I have two beautiful little grandsons.

Perhaps you’re wondering how long I’m going to ramble on about me and my family? Maybe I can go on to tell you that my oldest is a doctor. That my youngest is a Marine. That my only daughter decided to become a member of the US Navy, studying in their nuclear program, and that my little turkey is joining the US Navy in January. Am I bragging? Only in that the Lord has richly blessed me and my family. I would love to take the credit, but that would be absolutely insane.

This year I’ve probably heard more complaining than any other year of my life, without a doubt. It seems so easy to spot all the things that have had a negative impact on our lives. What I need to remember is two things. First, EVERYONE has had to deal with this pandemic, in one way or another. Secondly, if I think that I’ve got control of my life (and the lives of others) I will ALWAYS be miserable.

What I need to focus on isn’t me. If I want to find joy in my life, I have to look to my Lord. It’s okay to recognize and rejoice in my earthly blessings, but my true joy is only going to be found in the one who is my strength. He is the only thing, the only one that I can trust in. That’s what the Psalmist expressed in our verse for this month. I will give thanks to him - for all his goodness to me. Yes, even those situations which I deem to be negative, are urging me to constantly look to him for his help.

Regardless of how this year ends, may we always look to the one who NEVER stops blessing me. He protects me day in and day out, until that blessed day when he calls me home. I pray that your heart celebrates in all his goodness and gives thanks every day.

~Pastor

COVID-19 IMMANUEL GUIDELINES

Out of love toward our Lord and all people, the members of Immanuel Lutheran Church offer the following guidelines for November during the current Covid19 pandemic:

Worship - We will continue to have only one Service at 9:00 a.m. Please continue to sign-up if you plan to attend. This is especially important on communion Sundays. If you have a change in plans or forgot, you will not be turned away. You are welcome to worship BUT only those who signed up or notified Pastor will be able to receive communion. Masks and social distancing will be required until Governor Evers lifts this mandate.

Communion - Pastor must know by 8:00 a.m. each communion Sunday how many want to receive communion. If you cannot sign up, you can call or text the church or Pastor. This is so we have an accurate amount of wine and wafers set up and do not waste by setting up too much. The left over wine and wafers have to be disposed of. Pastor will serve the Lord's Supper and will wear a mask and give instructions each time.

Entry and dismissal - You may use either entrance. You will be welcomed by a greeter and be seated by another greeter so that seating will be spaced appropriately for social distancing. Greeters will be volunteers and do not necessarily need to be ushers. After the Service, Pastor will greet and dismiss each row of pews, one at a time, starting at the front. If you need to speak with Pastor, please do so after everyone has been dismissed. Please maintain social distancing as you congregate after church. If weather is nice, you many want to gather outside.

Social distancing - To maintain safe distancing, in accordance with CDC recommendations, all attendees are responsible to be careful. Out of love and respect for all, please make every effort to allow 6 feet between individuals whenever possible.

Sanitation - All commonly touched areas will continue to be properly sanitized. Door handles, bathroom surfaces, tops of the pews etcetera, will be a priority. Unless there is an objection, we will continue to sing during the service, but will have decreased verses. However, alternatives are being considered. Hand sanitizer will be available as you enter or leave the building.

Improvement - During this time, we want those who are worshipping to feel safe. If any member has a request or comment, please do so in person at the monthly sanitation and safety meeting. The next meeting will be held on **November 17, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.** You may also approach any council member, however, it may cause a delay, as the council only meets monthly and the meeting may be scheduled after the sanitation meeting.

Finally, these are recommendations that have been compiled at the current time. There will be modifications as matters progress in the coming weeks and months. Consideration was made with several factors in mind - CDC guidelines for houses of worship, common practice within the WELS, and Paul's encouragement to all children of God, that we treat each other with kindness, compassion and humility at all times.

Respectfully,
Jim Daubert, Ann Gosdeck, Dave Leatherman, Beverly Neumann and Judy Zarter



LADIES' GUILD

Our Mission collection continues through October. Collected funds will be used exclusively for some or all of: Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Student Financial Aid, WELS Martin Luther College Student Financial Aid, Board for Home Missions, P.A.L.S. Apache Learning, Christian Aid Relief, WLA Student Financial Aid and Central Africa Medical Missions. Mission Offering envelopes are available on the sign-up table in our Fellowship Hall for anyone wishing to donate to these charities.

Ladies' Guild will be selling Christmas cookies again this year. Anyone interested in donating cookies please sign-up by December 6 so we have an idea of how many cookies we will have available to box up. The cookies should be brought to our church kitchen on Saturday, December 19.

Our plan is to share the cookies with our homebound members. We will be delivering packages directly to all of Immanuel's shut-ins. Also, anyone who would like to purchase cookies, please sign-up indicating the number of boxes you would like. Each box will be \$5.00. All cookies are homemade. They will be available in our church Fellowship Hall on Sunday, December 20 before and after Worship Service.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

We will be holding our annual Congregational Meeting on December 13, after the church service. We will be careful to maintain social distancing and we will spread out to accommodate all those attending. There will be three items on the agenda that should cover most of the business that needs to be discussed. If there are any other areas of concern, please notify either Randy Montgomery or Pastor Seelman BEFORE December 5, so that an accurate agenda is presented on December 6.

1. A recommendation that the current council remain in office for the year 2021
 - This recommendation was made by the church council to avoid added time to the meeting
2. An attached budget that has been recommended by the budget committee
 - This was developed by: Randy Montgomery, Luke Mittelstaedt, Tim Krause, Pastor Seelman, Ruth Reiter and Darlene Zepczyk.
3. A possible project (attached) that would address our sound/music needs for the future
 - This is a compilation of suggestions from congregation members



CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Our Immanuel records indicate we have one sixth grader and one seventh grader for the 2020-2021 school year. Pastor will be working with the two families on a schedule to get an introduction to the catechism.

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS FOR PRAISING

OUR LORD WITH MUSIC:

These suggestions have been brought forward by members for the congregation to consider. They are not cast in stone. They are being presented for the reasons that will be explained.

1. A replacement of our current sound system

- Recently there has been feedback while using the portable microphones that has rendered them unusable
- We have only been able to use the pulpit microphone to record our services
- The system is quite outdated
- A new system would serve the congregation well into the future
- Replacement would also provide new speakers which would provide sound from the front and back

2. A replacement for our keyboard

- The current keyboard is aging
- Lengthy discussion has already taken place concerning replacing the organ
- New keyboards have expanded sound capabilities
- It could be placed where the old organ is, thus freeing up space in front of church

3. A replacement for the Carillon system (the system that provided outdoor music / bell ringing)

- The carillon system stopped working about two years ago due to age. According to the company that produces them, it is irreparable
- New systems use digitally produced sound, with 1,000's of musical selections built in
- The system would have advanced capabilities for both outdoor and indoor use

4. Financing / Possible funding

- Improvement fund: \$33,241.57
- Coca Cola Stock: \$27,294.81
- Organ fund: \$40,287.41
- Member donations

The hope is that members will consider these items and bring positive thoughts and ideas to the annual meeting. At that time, we will determine if estimates need to be sought for each of the items for future consideration.

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

President's Message...

I started a new job last month. It's not easy being on the front lines of education with a virus running through our country. Teaching with COVID protocols in place is challenging. Then I think of all our called workers who are busy doing the work of the Lord at this challenging time too. Teachers, pastors and missionaries have to come up with new ways to reach out to people who want to socially distance. Masks are an everyday sight in schools, grocery stores, and at soccer games as well as at church.

Pastors who were "old school" have gotten on board with technology in order to spread the Gospel online. Things around us have changed. "The times, they are a changing" says an old '60s song. But we are blessed with a God who does not change.

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows." says James 1:17. Our God is solid and changeless. In these changing, challenging times, let that thought comfort you. Let it inspire you to carry on the essential work of sharing the message of Jesus and supporting the work of our missionaries across the globe. Blessings to you all,

Cynthia Natsis, LWMS President

CHOIR NEWS

The Coronavirus certainly has changed life for all of us. Seems like masks and distancing is just the new norm. As much as I would love to start practicing with the choir, until masks and distancing is NOT required, choir will not resume. However, if anyone would like to contribute to our service through song (masks required of course) either in a duet, quartet or solo....please let me know. I can be reached through email at marjean42@msn.com, or via phone & text at 920-216-1246.

Colossians 3:16, KJV:

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.



LOOKING AHEAD.....

Our Thanksgiving service will be held Wednesday, November 25th at **6:00 p.m.**

This "Thanksgiving Eve" service should help to accommodate those that are not available or too busy on Thanksgiving morning to attend worship service.

This year's Advent theme will be:

What *Would Christmas be without...*

A Tree	Midweek #1 -December 2
Gifts	Midweek #2 -December 9
Angel	Midweek #3 -December 16
Songs	Midweek #4 -December 23
Guests	Christmas Eve
A Feast	Christmas Day

Advent Services will be at **6:00 p.m.** Plan to join us as we prepare our hearts and souls for Christmas!

Our Christmas Eve Service is scheduled for Thursday, December 24 at **4:00 p.m.** This will be a song and celebration service.

Christmas Day Service is scheduled for Christmas morning at **9:00 a.m.**



Please mark your calendars of these upcoming opportunities and plan to join us for these special worship services. As always, your feedback is welcome and appreciated.

REPORT OF OFFERINGS

OCTOBER 1 - OCTOBER 31

General Offering	\$7,268.00
Missions	\$590.00
Improve/Maint. Fund	\$10.00
Total	\$7,868.00



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS
ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1.

Don't forget

to turn your clocks back before going to
bed on Saturday, October 31.

COUNCIL CORNER...

(FROM OCTOBER 21, 2020 MEETING)

- Our church office now has a new computer system and software. Also, we have a new phone (same phone number).
- Church Council will be pursuing a church credit card for uses exclusively for purchases needed for our church operation such as office supplies, monthly church phone carrier service, janitorial supplies, yard maintenance, etc.
- Sound system needs replacing.
- Church back door needs new lock set.
- Congregational Meeting is planned for December 13.
- Marge and Marjean have offered to play organ/keyboard (once each) per month. It is wonderful to hear them again.
- Our Budget Team will meet Wednesday, October 28 to start addressing a financial forecast for 2021.
- Thanksgiving Service will be Wednesday, November 25 at **6:00 p.m.**
- Four Advent Services will be held in December, but there are no plans at this time for soup suppers.
- Next Church Council meeting is Wednesday, November 18 at 5:30 p.m.

STEWARDSHIP

Date	Attendance	Communion	Tuesday Bible Study	Total Offerings
Oct. 4	26	n/a	5	\$1,247.00
Oct. 11	32	30	n/a	\$1,762.00
Oct. 18	33	n/a	6	\$3,422.00
Oct. 25	27	27	7	\$1,437.00

IMMANUEL
Lutheran Church

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November
NEWSLETTER

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