

**NEWSLETTER OF IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, VIROQUA, WI
APRIL, 2011**

**...where in Jesus Christ, God gathers all generations to serve in,
witness to, and pray for our church, our community, and the world.**

PASTOR'S COLUMN

***What wondrous love is this, oh my soul...
that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the
dreadful curse for my soul!***

When we sang this beautiful old song at worship today, I was reminded why we gather to worship our great God, why we observe each Lent, why we dedicate our lives to the service of the One who poured his life out for us. As a newer hymn sings of life in the church, ***Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace; here are table, font and pulpit; here the cross has central place.*** The cross is indeed in the center, especially during Lent. But our journey to the cross doesn't leave us at that place of anguish and sorrow; it reminds us of the grace which we need and the forgiveness which is granted to repentant hearts. We lay our burdens down beneath it and then are freed to move on in peace and joy, no matter what else is going on in our lives.

This is the journey we continue for the rest of the month of April. We keep our Lent and then gather during Holy Week for prayer and worship in the days that lead us to Easter on April 24th. We gaze at the cross and remember the amazing and wondrous love shown there. And then we arise in new joy, the joy of every Easter, and are strengthened and freed again to serve in Christ's name.

Make time for this journey, make room in your heart so that Easter arrives full of its life-giving meaning again for you this year. Join your church family at worship and in fellowship and prayer and learning and giving and serving! Rejoice in the beauty of spring and in all of God's gifts of new life. Thanks to all those who help to make this season in the church year a most meaningful time!

~ Pastor Kathy

**PLEASE MAKE CAREFUL NOTE OF THESE
TWO ITEMS THAT FOLLOW!!!**

PROPERTY PRIORITIES

The council is working hard to develop an effective approach to our property needs. Some members of the property committee met recently and surveyed the building, and several work days are being planned to tackle specific tasks. The first of those days is planned for Saturday, April 16th from 8 am – noon (or longer, if possible). If the weather isn't sufficiently warm and dry, we will work mainly inside. When you see or hear of a list of projects being posted, PLEASE consider volunteering some time to help and sign up for tasks you can do! This saves money when we do our own work rather than hiring it out, and builds a sense of community and ownership in our congregation.

BUDGET UPDATE

Now that we have a newly adopted budget, to stay on track with our expenses it is helpful to receive an average of \$4,121 per Sunday. As of March 28th, 2011 we have received \$41,404 of \$53,573 needed (giving is at 77% of what we need to fully fund our budget). We would need an additional \$12,169 at this point to meet all of our budgeted obligations - which would mean becoming current on benevolence and our line of credit payments. We adopted a challenging budget at our annual meeting, and we need to work to meet it together. Thank you for your faithful giving!

Envelopes will be available to be picked up through Easter in the entryway of the church, and after that will be sent to you if you haven't received yours already. If you no longer wish to receive envelopes (no longer are a member of Immanuel or have joined another congregation) please let us know!

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY DIRECTOR

I'm beginning to realize more and more just how connected youth ministry and family ministry are. As I have continued to read, listen, learn, and grow in my role here, I have continued to look at how faith development happens with youth. Is it providing quality programs at the church for youth? Is it developing quality relationships between youth and Christian adults? Is it equipping families to bring the faith home? It is all of those and more.

I think the church as a whole sometimes forgets that last one; equipping families to bring the faith home. Youth directors, pastors, and volunteers often get so caught up in programming for the youth that we forget to check in with the families. Faith development really starts at home. Children learning from parents, grandparents, godparents, and the rest of the family AND those adults learning from the children.

My goal moving forward is to bring more of that focus to our ministry here. I want to equip our families at Immanuel to take the faith home; to talk about faith, God, the Bible, and life as a Christian. I encourage you to think about faith life of your family. Let's work together to develop faith in our youth AND adults.

God's Peace,
~Ben

Equipping Households of Faith

In May, we will be studying at a new educational DVD series called "Equipping Households of Faith." The series explores our belief that home is the primary place for nurturing and passing on the faith. It will engage and equip participants through presenter's stories, Biblical references, and practical how-to's. We will try several different formats to make this available to as many people as possible. This series is beneficial not just for parents, but grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, etc... More information about dates and times will come soon!

CONREGATIONAL PRAYERS

Please remember that when you receive a letter about being in the prayers in a certain week at worship, it is being done to include you and your family that week as part of our congregation. It is not meant to offend anyone, but to strengthen our connections with one another.

If you share a name for our prayer list in the bulletin, please keep the office or Pastor Kathy aware of how long to continue those prayers and when and if someone's name should be removed.

APRIL LENTEN & EASTER SCHEDULE

- 6th- 6:30 pm Holden Evening Prayer Worship
- 10th - Praise Band leads 8:30 am worship; more traditional worship at 11 am
- 13th- 6:30 pm Holden Evening Prayer Worship
- 17th- Palm Sunday; Bishop Arends joins us
- 21st- 6:30 pm Maundy Thursday Worship with Holy Communion
- 22nd- 6:30 pm Good Friday Worship
- 24th- 6:30, 8:30 & 10:30 am Easter Worship with Holy Communion. Easter Breakfast at 7:30 am and continuing through the morning

MAUNDY THURSDAY: Plans are to have a meal which will help us commemorate the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples, including Holy Communion – perhaps in the fellowship hall - and then move to the sanctuary to strip the altar for Good Friday.

GOOD FRIDAY: Our "Tenebrae" service (meaning "the approaching darkness") last year was well-received. A similar service might be in the works for this year if we have enough participants!

USHERS FOR APRIL

- 3rd- 8:30 am- John & Sandy Nelson
11:00 am-Karen Laabs
- 10th-8:30 am- Pete & Kari Amrhein
11:00 am- Roger & Judy Munson
- 17th-8:30 am- Linda Reynolds & Judy Munson
11:00 am- Gary & Judy Gilbertson
- 24th- 6:30 am-Harold & Alice Olson
8:30 am- Tim & Vickie Van Blarcom
11:00 am- Eric & Beth Vold

APRIL READERS/WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

- 3rd- 8:30 am- Tim Lee
11:00 am-Tom Weston
- 10th-8:30 am- Trudy Wallin
11:00 am- OPEN
- 17th-8:30 am- Wayne Sherry
11:00 am- Erma Erickson
- 24th- 6:30 am-Tim Lee
8:30 am- Deb Clark
10:30 am- OPEN

FELLOWSHIP SERVERS FOR APRIL

- 3rd, 10th & 17th- OPEN
- 24th- 7:30 am Easter Breakfast



APRIL ACOLYTES

3rd- 8:30 am-Collin Mastin
11:00 am-Jessica Schmidt
10th-8:30 am- Gillian Schultz
11:00 am- Andrea Weston
17th-8:30 am- Jacob Van Blarcom
11:00 am- Dalton Burckhardt
24th- 6:30 am- TBA
8:30 am- Alexis La Mere
10:30 am- Jared Runice

PRAYER VIGIL!

We will again be holding a prayer vigil on Wednesday, April 20th starting at 7 am and going through 7 am on Thursday morning the 21st to usher in Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter. This year (which is the 5th year we are doing this!) there will be several stations around the church for those of you who want to move around a bit more, as well as the traditional setting in the sanctuary of a comfy chair, reading lamp, music, devotional material, and candles. One new feature we hope to have will be a prayer labyrinth to walk in the fellowship hall before, during, or after your chosen time. Please join in this wonderful time of quiet meditation and prayer – this is truly one of the best events we hold all year!

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

The Immanuel Lutheran Church Council met on February 21, 2011 at 6:30 PM. Members present were Karin Iverson, Sandra Favor, Becky Baumgartner, Derek Dregne, Mark Solverson, Vickie Van Blarcom, Ben Natzke, and Pastor Kathy. The meeting was called to order by Vice President Karin Iverson. Devotions and prayer were led by Pastor Kathy. The minutes of the January, 2011 meeting were presented. Motion to approve by Vickie, seconded by Karin. Motion carried. Treasurer's Report was presented in print. A financial report from Chentel was reviewed. The checking account balance was lower than usual due to reduced offerings on the snowy Sunday that 2nd service was canceled. The 2010 books were audited by Ed Achenbach and Marlene Favor, and everything was in order. Motion to approve by Pastor Kathy, seconded by Vickie. Motion carried. Motion by Vickie, seconded by Mark to elect Karin Iverson as President. Motion carried. Motion by Karin, seconded by Sandy to elect Vickie Van Blarcom as Vice President. Motion carried. Motion by Karin, seconded by Sandy to elect Erma Erickson as Treasurer. This will be based on her acceptance of the position. Motion carried. Motion by Vickie, seconded by Karin to elect Konna Spaeth as Secretary. Motion carried.

Pastor Kathy presented her report. In January she had the regular worship services, one funeral, twenty-eight visitations, youth meetings and the South Conference. She also had a communion service at apartments and a service at Vernon Manor. The other item discussed was that Pastor Kathy is looking at information on sabbaticals and the use of the money that is in the fund right now.

Youth and Family report was presented by Ben Natzke. He worked between 30 and 35 hours per week in the month of January, continuing work with the 5th & 6th grade confirmation class. Dedicating more time into contact with youth through Facebook and after-school events, and working on getting high school students involved in your ministry. Fundraising for the 2012 National Youth gathering, attending South Conference meeting and Peer Ministry Training Workshop, a Sugar Creek event, and setting up the Lenten resource material fair.

COMMITTEES

Our listing of committees, task forces, and interest groups is almost completed for this year. The final listing will be posted on the welcome board. If you have a particular area in which you would like to serve, please contact the church office for more information! Meetings have taken place or are being scheduled in the near future for most of these groups.

THRIVENT CHOICE

Those of you who are Thrivent Financial for Lutheran members (who have policies or investments with Thrivent) – if and when you are given the opportunity this year to designate recipients of your Thrivent Choice dollars, please consider Immanuel Lutheran! Also you have the option of making an automatic yearly donation to the place of your choice. Thanks!

MEMORIALS FOR MARCH

Undesignated:

Gail Kyser	\$25
Helen Endicott	\$10
William Ilstrup	\$950
Caroline Hanson	\$10

Special Projects:

William Ilstrup	\$20
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TOTAL	\$1,015
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IMMANUEL SALAD LUNCHEON

April 6th from 11 am until 1 pm. Enjoy many hot and cold salads drinks and desserts for \$5.50. Gluten and lactose-free options will be available. Everyone is welcome to attend!

CIRCLE NOTE

Circles will be meeting on Tuesday, April 12th Ruth at 9 am and Martha at 7 pm.

QUILTERS NOTE

Quilters will be meeting in April on the 5st & 19th at 9 am.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club will be meeting on Monday, April 4th at 6:30 pm. This month's book is "I Remember Nothing" by Nora Ephron. May's book will be "Day After Night" by Anita Diamant.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School meets all Sundays in April at 9:45 am except Easter Sunday the 24th. The 17th will be a craft day! 3rd-6th sing April 10th at 8:30 am.

GOD'S CAPPUCINOS AFTER SCHOOL GROUP

5th and 6th graders will meet right after school until 4:30 pm on all Wednesdays in April except the 20th.

CONFIRMATION

7th/8th & 9th grade confirmation will be meeting on all Wednesdays in April except April 20th at 4:30 pm for the 7th and 8th graders and 5:30 pm for the 9th graders. On April 20th, students and families are encouraged to join in the prayer vigil taking place all day and night.

CHOIR NEWS

The Immanuel choir will rehearse on Wednesdays, April 6th and 13th at 7:15 pm. Choir sings April 3rd at 11 am- "Amazing Grace"; April 17th at both services- "Hosanna"; and April 24th, Easter Sunday at the 8:30 am- "Lord of the Dance".

CALLING ALL GARDENERS

Are you a gardener? Are you interested in helping grow food for a local food shelf? People are needed to plant, grow and/or harvest food this summer for distribution at our local food shelves, particularly potatoes, onions, and carrots. There will be a meeting in the fellowship hall on Sunday, April 10th 10 a.m. or contact Thom Hunt at 637-3010 or thomhunt@frontiernet.net.

Gardeners are also needed – FIVE, to be exact - if we are going to hold a *second* annual Garden Walk this summer. Please contact the church office or Lisa Andresen if you have a garden to share with the community!



PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Please check out the Body-Mind-Spirit bulletin board which is on your right as you head up the hall to the sanctuary. Along with information from our parish nurse, there is information about events in the community meant to promote health and physical fitness (like the triathlon and the community bike ride) as well as Immanuel events (like the GO! Challenge which several of us are doing during Lent). There will be Bigley Pool schedule posted there, and Beth Lee is willing to gather a walking group for anyone interested.

If you serve fellowship or a meal at Immanuel, it is much appreciated if you keep in mind those who are diabetic as well as lactose and gluten sensitive.

WESTBY COON PRAIRIE SALAD LUNCHEON

Thursday, April 14th from 11 am-1 pm. All are welcome to attend! Tickets may be purchased at the door for \$6. Children 4-12-\$3 and 3 and under are free.

BETHEL HOME SALAD LUNCHEON

At Good Shepherd Lutheran Church on Tuesday, April 26th from 11 am-1 pm \$5 per person. Proceeds will go to purchase chairs for Maplewood Terrace and Bethel Home.

YESTERDAY'S YOUTH

April 4th from 9 am until 2:30 pm at Sugar Creek Bible Camp. Coffee & rolls, Thrivent speaker, "Gorilla Trekking in Rwanda" by Cindy Berg, Lunch and Dr. Seuss Dramatic Story Reading. The cost is \$8 for the entire day!

FORTNEY HOTEL MEAL

Thanks for all of the food donations for the Fortney Hotel Meal last month. Also, thank you to the high school youth for being in charge! Our next time will be on May 8th- watch for the sign-up sheet.

BLUEGRASS & GOSPEL FUNDRAISER

This event will be held at the Viroqua United Methodist Church on Saturday, April 9th from 3-6 pm. Good music - and chili! Free-will offering. Come and get a "taste" of the bigger summer event in July!

A CONTINUING REQUEST....

Please update your address and phone number, and cell phone number and e-mail if they can be used for church communications. We are working to streamline our connections with members, and updated information really helps!