

NEWSLETTER OF IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

VIROQUA, WI November, 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

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God... For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than live in the tents of wickedness. (from Psalm 84)

This psalm inspired a song we just sang last Sunday under the leadership of Ps150, "Better Is One Day." I have been doing some research into the Scripture sources for the songs the band is leading so that we learn the Bible better as well as the songs themselves. This psalm has an interesting line that isn't actually in the song – the part about being "a doorkeeper in the house of God rather than living in tents of wickedness." The psalmist knew even way back then about the challenge of staying away from temptation, and that serving God could help keep one on the straight and narrow path.

Serving God as an alternative to sin – a pretty good idea, right? As we approach the holiday season, I hear more and more voices seeking to be servants to others rather than just focusing on getting things for themselves and their families. *Pastor, I'd like to donate a holiday meal for a family in need...we can't wait to host our potato supper so that we can raise the money for our Christmas giving project....our family loves to serve at the community Thanksgiving meal, sign us up... we would like to donate our family Christmas money to those who need gifts.*

My heart rejoices when I have such conversations! This is one of the joys of being a part of a community of faith, of challenging one another to do what is good and not just stay away from or complain about the bad. People of faith who serve God and others, who are servant "doorkeepers in God's house" and spend their time doing so instead of pursuing the false idols of this world, know an abundant life that only a life centered in God can bring.

During November and December, I encourage you to look for ways to be a servant, to give away, to pay forward kindness shown to you. We will have opportunities to give gifts to combat world hunger and to feed the hungry in our own community. Know the joy of being in the courts of the Lord in worship and then serving the Lord out in the world around you!

A blessed Thanksgiving season to you –
Pastor Kathy Ingbritsen

BUDGET UPDATE

To stay on track with our expenses it is helpful to receive an average of \$4,121 per Sunday. As of October 24^h, 2011 we have received \$145,241 of \$177,203 needed (giving is at **82%** of what we need to fully fund our budget, which would mean becoming current with our benevolences & paying on our line of credit). We need to meet the challenge to raise that percentage higher this fall!

Thank you for your faithful giving for all the great ministry you support with your gifts!

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOUR GIFTS HELP TO MAKE OUR MINISTRY HAPPEN, THROUGH THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT! YOU SUPPORT OUR STAFF, OUR EDUCATIONAL AND YOUTH MINISTRIES, OUR OUTREACH, OUR MINISTRY IN TIMES OF CRISIS, THE SPACE IN WHICH WE CARRY OUT GOD'S WORK, AND SO MUCH MORE....

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Greetings Immanuel!

Two exciting Christian artists for you this month! The first is a group called The Afters. This group got its start (as many great things do) because of Starbucks! The two originators met while working at a Starbucks in Texas in 1999, and after a series of coffee house show, name changes, and personal strife, they are now becoming well known in the Christian music world. Their current top 10 song is called "Lift Me Up". It is a great about God's healing and comforting power. Check it out on youtube!

The second artist is Chris Tomlin. Many of the songs Ps150 plays or will play are a direct result of Chris Tomlin's work. Many of us *average* male singers harbor a strong jealousy of Tomlin's high vocal range. But don't worry; we bring those songs down when we sing them in church! In the next few months, Ps150 will introduce one of his more recent songs called "Our God". I encourage you to check that one out on youtube as well. And then you can scroll down the side to listen to more of his seemingly endless list of songs!

Happy Listening!
~Ben

NEW FAITH FORMATION TEAM!!!

What does a vibrant and mature faith look like?

- Head: Knowledge of grace, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, elements of worship, and other important faith teachings.
- Heart: Positive, faith-supporting relationships with peers, family, and congregational members.
- Hand: Faith lived daily through service to our neighbors (far and near) and God's creation. An understanding that service is our opportunity to love God back.
- Holiness: Personal faith practices that keep us mindful of God's presence in our daily lives.

Research in youth and family ministry over the past 20 years has looked at important factors in youth faith formation. The primary theme is this: vibrant and mature faith is developed when the church (congregation and staff) and home partner together in ministry. A new Faith Formation Team at Immanuel is being developed to explore how we can take that concept and apply it to our ministry here. What are our goals for the faith lives of our youth? How do we as a church and congregation partner with families to equip households of faith? How do we encourage one another at every stage and situation in life to grow in faith? Look for more news to come from this group as we continue to work towards a ministry that will develop an even more vibrant and mature faith in all the lives we touch here at Immanuel. Please pray for the team as we develop and evaluate our ministry.

NOVEMBER WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

November 6th: All Saints Sunday; we light candles and name those members and friends of Immanuel for whom we have provided the service at their time of death; and we will gather at the Lord's table and remember our eternal connection with those who have gone before us. (We also receive an additional offering to catch-up on our giving for the year!) Ps150 at late service, 1st-6th grades sing.

November 13th: Worship with communion; senior choir sings at early service.

November 20th: Christ the King/Last Sunday of the church year; Ps150 leads at early service.

November 23rd (Wednesday): Immanuel is hosting the community Thanksgiving service at 7 pm. Our senior choir will sing.

November 27th: Advent begins!

November 30th (Wednesday): Our first midweek Advent service at 6:30 pm.

USHERS FOR NOVEMBER

8:30 am: 6th- Paul & Laura Schmidt
(Daylight Savings time ends)

13th- Paul & Laura Schmidt

20th-John & Sandy Nelson

27th- John & Sandy Nelson

11 am all month

- Gary and Judy Gilbertson

NOVEMBER READERS/WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

6th - 8:30 am- Danelle Weston
11am- OPEN

(Daylight Savings time ends)

13th-8:30 am- Deb Clark
11am- OPEN

20th-8:30 am- Karen Laabs
11am- Karen Laabs

27th-8:30 am- John Nelson
11am- OPEN

NOVEMBER ACOLYTES

6th - 8:30 am- Kelsey Achenbach
11am- Christopher Amrhein
(Daylight Savings time ends)

13th-8:30 am- Nicole Achenbach
11am- Olivia Amrhein

20th-8:30 am- Jennifer Brendel
11am- Zach Drake

27th-8:30 am- Hunter Kyser
11 am- Collin Mastin

NOVEMBER FELLOWSHIP SERVERS

All Sundays except the 6th are available to serve in November! On the 6th we will have our annual council-served breakfast in conjunction with "Catch-up Sunday" (an opportunity to catch up on our yearly giving) and a session of intergenerational learning about Ethiopia.

BIBLE STUDY ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

It is time to get started! We will meet in the library on October 31st starting at 9:50 am and discuss a challenge to read through the Bible in a year between the beginning of Advent 2011 and 2012. We will also decide what we want to study for the rest of the school year. Our intergenerational Sunday School presentation will take place on November 6th between services, where we can eat a light breakfast and listen to a presentation about Ethiopia from Jeremy & Sarah Mosley and Micah. We will begin our own study on November 13th.

OTHER NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS....

BAKED POTATO DINNER

We will be holding our annual Baked Potato Dinner on Wednesday, November 2nd from 4:30 -6:30 pm. Come & enjoy a baked potato just the way you like it! (cheese, veggies, ham, sour cream, bacon bits, butter), lettuce salad, dinner roll, dessert, milk & coffee. The Cost will be \$5/ person, max \$20/ family. Carry outs Available! The 7th, 8th, & 9th grade confirmation class will be serving this year's Baked Potato Dinner! Proceeds will go towards our Christmas Service Project of providing gifts for needy families.

SOUP SUPPER

We will be having our annual soup supper on Wednesday, November 16th from 6-8 pm. This is a chance to enjoy delicious soups from congregation members. Free will offering and all are invited to attend! Please call or email the church office if you would like to donate a soup. 637-3983 or office@immanuel-lc.org

SILENT AUCTION

Our annual silent auction is set to begin Sunday, November 20th at 8 am. Donations may be dropped off in the church office. Thanks! The auction will continue through the morning of December 4th. Proceeds will go to debt reduction and Thrivent Choice funds will also be applied!

LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

Do you remember gaining the skills to walk? How do McDonald's and Disney "catch" our kids so young? What does it take to raise a faith filled child? The answers to these three questions helps explain why birth to 3 faith formation is an essential ministry.

"Let the Children Come to Me" is a workshop that will help to explore the importance of birth to 3 ministry and give some thoughts about how to do it. The workshop is on Saturday, November 19 at First Lutheran, Onalaska. The cost is \$50 for 1 person; \$25 for 2, and FREE for 3. Registration is at 8 am. For more

information please contact Ben here at Immanuel.

COUNCIL MINUTES

September 19th, 2011

The Immanuel Lutheran Church Council met on September 19, 2011 at 6:30 pm. Members present were Karin Iverson, Becky Baumgartner, Derek Dregne, Lisa Andresen, Sandy Favor, Ben Natzke and Pastor Kathy. The meeting was called to order by President Karin Iverson. Devotions were given by Ben.

The Secretary's Report was presented. Motion by Sandy, seconded by Lisa to accept the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's Report was discussed. The reports from Chentel were reviewed. Motion by Lisa, seconded by Karin to accept the Treasurer's Report as printed. Motion carried.

The Pastor's Report was presented. Pastor Kathy had three baptisms, one wedding and one graveside service in August. She made a total of 26 visitations to hospitals, nursing homes, shut-ins and others. On August 7th – 10th she hosted Pastor Hirut from Ethiopia.

The Youth and Family Ministry Director's Report was presented. Ben began to do a lot of preparation and planning for the Confirmation classes and Breath/Spirit. He also assisted with VBS and led the Chadder's Theater portion. There was a softball event for the Confirmation youth with Good Shepherd to celebrate the end of summer and the beginning of the new school year. He also attended a canoe event with the high school youth. The Praise Band practiced for leading worship services on August 3rd and 21st. He is still planning for a Youth and Family Ministry Committee.

Committee reports:

Education Committee: Will meet in November. Sunday school has begun and the Breath and Spirit programs begin this week. Confirmation is Sunday, September 25th. Intergenerational learning day will be November 6th as well as catch up Sunday and the council breakfast.

Music and Worship: Will meet October 2nd. They will be planning the schedules for the choir and PS150.

Property Committee: Next meeting is October 16th. Kevin Schlicht is checking on bids for the bell tower. Discussed disposal of TV and the second refrigerator is

no longer working. The trees out front will be trimmed by Rick Volten.

Stewardship/Finance Committee: Met September 6th.

Discussed electronic transfer for giving as an option.

Personnel Committee: Have not met. Will be discussing job descriptions.

Unfinished Business: Lisa researched community gardens in other cities (Milwaukee, Madison, and Lacrosse). There are lots of resources/web pages. There was a short discussion about a partnership with another church. Will discuss more next month.

New Business: We will be hosting the Thanksgiving service.

Next meeting date is Monday, October 24th.

Agreed to adjourn. Closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Becky Baumgartner

MEMORIALS FOR OCTOBER

Boiler:

Betty Weber \$100

Doris Buros \$130

Ingvald Offerdahl Jr. \$100

Sunday School:

Doris Buros \$65

Undesignated:

Doris Buros \$120

Jack Vig \$10

TOTAL

\$525

CHOIR

Choir will be practicing all Wednesdays in November. The usual time is 6:45 pm, however we will be adjusting that time on Thanksgiving Eve due to the community worship service and on the 30th due to the first Advent service. We will be singing at the 8:30 am worship service on November 13th. SINGERS ARE NEEDED AND WELCOME.

PS 150

PS 150 will meet to practice on Wednesdays November 2nd, 9th & 16th at 7:45 pm and tentatively, Tuesdays November 22nd & 29th at 7:45 pm. This group, which provides contemporary Christian music will lead worship on November 6th at the 11 am worship service

and November 20th at the 8:30 am worship service.

BREATH AND SPIRIT

Breath (for 1st through 4th graders) and Spirit (for 5th and 6th graders) meets on Wednesdays in November, except the 16th and 23rd, right after school. Breath usually meets at Good Shepherd and Spirit here at Immanuel. But – on November 2nd there will be a combined Halloween event at Good Shepherd. All Breath and Spirit participants will meet at Good Shepherd on that day.

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation will be on the Wednesdays in November, except the 16th and 23rd. 7/8th will meet at 4:30 pm and 9th grade at 5:30 pm. Baked Potato Supper service project is November 2nd.

W-ELCA

NO W-ELCA meeting in November.

CIRCLE NOTE

Ruth Circle will be meeting on Monday, November 7th at 9 am. Martha Circle will meet November 8th at 7 pm. The Martha Circle is in charge of the Bethel Home program on November 1st at 2 pm; followed by refreshments by the Mary Circle. There will be special music; please plan to attend.

The Thanksgiving Day community dinner will be held at St. Mary's Church, watch for more information about donating and helping. Caroling of the Choirs will be on December 4th at Good Shepherd. Immanuel will prepare and serve the refreshments. The Martha Circle is in charge of the WELCA December Meeting and Program. Come to our November circle meeting and find out more about our program and plans! The Martha Circle will meet for their "Kick Off to Christmas" breakfast on Sat., Dec. 3rd, 2011 @ 9:30 am at the Grille. No reservations necessary. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Clark @ 637-3882.

QUILTERS NOTE

Quilters meet on November 1st & 15th at 9 am.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Immanuel sent out 26 health kits, 25 school kits, 41 quilts and 20 layettes to Lutheran World Relief this past October. Thank you to all who donated supplies and helped prepare the kits. A special thanks to Roger and Judy Munson for delivering the kits to La Crosse.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE....

Prayer shawls: If anyone is interested in knitting or crocheting prayer shawls, please contact Pastor Kathy – our supply is low!

Communion bread bakers: If anyone would like to bake communion bread for our church services, contact Pastor Kathy also.

Fortney Hotel meal: We are in charge of providing the Fortney Hotel meal on November 13th. Please sign up at the welcome table if you are interested in donating food or preparing and delivering food.

BOOK CLUB

Book Club will be meeting on November 7th at 6:30 pm to discuss "Cutting for Stone" by Abraham Verghese.



FARMER'S MARKET

Thank you to all who provided food for the farmer's market hunger booth last month!

SUGAR CREEK FUNDRAISING

Sugar Creek camper fundraising meeting will be Sunday, November 6th at 9:45 am in the Youth Room. Any families interested in participating in the Sugar Creek Camper fundraising activities should attend the short 9:45 meeting on November 6th. Families/campers earn a camp scholarship based on the amount of fund-raising activities that they participate in throughout the year. Last year, campers earned camperships ranging from \$30 to \$200. If you are not able to attend this meeting, but

would like to more information about participating in the fundraising or making a donation to these camperships, please contact Jackie Saner, jsaner85@gmail.com, or 637-7607, or the church office, office@immanuel-lc.org or 637-3983. Thanks to everyone that made last year's events successful!

OTHER NOVEMBER NOTES

- The Viroqua Ministerial Association will meet at Immanuel on the morning of November 3rd, devotions and food will be supplied by Pastor Pete Beckstrand. We enjoy having Pastor Pete in the downstairs office! He will become the pastor of a three-point parish at the beginning of November – Zion, Bethel, and Bethany! Congratulations!
- The church office will be closed for Thanks-giving Day and the day after (Friday the 25th).
- Anyone interested in taking charge of a church float for the Twinklefest parade on Friday the 25th? Contact the office!
- Remember our veterans on November 11th! If you are a veteran, we thank you for your service!

SUGAR CREEK EVENTS

Fireside Christmas Show November 9th- \$90 for the day includes bus trip dinner and show ticket! Call camp for more information. (608) 734-3114.

BETHEL HOME

Bazaar, Craft Fair and Lunch on Friday, Nov. 11th from 10 am until 2 pm on the first floor at Bethel Home. Everyone welcome! Crafter's tables are available for \$5 & \$10. Set up from 9- 10 am. Please contact Inga Gerber if interested, 637-6358/igerber@bethelhome.org

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS

BBBS is a nationwide program whose goal is to match children ages 6-14 with a mentor of the same gender. Research shows that the effect of positive support through mentoring can greatly impact a child. Vernon County is certainly not exempt from the social & economic problems of our times and by volunteering as a Big Brother/Sister you can help a local child facing adversity with a one to one mentoring relationship. To be a mentor you must be 18 or above, be able to give 1-2 hours per week or an average of 4-8 hours per month with a one year commitment. Make a Difference! For more information contact Steve Lawless (608) 632-1792 info.vernonco@7riversbbbs.org.

A PRAYER FOR THANKSGIVING

Merciful Creator, your hand is open wide to satisfy the needs of every living creature. Make us *always thankful* for your loving providence; and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts, through *Jesus Christ*, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

