

THE MESSENGER

The monthly newsletter for members of Immanuel Lutheran Church of Forest City, Iowa - March 2019

Wednesday LENTEN DRAMA SERIES Begins March 6, 6:30 pm

"JESUS: Growing Our Capacity for Love"

A series of 8 services using original dramatic scenes by **Iowa playwright Jack Jenkins** to portray the scriptures.

Join us at Immanuel Lutheran Church for a series of 6:30 pm Wednesday Evening Lenten Services which will use live drama to tell the story of what Jesus was trying to teach his followers, that love was central to everything that was happening and would happen, to him and to them. Set in modern times, the stories are portrayed by ordinary members of Immanuel, of all ages and walks of life. Each drama will pose a different question or questions to the congregation, and give the audience time to discuss the ideas presented. We hope these dramatic scenes will help you understand and receive the love of Jesus in a new way, and that it will inspire all of us to see new ways of sharing God's love with others.

SCHEDULE

March 6	Ash Wednesday: Dying and Rising with Jesus	Romans 6:1-10
March 13	Week 1: Meet Jesus	Wedding at Cana, Cleansing of the Temple John 2:1-25
March 20	Week 2: Know Jesus	Samaritan Woman at the Well John 4:1-42
March 27	Week 3: Love Jesus	Restoring a blind man's sight John 5:1-29, 30-47
April 3	Week 4: Dine with Jesus	Feeding of 5000 and Bread of Life John 6:1-15, 22-59
April 10	Week 5: Trust Jesus	Raising of Lazarus John 11:1-53
April 17	No Wednesday Service!	
April 18	Maundy Thursday: Washed by Jesus	The Upper Room John 13:1-35
April 21	Easter Sunday: The Resurrection of Jesus	The empty tomb John 20:1-18



Vital Agers

Everyone is invited to the Vital Agers SoupLuncheon on Tuesday, March 12 at 11:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall.

After enjoying the soup, we will be entertained with a sing-a-long accompanied by Amy Thorson.

Please plan on coming on March 12 for fun, fellowship, and of course, food!



'2nd Sunday' Potluck Brunch

Sunday, March 10, 10:15 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Come, bring, and enjoy this monthly POTLUCK BRUNCH time together with the Immanuel family.

Council members are hosting this month. Just drop off your food items in the kitchen before worship and they will take care of it.



Your offering at work

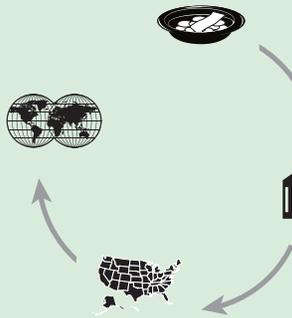
When you give to your local congregation, a percentage of that money is shared with your synod and with the ELCA churchwide organization. The portion of your offering that is shared with the wider church is called Mission Support. As members of the ELCA, we are freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor, open to the Holy Spirit's invitation to be active in the world. Through sharing your time, talents and financial resources, you are actively participating in God's work throughout the U.S. and around the world.

1 YOUR WEEKLY OFFERING

at your congregation supports the mission of the whole ELCA doing God's work in the world.

4 YOUR CHURCHWIDE ORGANIZATION

responds to local and worldwide ministry opportunities. Together we do God's work in ways that no individual, congregation or synod can do alone.



2 YOUR CONGREGATION shares a portion of your offering – called Mission Support – with your synod and the ELCA churchwide organization.

3 YOUR SYNOD

supports congregations and rostered leaders as they work in their communities and throughout the world.

Your support of God's mission and ministry through the ELCA churchwide organization provides

- Global and ecumenical relationships
- Stewardship and mission funding
- Supporting congregations and evangelical outreach
- Governance
- Bringing forth and supporting leaders
- Stepping forward as a church serving others
- Coordination and support of ministries in the U.S. and throughout the world



Lutheran Day on the Hill

Deb Jensen

It was a privilege to participate in Lutheran Day On The Hill and to advocate for a strong child welfare workforce, support for refugee community services, and for needed changes to the Medicaid managed care system. Speaking to our legislators and telling the stories of the people we love and care for in our communities reminds them that investing in programs to protect children, care for refugees, those with disabilities, and the vulnerable should be a government priority. It was an awesome experience to collaborate with people from all over the state to speak for those that can't speak for themselves, and to know that we are partners together in God's work.



Lutheran Day on the Hill Feb. 19 with WIS Bishop Rodger Prois, WIS Mission Adm. Kay Broich, Pastor Rod Hopp, Deb Jensen, Cindi Lehmann (behind the camera)

Golden opportunity to help stop hunger!

NOISY OFFERINGS FOR HUNGER 'NEAR AND FAR'

Mission and Outreach Board invites you to help with the cause of hunger initiatives when we pass the noisy offering buckets at worship on Wednesday, March 20, and then on Sunday, March 24. Bring along your loose change, paper money, or checkbook to help give towards these gifts.

This quarter's (Jan.-Mar.) mission emphasis donations will be equally divided between the Forest City Neighborhood Food Bank and World Hunger. Helping 'hunger near and far'!



Iowa Lutheran attending including the three Bishops in the state.

Letter from Pastor Rod

Giving It Up; Creating Space: A Lenten Journey



On Sunday February 17th I preached a sermon based on Luke 6:11-17 that not many people heard. It was a snowy Sunday and there were only about one hundred people in worship. I am not going to repeat that sermon here, but I would encourage you to go to Immanuelfamily.com and listen to it if you didn't get to hear it. This article is meant to take those thoughts even deeper.

In verses 11-17 of Luke 6 Jesus says that the poor, those who are hungry now, those who are mourning now, and those who are hated, excluded, reviled, and defamed because of him are blessed. As hard as that is to believe, he goes on to say that the rich, those who are full or satisfied now, those who are laughing now, and those who are well spoken of now will, in time, face a reversal of their lot in life.

Jesus is the greatest spiritual teacher of all times and his thoughts are often deeper than ours, and therefore, to understand his teaching we must think deeply about them. We must also invite the Holy Spirit to help us discern his teachings. Below is my attempt to understand Jesus, and to connect them to his life-giving ministry and to our broken lives in a way that will help us grow in faith, love, and obedience to God's will.

In the Catholic community our brothers and sisters have a long tradition of giving up something during Lent. Giving up meat on Fridays was (and perhaps still is) one of the most widely practiced traditions. The meat was usually replaced with fish. That's why some Catholic communities still have Friday night fish fries. The reason they started that practice is related to Jesus teaching in Luke 6. To give up something is an attempt to create a place of poverty, or to create an emptiness, a hunger that, in the spiritual practice then, Jesus will fill and occupy that space with his presence and life.

I'm not sure that as human beings we need to try so hard to create poverty, hunger, grief, and a sense of rejection because in our reality as sinners we all suffer from such an existence. The discipline we need to practice is first, stop trying to fill that emptiness ourselves or with earthly things: shopping, food, alcohol, or drugs, work, accomplishments, toys, etc. etc. Second, by suspending our efforts to fill ourselves we leave space and opportunity for God to work – to enter our lives. Our spiritual task is to invite Jesus into those places of weakness and vulnerability and emptiness, to let him fill us with himself.

During Lent this year our theme is "Jesus: Growing our Capacity for Love!" Wednesday evenings will focus on stories from John's Gospel such as 1) Turning Water into Wine, 2) The Woman at the Well (see cover page for more details). In these stories Jesus is demonstrating extraordinary capacity for love and to enter our lives where we need him most. I believe that when Jesus invites us saying, "follow me" he is inviting us into his extraordinary love and inviting us to enhance our capacity to love in ways that brings wholeness to our lives and the lives of others. These stories show us a Jesus who is willing to be deeply intimate with people; people with whom the original audience of John's gospel would not have expected Him to have any relationship with, let alone such tender and life-giving exchanges.

Jesus is calling each of us into deep and abiding relationships with him and with each other. To do that we must expand our

capacity to love God, neighbor, and self. Instead of artificially creating an empty space that you invite Jesus to fill, come as your authentically needy, broken, empty, longing self and experience the love of Jesus through these timeless stories.

God's Peace,
Pastor Rod

Immanuel Kids Growing in Love

"You have heard that you should love your neighbors and hate your enemies," Jesus said. "But I say, love your enemies and pray those who hate you." Matthew 5:43ff

Who do you love? Do you love your parents? Do you love your brother or sister? How about your best friend? Do you love your teacher? Do you love your Pastor? I'm hoping you said yes to all of these. It is easy to love these people, because they love us too.

Are there any boys or girls that are mean to you at recess? Has anyone ever said something about you that was not true? Do you love those boys and girls? Should we really be expected to love people who are mean to us, treat us badly, and say ugly things about us? Well, let's listen to what Jesus told us to do.

One day Jesus was teaching out on a hillside. We call his lesson that day "The Sermon on the Mount." In his sermon, Jesus said some things that really surprised his listeners. "You have heard that you should love your neighbors and hate your enemies, but I say, love your enemies, and pray for those who hate you."

Wow! Why should we love our enemies? Jesus said that when we love our enemies, we are acting like children of God. If we only love those who love us, that isn't special or astounding love – everyone does that. If we are only kind to our friends, what is so great about that? Everybody does that!

It isn't always easy to love your enemies, in fact, sometimes it's impossible, but there are some good reasons for doing it. 1) It demonstrates the love of God for us. 2) It sets a good example for others to follow. 3) It turns enemies into friends (that's the hope at least).

Our Lenten theme is "Building capacity for love: Jesus: Growing our Capacity for Love!" Jesus loved us even when we were enemies of God. "Crucify him!" "Crucify him" sinners cried on Good Friday. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do", Jesus pleaded in that same hour. Jesus had love for us – for his enemies and with his great capacity for love has made it possible for many of us to call him friend. You and I can grow in our capacity to love too, and we do it by following and imitating Jesus. It's not easy – but it's worth it.

Prayer: Father, it is usually easy to love those who love us. Help us to love our enemies so that they might know that we are your children and give you glory. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Crossed in Christ,



Understanding Grief & Loss

Sponsored by MercyOne North Iowa Hospice

A bereavement support 6-week program for adults grieving a death will be held March 14-April 18.

Six consecutive Thursday evenings in Mason City at Hospice, 232 2nd St SE, Mason City.

Class is free but space is limited so please pre-register by calling 1-800-297-4719.



Daylight Savings, it's time to spring ahead!

I'm not sure if you have noticed, the days are getting longer. The sun is out longer, the snow is becoming less fluffy and heavier as the temperature creeps upwards every week. For many this

can be their favorite time of year. I do like this time of year because that means baseball is right around the corner, I can play outside with my family in the snow longer and have fires in our driveway once again. But, there is one Sunday of the year I dread every year because I am not a very early riser. That day is the start of daylight savings, when we spring forward and lose an hour of sleep. It's also the one Sunday of the year where if you forget to change your clocks you will be late for worship or miss it all together. But, it does seem appropriate to gain light at this time of year from a spiritual sense too.

In the winter when we fall back and the days get shorter and we seem to be stuck in darkness, Christmas arrives into our lives, not long after the shortest, darkest, day of the year. It's during Christmas that we hear from John 1, "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it...The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world." We hear about the light coming into the world at Christmas, and everyday after that the days get longer and longer and the light shines longer and longer during our days.

The days are indeed getting longer, and the light is brighter as the sun continues to move towards the northern hemisphere of earth. And it's in this time that we come into

Lent, watching the light become brighter and brighter each week as we move towards Easter. But the Sun is not totally bright yet. The clouds roll in and there is the darkness of Good Friday, where we wonder will we ever see the light again? What good can come out of this? We are stuck in the what next phase of Holy Saturday. But when we go to sleep not knowing what is coming next, someone leaps forward, brings the brightest light into our lives. The light overcomes the darkness, and the light saves us all.

At the end of our Lenten journey is this from Matthew, "There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men...He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay."

See the place where he lay which was once dark, is now light! Jesus overcame the darkness and springs us forward, away from sin, death and the devil, out of darkness into light. Daylight savings, the one light who saves us all by springing us forward, Jesus! And as we begin our Lenten journey once again, remember that in this dark reflective time, there will come a moment at the end of Lent in which the light shines brighter than ever, and we are forever spring ahead. What a wonderful time of year this really is for all of us!

See you in worship.

Pastor Zech Anderson

Treasury's Report | Immanuel Lutheran Church FY January 2019

	January Actual 2019	Monthly Budget	Year-to-Date Actual	Annual Budget	Percent of YTD Budget	JANUARY Actual 2018	YTD Actual 2018
Income	8.33%						
Regular Offerings & Envelopes	\$30,023.19	\$43,776.17	\$30,023.19	\$525,314.00	5.7%	\$33,765.88	\$33,765.88
Other Income	\$ 1,073.89	\$5,025.00	\$1,073.89	\$60,300.00	1.8%	\$1,559.37	\$1,559.37
Total Income	\$ 31,097.08	\$48,801.17	\$31,097.08	\$585,614.00	5.3%	\$35,325.25	\$35,325.25
Expense							
Staff Support	\$30,768.45	\$30,076.42	\$30,768.45	\$360,917.00	8.5%	\$29,700.42	\$29,700.42
Administration	\$6,458.03	\$10,736.50	\$6,458.03	\$128,838.00	5.0%	\$4,621.03	\$4,621.03
Ministry Areas	\$6,059.88	\$7,988.25	\$6,059.88	\$95,859.00	6.3%	\$5,911.32	\$5,911.32
Loan re-payment/contingency	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00	\$0.00	0.0%	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$43,286.36	\$48,801.17	\$43,286.36	\$585,614.00	7.4%	\$40,232.77	\$40,232.77
Income Less Expensive	(\$12,189.28)	0.00	(\$12,189.28)	0.00		(\$4,907.52)	(\$4,907.52)

Board notes

Children's Education

Krista Hopp

The Board of Education met on Tuesday, February 12. As a group, we discussed options for a possible Wednesday ministry schedule change next year. There was discussion of switching around worship and Promiseland times to help make it more accommodating for families to attend worship on Wednesdays. The Board had many good viewpoints on this topic, so we spent quite a while throwing out ideas and brainstorming. No decision has been made on this topic, so look for more information in the coming weeks.

With a teacher in-service coming up for our Promiseland teachers, the board discussed some of those topics. We want to increase emphasis on bible fundamentals and bible knowledge for the upper elementary students in Promiseland. We feel the Sunday Promiseland curriculum lends itself to helping kids truly learn and understand the story because it focuses on one story per month. Ideas were brought up on how to work in a deeper knowledge of the bible stories with our shorter time on Wednesdays. We will continue brainstorming that as we get closer to the end of the year.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 12, at 4:30.

Mission and Outreach

Amy Thorson

The Mission and Outreach Board met at 4:45pm Wednesday, February 13 in the Lounge. Those in attendance were: Sharen Rieffer, Becky Stumme, Ken Korth, Nicholas Determann, Amy Thorson, Jaci Thorson, Pøtt Van Auken and Larry Rieffer.

Devotions were given by Sharen on 1 Timothy 3:6.

The monetary figure of where our Hunger Appeal campaign currently stands is unknown and will be reported at next month's meeting. Donations of soup and crackers continue to come in for the Tackle Hunger initiative.

We will have noisy offerings on March 20th and 24th and any incoming money designated to Missions will be divided between our world and local hunger initiatives.

Ideas were tossed around for a theme in March relating to either St. Patrick's Day or March Madness.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 13th at 4:45pm in the Lounge..

Trustees

Bink Keller

The Board of Trustees met on February 11, 2019. In January Financials showed income of \$31,097.03 and expenses of \$43,286.36 with (\$12,189.28) expenses over income.

Endowment proposals distributions of \$23,587 was approved to date. \$35,000 will be available for 2019.

Property update on the parsonage repairs: Phase 1 of Midwest Basement work is done. Phase 2 of the wall repair is completed. Phase 3 of painting and carpeting is underway and carpet has been ordered and will be installed. Mindy and Pastor Zech have been doing the painting.

Mike Korth has been added to the Board of Directors and one

additional lay person is being pursued.

The Board discussed the many things with our sound system that are worn and not working.

The board Discussed the Worden/Titonka Pastoral assistance and possibilities with Bethany Lutheran Church, Thompson.

Parish Council

Alice Lewellen

The ILC council met on February 11, 2019 with the following members present: Andy Buffington, Alice Lewellen, Amy Thorson, Heather Johnson, Kathy Leuwerke, Joan Beebe, Linda Holland, Nic Determann, Daryl Krieger, Melanie Westerberg, Marcy Hanson, Pastor Anderson and Pastor Hopp.

It was announced that the Lenten services will be based on the book of John. Pasto Hopp will be traveling to California with the Waldorf group to study immigration, justice and injustice. Council discussed reactions to the Annual Meeting. Pastor Hopp shared the responses regarding a possible covenant with Bethany. The Executive Council will meet with them again to continue in discussion.

Board assignments were made for new Council members. Marcy Hanson will be on the Board of Education, Nic Determann on the Mission and Outreach Board, Linda Holland on Trustees, Linda Ferjak and Melanie Westerberg on Parish Life.

A Task Team will be formed to discuss a Capital Campaign. Congregation members are encouraged to give with automatic giving to try to keep the budget more stable

The Council will have a retreat April 7 from 4 to 7. We concluded by discussing goals for this year and for the future.

Parish Life

Melanie Westerberg

Board of Parish Life met on Tuesday, Feb. 5.

We had one topic of business and that was to discuss making a greeters schedule for the rest of the year.

Church members may be contacted by phone or a signup sheet at coffee. Our goal is to get enough volunteers to make it so that no one has to do it more than once or twice a year.

We want our church to feel welcoming to our members and visitors alike! So we are asking that everyone do their part and be willing to participate in our goal! Thanks in advance.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

2018 return was down 4.9%. Most of that loss has been made up with a strong 2019 recovery. The market is up more than 9% since year-end (as of February 12).

Since the Endowment Fund began in 1985, we have taken in \$445,333.74, paid out \$563,031.19 and have a fund worth \$728,043.94. That is a strong record of success.

We continue to believe that our investment philosophy is sound and will treat us well in the long term. There will be short term declines as we saw in 2001-02 and 2008 but the market recovered quickly from both of those downturns to reach record highs in subsequent years, including 2018.

Please consider remembering the Immanuel Endowment Fund in your estate planning, and/or consider a one-time gift to the fund that will help Immanuel continue to provide for emergencies, capital improvements, education and charitable work in the future.

✝ Promiseland

Promiseland Teacher Spotlight: Megan Porter



Tasha Banta

March has arrived...and with it should be spring. As I write this, we are far from springy weather, but I am sure it is around the corner.

Last month we issued a Teacher Spotlight article with Barb Braun who is a veteran in teaching Sunday School. It was fun to read about her past and present experiences. We decided to do another Teacher Spotlight this month, and it seemed suitable to shine light on a new teacher. Someone who, like spring, is blossoming and has a new perspective to share. This teacher is Megan Porter and we are so happy to have her on our team this year! Megan grew up at Immanuel and joined us as a Kindergarten teacher in her son, Isaac's class. Let's hear about her experience so far.

This is your first year teaching Promiseland. What was it that helped you decide to teach?

I had contemplated teaching in the past and decided I would try it out this year. I was excited to teach in my son's Kindergarten class and get to know some of his classmates better.

Was there anything you were worried about and if so, have those worries subsided?

I had reservations about teaching because I didn't have experience in a classroom setting. After the first night the concerns I had about teaching went away, I have awesome kids in my class.

What is your favorite thing about teaching?

The kids are my favorite part of teaching, they are so engaged at this age and I enjoy checking in with them each week.

How have you seen the children grow in your class?

My class has grown so much this year. In the beginning some of the kids were hesitant to participate, but as the weeks have gone by they have become more comfortable with discussing our lessons in the classroom.

How has your faith grown in this experience?

I grew up at Immanuel and seeing the kids faith grow and hearing their perspectives has given me a chance reflect and see things in their eyes. It is fun to see how many different ways they interpret things.

Can you tell us something about your class that you love.

I love the kids, they are eager to learn, they have a lot of energy, and they are fun to be around. I look forward to seeing them each week.

We are blessed to have Megan as a Promiseland teacher this year. She always has a smile on her face, a warm welcome for the children and her love for Jesus shines through these things.

Thank you, Megan, and thank you to all of the parents, grandparents and members of Immanuel who give your time to these amazing kids!

Youth Ministry

By Matt Polsdofer

Waiting...

Everyone knows that we are a society of people who want something now. When I was a youth it was hard if you did not get a response back from your friend for a day or two. Now in a world filled with instant access and social media we are frustrated if we do not hear back from people within minutes. Or worse, we could see those dreaded grey dots showing that a friend is typing a response but waiting for the response to come. Our anticipation for that message back is palpable.

In the church we discuss listening to God's call for your life and finding your vocation. But what if you feel you have heard God's call and are waiting for God to respond to your message? Is God typing right now and we have those dreaded grey dots?!?! In my personal life right now, I feel God's calling and have applied to seminary. I am waiting to hear back if I got into the program I applied for or not. It is that time that you are waiting for a friend to respond, except this one feels like it is a huge response that has ramifications to alter not only your life but your family and friends as well. The response I am waiting for in the grand scheme of things is trivial (2 weeks), but in moment they are two long weeks. I remind myself that they are short because by the time you are reading this (March 1st or after) I will know whether I am in the program.

Waiting for God can be hard. In Isaiah 40:31 it says "but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." We are not patient, especially when waiting for an answer from God. Just like the verse, there are benefits for waiting. It helps us determine whether this is something we really want, it builds anticipation so that when we do receive it we appreciate it more than if it was handed to us right away and it bring clarity to our calling from God. I hope and pray that you are listening to God's call and praying that if you are answering that call you have patience because God will use you at the appropriate time. I am often reminded of the quote "God doesn't call the equipped, He equips the called."

Blessings & peace, Matt Polsdofer

Middle School:

February was an exciting time as we got to go bowling as a group. It was a lot of fun to go cosmic bowling. It was a great opportunity for us to get to do some group building and have some fun together. The pizza was delicious too! Thanks to Phil & Ruth Ann and the rest of their staff! They did awesome! March is a great month for us to learn together as we have the 6&7 grade parents coming in.

High School:

We are continuing to practice our Peer Ministry skills while also building a community of support and love. It was fun to have the opportunity to lead the annual meeting for a few minutes and show one of the skills we learned.

Library News March 2019



withered by life's dry seasons or overturned by circumstances--because it's rooted in Christ himself. In *Bring Back the Joy*, Sheila calls us to a deeper joy. With wisdom, she exposes the negative forces designed to steal our joy--sin, fear, anger, and hopelessness, loss of vision, unforgiveness, and shame. And she shows how to sow life-changing seeds of joy--through obedience, transparency, friendship, grace, simplicity, risk, surrender, and learning to simply lighten up!

Jesus
Others
You

"These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full." John 15:11 ESV

Book Reviews

Involuntary Joy: A Story of Unexpected Rebirth

By Joy M. Newcom

Involuntary Joy describes our own Joy Newcom's first five years experiences with her first child who was born with multiple birth defects 29 years ago. Joy is candidly honest as she shares the spiritual and identity struggles she experienced in those first years after learning she would never be the kind of mom she'd imagined. By sharing her story, she invites others--who may only know life through children with normal abilities--to live experiences that few know of firsthand. A great read for every parent.

Bring Back the Joy

By Sheila Walsh

Sheila Walsh invites Women of Faith to reclaim the joy -- an abiding, overflowing gladness of heart that wells up from within. Joy that exists independent of circumstances, rejoicing in the best of times and triumphing in the worst. We all know this. We've memorized the Scripture verse that says the joy of the Lord is our strength. But, if we're honest, many of us will admit that our own experience of joy is a far cry from what the Bible seems to promise. Have we missed something? Where did the joy go--and more important, how can we get it back? Sheila Walsh knows the importance of joy. Her own difficulties ultimately became a journey to the kind of joy that can't be

Love's Abiding Joy

By Janette Oke

The *Love Comes Softly* series introduces the characters of Marty and Clark Davis, whose tragic circumstances brought them to a "marriage of convenience" on the frontier prairies during the mid-1800s. The story of how Clark's patient, caring love mirrored that of the heavenly Father, drawing Marty to faith and to love, has captured the hearts and imaginations of over one million readers. *Love's Abiding Joy* is book four in the eight book series which all can be found in your Immanuel Library.

Reviews taken from Amazon



Reading Contest Weekly Winners





CAMPUS MINISTRY

My name is Lauren Dohman and I am a freshman here at Waldorf. My experience with campus ministry has been life changing. I sing in the Like Fire band, attend all the Like Fire events such as going to the volunteer events, small fires, and

the retreats. Now I am super excited to be in the transition of becoming a peer minister. I am beyond blessed to be a part of such a wonderful group.

The group has helped strengthen my faith by challenging and supporting me. I was able to share my testimony at a Like Fire worship. That truly meant the world to me. The campus ministry has made my first year at college amazing. I cannot wait continue my journey with Like Fire.



Lauren Dohman, Like Fire Peer minister

WARTBURG RETREAT

On February 8, 2019, a team of ten student and staff from Waldorf University, led by Antoine Cummins, travelled to Wartburg Seminary for a weekend retreat. Wartburg Theological Seminary is a seminary

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in Dubuque, Iowa. They invited campus ministries from different institutions in Iowa (University of Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, Waldorf University and Luther College) for a two day seminar of fellowship and community engagement. The theme of this year's retreat was "Come and See..." John 1:35-39. This is the second time Waldorf University Campus Ministry was invited to Wartburg Theological Seminary for a weekend retreat.

After breakfast on February 9th, we got the opportunity to hear from current student and faculty about the academic environment at Wartburg. The seminary introduced us to modern technologies and the flexibility residential and online students have in regard to their schedules. Wartburg treated the whole group to an amazing lunch at Old Chicago, following the morning sessions. After lunch, we travelled to a non-profit organization called Fountain of Youth Program, which has a partnership with the seminary, for an intensive discussion on generational poverty and the power of privilege. The organization works with juveniles from community for the purposes of rehabilitations. This experience was definitely eye opening, if not humbling for all of us. Sadly, because of the incoming storm on Sunday, we had to change the plans and leave a day before to avoid any issues. This short but definitely influential trip was a great reminder of the value of ministry and awareness of our social circumstances. Waldorf University Campus Ministry is very grateful for this retreat and such fellowship opportunity.

Asmita KC
Peer Minister

AND THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

Marge Solberg

February was a month with a lot of holidays and days off from work and school. We had national holidays and stay-home days because of weather. On Valentine's day I got a beautiful "To my Wife" Valentine with words of love and gave a similar "To my husband" card. We have received and given Valentines to each other for 63 years. The card shelves were full of Valentines weeks before the day and on the morning of the holiday a local store had a cool bunker full of flower bouquets ready to deliver. Anxious people hoped one would come to them. Teachers used the day to show that everyone is happy to get a message of kindness from classmates. I notice that each year I hear fewer words and expressions of care and respect. Sometimes we don't even see friends walking by us because we are concentrating on our phones. Family members exchange few words at home because there is "nothing to say" but so much to see on TV and play on phone games. We say fewer words of encouragement, thanks, and concern, but words of criticism, and mistakes are quick to come.

This year angry, hurtful words seem to come easier in conversation between neighbors, friends, and our families. I remember the first times I heard a child tell mother or dad to "shut up, you're not the boss of me!" I waited for the reaction but there was none. Teachers have heard more brutal words spoken in classrooms than we could imagine. Sadly, I realize the children don't make up those words, they repeat them. There has always been a need for kids to prove independence by shocking adults by what they say but it seems to be louder and more hurtful. On TV everyone is shouting; no one listens. I recently heard a group of long-time friends talking to each other. Their conversation turned from kind words to loud disagreement and I was surprised to hear disrespect and hurt feelings. Discussion of issues become

Women of the **ELCA** 

arguments and could permanently scar a friendship. We have had these heated reactions before, but it seems to have become escalated as the normal way to treat each other.

I was 4 years old when I first felt real fear. It was 1941 and my dad was leaving to go to war. I didn't know the reasons; I just understood he would be gone a long time, maybe years. Most of our neighborhood and school friends were saying goodbye to their dads. Some families moved away, to live with grandparents. I was afraid every day and especially every night. I was always sad. No part of my life was the same as it had been. But I did have a place I felt safe. Our church circled us with love. The few remaining men in our church became substitutes for dads gone to war. I sense some of that fear now, a wave of change in our respect and treatment of others. I hear this concern from my friends who are my age. So, I am looking to the people of Immanuel to circle each other with care, love, and respect that comes from Christ. I will try to speak to my brothers and sisters of our church with kinder words. I will pay more attention to their needs. I will encourage those who are hurting. I will visit more and ignore them less. I will stop where they are and talk with them. People of our church have a special way to share with and care for each other. We need to make sure the younger families and, especially the kids, see that in us as we discuss, teach, and work together. How great it would be if everyone feels safe and loved in our church. Only then can we reach out beyond our doors and walls to the people in our town, our country and world and love them. When Christ tells us to "Love one another," it isn't about Valentine's Day!!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Endowment 101

David Damm, Endowment Committee Chair

With the stock market experiencing dramatic ups and downs the past several months, we thought it would be a good time to update the congregation on the Immanuel Endowment Fund: its purpose, the investment philosophy and recent results.

PURPOSE

The Immanuel Endowment Fund goes back to 1985 when it started with \$26,030. The purpose of the fund is to provide financial resources to Immanuel in the event of unforeseen emergencies. Distributions from the fund can happen for three primary purposes:

1. Capital improvements and/or building expansion of the church
2. Religious, educational and charitable work of Immanuel Lutheran Church and its environs
3. Contributions to the progress of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

A committee of directors appointed by the church council manage the Endowment Fund, including decisions on how to invest the funds and release of the proceeds from the fund. Current directors are David Damm, Mark Johnson, Craig Johnson, John Faircloth, Jerry Brickman, Jennifer Jenkins and Pastor Rod.

Each year the committee provides the church council with 5% of the value of the endowment fund (minus reserved money for the roof fund) as of November 1 of the previous year. For the 2019 budget, a total of \$35,000 was given to the church council to be spent within the three allowed categories listed above.

INVESTMENT PHILOSOPHY

The current philosophy of the Immanuel Endowment Committee is to invest 85% of the fund in a stock index fund and 15% of the fund in a bond index fund. This asset allocation is a long-term investment philosophy similar to allocations recommended for young people seeking long-term rewards.

We are invested through Vanguard due to its low expenses and fees (less than 0.05% per year).

Why low-cost index funds when there are “experts” willing to invest money for you?

The argument managers of actively managed funds make is that “we can beat the market” by more than enough to justify the high fees.

The trouble is between 85 and 96 percent of actively managed funds fail to beat the market over any sustained period of time! In a study by industry expert Robert Arnott, founder of Research Affiliates, only 8 of 200 fund managers with at least \$100 million under management beat the Vanguard 500 from 1984 to 1998.

The following study shows the impact of annual fees.

Someone investing \$1 million and paying a 2% annual fee would have \$5,743,490 after 30 years, assuming an 8% annual return.

Someone investing \$1 million and paying a 1% annual fee would have \$7,612,256 after 30 years, assuming the same 8% annual return.

Money paid in fees goes into the fund manager’s pocket and is never invested in the investor’s account. So that money never compounds and costs the investor tens of thousands of dollars. In the above example, the extra 1% in fees cost the investor nearly \$2 million in unrealized gains over a 30-year period.

So what investing advice do four of the world’s greatest investors give?

Warren Buffet, America’s best-known investor, provided this advice for his wife and their trust for after he dies: “Put 10% into short-term government bonds and 90 percent in a very low-cost S&P 500 index

fund—I suggest Vanguard’s. I believe the trust’s long-term results from this policy will be superior to those attained by most investors—whether pension funds, institutions, or individuals—who employ high-fee managers.”

Buffet is the same individual who made a \$1 million wager in 2007 against New York-based Protégé Partners betting that Protégé could not pick five hedge fund managers who will collectively beat the S&P 500 index over a 10-year period. At the end of the 10 years, the S&P 500 was up 125.8% over that time while the five hedge funds added an average of about 36%. After losing the first year (2008), the S&P 500 index fund beat the actively-managed funds every year!

Making money on the stock market “does not require great intelligence, a degree in economics or a familiarity with Wall Street jargon,” he wrote. “What investors then need instead is an ability to both disregard mob fears or enthusiasms and to focus on a few simple fundamentals. Stick with big, ‘easy’ decisions and eschew activity.”

John Bogle, who started the Vanguard Group and served as its CEO for many years, said this:

“Active management is going to cost you around 2% for the average fund (including 1.2 average expense ratio, transaction costs, cash drag, and sales charges). So that means in a 7% market, they (the investor) will get 5%. But the index fund investor will get 6.95% of the 7% return. At 6.95% you turn \$1 into about \$30 over 50 years. But at 5%, you get \$10 instead of \$30. And what does that mean? It means you put up 100% of the cash, took 100% of the risk, and you got 33% of the reward.”

Prior to his death January 16, Bogle’s personal and retirement accounts were 60% stocks (mostly in Vanguard’s stock index funds) and 40% was split between Vanguard’s Total Bond Market Index Fund and tax-exempt municipal bond funds.

David Swenson turned Yale University’s assets from \$1 billion into \$23.9 billion (an average annual return of 13.9%). Here is what he says is best for individual investors:

“The active managers charge higher fees with promises of beating the market, but we’ve seen it’s a false promise more often than not. You can take a passive approach and own the whole market. And you can buy the entire market for a very, very low fee. You can get it for less than 20 basis points (\$2 per \$1,000) through mutual funds offered by Vanguard.”

Charles Schwab, founder and chairman of the Charles Schwab Corporation (which has \$2.4 trillion in client assets under management), says that only 2% of people really know about investing. The other 98%, he says, need help and advice. Here is his advice:

“The 98% should really predominantly go into index funds. They have the most predictable outcomes.”

He adds that for every 1% you pay in fees per year over a lifetime of investing, you are giving up 20% of your money. At 2% you are giving up 40% and at 3% you are giving up 60%.

The message is clear: Invest in low-cost index funds and use an asset allocation consistent with your age and your risk tolerance.

Some information above comes from “Money: Master the Game” by Tony Robbins

RECENT RESULTS

Since the downturn of 2001-2002, the Immanuel Endowment Fund has been up in 12 of the 16 years. Total value of the fund has increased from \$418,343 to \$728,043.94 despite paying out \$383,543.74 during that 16-year period.

Our worst return in that period was a minus 29.35% in 2008 but that beat the S&P500 return of a minus 37.0%. We stayed the course and our return for 2009 was 23.3% and 12.6% in 2010—more than making up for the 2008 downturn.

After two years of 18.5% and 18.0% returns in 2016 and 2017, our

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Volunteer March 2019

Altar Guild

Mar. 3.....Julie Damm
 Mar. 10.....Julie Damm
 Mar. 17.....Julie Damm
 Mar. 24.....Kathy Leuwerke
 Mar. 31.....Jean Yeager

Assisting Ministers

Mar. 3.....Kathy McEnelly
 Mar. 10.....Cynthia Ryder
 Mar. 17.....Dave Melby
 Mar. 24.....Jim Cherry
 Mar. 31.....Joan Hansen

Scripture Readers

Mar. 3.....Julie Damm
 Mar. 10.....Marla Betz
 Mar. 17.....Carolynn Korth
 Mar. 24.....Brad Jones
 Mar. 31.....Mary Kingland

Communion Set Up

Mar. 3.....Barb Lovick
 Mar. 10.....Sue Moglestad
 Mar. 17.....Kathy Bendickson
 Mar. 24.....Ellen Olson
 Mar. 31.....Ruth Melby

Wednesday.....Bernie & Karen Kofron

Communion Servers

Mar. 3.....Leah Boyd, Julie Damm
 Mar. 10.....Jim Cherry, Laurel Erickson
 Mar. 17.....Carolynn Korth, Kay Sorensen
 Mar. 24.....Jim & Barb Braun
 Mar. 31.....Joan Beebe, Mary Kingland

Song Leaders

Mar. 3.....Linda Ferjak, Scott Bertelsen
 Mar. 10.....Dave Melby, Brenda Rust
 Mar. 17.....Kathy Jerome, Brenda Rust
 Mar. 24.....Mark & Joy Newcom
 Mar. 31.....Audrey Olmstead, Cindi Lehmann

Greeters

WAYS TO SERVE ~ SIGN UP TO BE A SUNDAY GREETER!

Offering Counters

Linda Holland, Ellen Olson, Mavis Hess, Marj Anderson, Betty Nelson

Ushers

Jim Lund, Jim Bowman, Paul Jensen

Sound Techs

Bruce Mielke, Dave Midtgaard



Flowers
 &
Broadcasts

Flowers available for these Sundays: (cost is \$44)
 March 10, 24, 31
 April 21 – Easter lilies
 April 28
 May 5, 26
 June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Radio broadcasts available for these Sundays: (cost is \$100)
 March 10, 24, 31
 May 5, 12, 19, 26
 June 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Sunday broadcasts are played each Sunday at 11am over KIOW, 107.3 FM.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

March Circle Schedule

<u>Thursday, Mar. 21</u>	<u>Location/Hostess</u>	<u>Lesson Leader</u>
9:30 a.m. Martha	Shalom/Ellen Olson	Joan Langerud
1:30 p.m. Rachel	Shalom /Sonya Dyste	Barb Braun
1:30 p.m. Sarah	Lounge/Joan Hansen	Kay Sorensen

Dates to remember:

Thursday, Mar. 14, 9:45 a.m.	Circle Bible Study Leaders meet with Barb Johnson, Lounge
Monday, Mar. 18, 2-4 p.m.	Prayer Shawl Ministry, Shalom
Thursday, Mar. 21	Circle Day (see schedule above)
Tuesday, Mar. 26, 1-3 p.m.	LWR Quilting Do Day, Fellowship Hall
March Laundry	Barb Braun
March Sunday Coffee	Coffee Hour Service Group

March 2019						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 9:15am- Worship 10:15 – Coffee, FH 10:30am- Promiseland 3pm- Pre-Assembly WIS Gathering, Graettinger	4	5 2pm- Intercessor Prayer Group, Prayer Room 5pm- Parish Life, lounge	6 4:45-6:45pm- Supper, FH 5:30pm- 6-7 Confirmation / Promiseland / Bells 6:30pm- Ash Wednesday Worship & Drama 7:30pm- Choir/ 8-9 Confirmation/HS Youth	7 8:30am- Women’s Bible Study, Lounge	8	9 <i>set your clocks ahead before bedtime!</i>
10 9:15am- Worship 10:15am- ‘2nd Sunday’ Potluck Brunch, FH 10:30am- Promiseland	11 5:30pm- Trustees, Kitchnette 6:30pm- Council, Reformation Room	12 11:30am – Vital Agers Soup Lunch, FH 2pm- Intercessor Prayer Group, Prayer Room 4:30pm- Education Board, Kitchnette	13 4:45pm- M&O, Lounge 4:45-6:45pm- Supper, FH 5:30pm- 6-7 Confirmation / Promiseland / Bells 6:30pm- Lenten Worship & Drama 7:30pm- Choir/ HS Youth / 8-9, Confirmation	14 8:30am- Women’s Bible Study, Lounge 9:45am- Circle Bible Study Leaders, Lounge 10:30am- Good Samaritan Communion Service 630pm- Good Grief Group, Lounge	15	16
17 9:15am- Worship 10:15am- Coffee, FH 10:30am- Promiseland	18 2-4pm- Prayer Shawl Ministry, Shalom	19 2pm- Intercessor Prayer Group, Prayer Room 2:30pm- Forest Plaza Communion Service 6:30pm- Cub Scouts Pack Meeting, FH	20 4:45-6:45pm- Supper, FH 5:30pm- 6-7 Confirmation / Promiseland / Bells 6:30pm- Lenten Worship & Drama, PL sings, noisy offering for hunger 7:30pm- Choir/ HS Youth / 8-9, Confirmation, APRIL MESSENGER DEADLINE	21 8:30am- Women’s Bible Study, Lounge 9:30am- Martha Circle, Shalom 1:30pm- Sarah Circle, Lounge 1:30pm- Rachel Circle, Shalom	22	23
24 9:15am- Worship, Promiseland sings, noisy offering for hunger 10:15 – Coffee, FH 10:30am- Promiseland	25	26 1pm- LWR Quilting Do Day, FH	27 4:45-6:45pm- Supper, FH 5:30pm- 6-7 Confirmation / Promiseland / Bells 6:30pm- Lenten Worship & Drama, 7:30pm- Choir/ HS Youth / 8-9, Confirmation,	28 8:30am- Women’s Bible Study, Lounge 630pm- Good Grief Group, Lounge	29	30
31 9:15am- Worship 10:15am- Coffee, FH 10:30am- Promiseland						

Blessings & Prayers

Prayers

Sherri & Wayne Sesker in the loss of Sherri’s sister, Kay Nicholson of Alden

Eric & Brenda Rust in the loss of brother-in-law, Steven Malepsy of Litchfield, MN

Family and friends of Laurie Nugent of Forest City

Dorie & Gary Sinnard in the loss of Dorie’s brother & sister-in-law, Leonard & Lois Harms of Forest City

Michelle & Kevin Bungler and family in the loss of Michelle’s grandmother, Irma Belle Duncan of Cedar Falls

Wilma Sauer and family in the loss of husband, Eugene Sauer of Thompson

Jack Thurston, family and friends, in the loss of wife, Elaine ‘Chick’ Thurston of Forest City

Family and friends of Delores Steinfeldt

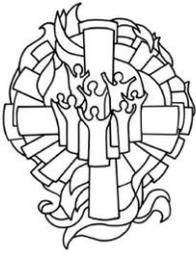


Let's hope March will be a little warmer month for all of us. Positive thinking Spring is closer. God bless you!

Dawn Craig,
Hospitality Specialist

Free meal served 4:45-6:45pm in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome each Wednesday for a tasty, homecooked meal as well as fellowship time!

- March 6** Spaghetti bar, bread, green beans, cake
- March 13** Hot dog bar, chips, cole slaw, apple crisp
- March 20** Baked pork, scalloped potatoes, corn, chocolate pudding
- March 27** Maidrites, chips, potato salad, strawberry fluff



246 South Clark Street, Forest City, IA 50436
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUEST



MISSION STATEMENT

Building community in the
Name and likeness of
Jesus Christ.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sundays – 9:15am
Wednesdays – 6:30pm

OFFICE HOURS

M-F 8am – 5pm

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

246 South Clark Street, Forest City, IA 50436

TELEPHONE

641-585-3152

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www.immanuelfamily.com

Facebook pages:

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Immanuel Lutheran Church Library

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Vice-President: **Daryl Krieger**

Treasurer: **Kathy Leuwerke**

Secretary: **Alice Lewellen**

Representatives: **Joan Beebe, Nic Determann, Linda Ferjak, Marcy Hanson, Linda Holland, Heather Johnson, Daryl Krieger, Amy Thorson, Melanie Westerberg**