# Immanuel Messenger April 2025

Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church Mission: We gather as people of Christ, serving with love, hope and faith.



# Join us for HOLY WEEK WORSHIP! IMMANUEL'S HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

April 13, Palm Sunday - 9:00 a.m. Worship with palms

April 17, Maundy Thursday - 12:15 & 6:00 p.m. Worship with the stripping of the Altar at 6:00 p.m. only.

April 18, Good Friday - 12:15 & 6:00 p.m. Worship April 20, Easter Sunday - 9:00 a.m. Worship

You are most welcome to worship with us weekly in person, or over the phone! In person worship is offered on Sundays at 9 a.m. You can call into worship ANYTIME at 1-888-975-5536.

Worship evith us from

# WE WILL CELEBRATE HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY ON APRIL 27!

Many American churches are resurrecting an old Easter custom begun by the Greeks in the early centuries of Christianity—"Holy Humor Sunday!" For centuries in Eastern Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant countries, the week following Easter Sunday, was observed by the faithful as "days of joy and laughter" with parties and picnics to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. Churchgoers and pastors played practical jokes on each other, told jokes, sang, and danced. The custom was rooted in the musings of early church theologians (like Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom) that God played a practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. You are welcome to switch up your attire on Holy Humor Sunday and wear two different shoes or soaks, mismatched clothes or a costume. Join us for this special worship service filled with the Good News of God's love, laughter and more on April 27!



Beloved people of Immanuel,

Throughout Lent are Turning Toward God's Abundance as we explore God's Faithfulness, Mercy, Compassion, Forgiveness, and Love during midweek Lenten Worship.

I wonder, how this has been for you?
I pray deeply that Lent continues to be a season of growth as we turn toward God's abundance!
As we are commended in Joel 2:13a, "Return to the Lord your God, for



God is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love" (NRSVUE). Truly, God loves you fully and completely in every breath. May you breathe deep in these days and welcome the bounty of God's Faithfulness, Mercy, Compassion, Forgiveness, and Love!

It continues to be a gift to serve alongside you!

-Pastor Bree

pastorimmanuelrf@gmail.com, 360-989-4906

Pastor Bree will be off and on vacation in the State of Oregon with my family April 21-26. In case of a pastoral care emergency in this time, please contact Deacon Michelle at 773-573-0948 or the church office at 815-625-3575.

The Noisy Offering throughout April will support the Buddy Bags food program that provides take home meals for Sterling students in need. Thank you for saving your change and using your change to change lives!

#### Council Meeting Highlights on March 17, 2025

1. There are two more outside security cameras to be installed and some focusing/repositioning of existing cameras. In addition Kyle is working out some tech issues. Kyle led a training session for Jill and Pastor Bree on how to use the new system to buzz people in and access the feed. The council determined that a received the feed.



- and access the feed. The council determined that a real-time monitor for the system is not necessary at this time.
- 2. New faucets have been installed in the kitchen. Special thanks to Denny for his service! We are holding off on installing a water softener until dishwasher plans are finalized.
- 3. The council installation was finalized for March 23.
- 4. The Congregational Council is continuing to explore and develop Immanuel's RSO policy.
- 5. Council voted that 'passing the peace' in a variety of ways be reinstated beginning April 6.
- 6. Three new members to be welcomed on March 23 and reinstatement of a member whose contact info was lost were all approved.
- 7. The April Council meeting date was changed to April 14 due to Pastor's schedule.
- 8. Council approved the support of Deacon Michelle's ministry by paying her First Call Theological fees, Synod Assembly costs and Professional Leaders Conference costs for 2025 from the Seminary Fund with Deacon Michelle to complete the Seminary Fund Scholarship Application.

Next meeting will be on April 14, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at Immanuel.

Respectfully submitted, Ronda Borgmann, Council Secretary



Immanuel's Trust Fund Team is meeting on April 3 at 4:15 p.m. in the Friendship Room. The Trust Fund Team oversees Immanuel's Memorials. Visitors are welcome.



We thank God for all of you, and for all who have birthdays in April! We specifically honor members who are 80 years or older.

Ruth Ann Metzen	4/01	Virgil Rhodes (94)	4/12	
Nancy Strock	4/20	Dale Smith	4/27	
Ronda Borgmann	4/28	Shirley Boyer	4/28	

Although we have no members married 50 years or more this month we praise God for all who were married this month!

If you don't see your name on this list or there is a correction to be made, please contact the church office at 815-625-3575.

Please join us for BBT in April! Breaking Bread Together or BBT is a time of sharing life, God's love and a meal together! What a gift to connect in God's love and welcome God's presence in all of life. These are no host gatherings for all interested parties.



Join us for BBT on Wednesday, April 30, at Angelo's II

(2525 E. Lincolnway, Sterling) at 11:15 a.m. Come and share life with God and each other at BBT!



Menz Group will meet at St. John's Lutheran Church in Sterling on Monday, April 7, at 6:00 p.m. This opportunity is open to all men. A hearty welcome and invitation is extended! Please contact Gerald Foskitt at 815-499-6566 with questions.

## **Offering Envelopes**

You will find two offering envelopes in your offering packet for Sunday, **April 20**. The red border envelope is designated for Easter and will be sent to the Northern Illinois Synod for benevolence. The other offering envelope is the regular offering and will be used for our expenses. Thank you.



## Please remember our Homebound Members with a prayer, visit or card:

Gerry Trieloff

Morningside of Sterling 2705 Avenue E, Apt. 233 Sterling, IL 61081

Emma Bailey

Citadel

105 E. 23rd Street Sterling, IL 61081

Virgil Rhodes

Allure of Walnut 308 S. 2nd Street Walnut, IL 61376

Joyce Greenwalt

P.O. Box 144 Polo, IL 61064 Shirley Downey

Morningside of Sterling 2705 Avenue E, Rm. 317 Sterling, IL 61081

Nancy Maxwell

710 W. LeFevre

Apt. 204

Sterling, IL 61081

Patricia Mintun

Allure of Sterling 612 W. St. Mary's Rd. Sterling, IL 61081

Delores Kuhlemier

1011 6th Avenue Rock Falls, Il 61071 Norma Atkins

620 N. Ottawa Ave.,

Rm. 222

Dixon, IL 61021

Vera Stutzke

Citadel

105 E. 23rd Street

Sterling, IL 61081

JoAnn Linton

20538 Manton Road Sterling, IL 61081



When being admitted to the hospital or nursing home, you are welcome to let the admitting clerk know that you are a member of Immanuel Lutheran, Rock Falls. <u>If you would like a visit or to be included in congregational prayers</u>, please call the church office (815-625-3575).

Please contact the church office if you have a prayer request for the congregational prayer list. Prayer requests will remain on the list for a month and can be renewed as many times as needed. Thank you!

**WORSHIP** at Parkway Ctr & Morningside

Immanuel is offering worship at two area care Facilities monthly. In April we are worshipping at 9:30 a.m. at Morningside of Sterling (2705 Avenue E) on April 8th and at Parkway

Center, (1801 Ave. G in Sterling) at 3 p.m. on Sunday, April 13. If you would like to assist with these opportunities please contact Pastor Bree.



WELCA served 22 attendees at the Ash Wednesday luncheon.

WELCA Bible Study will be held on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. at Immanuel. Please bring your Bible and "Gather" magazine. All women of Immanuel are members of WELCA and welcome to join WELCA for a time of fellowship and Bible Study!

Storytelling with Jen Miller will be held on Saturday, April 12 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at First Lutheran Church, 324 N. Third St., DeKalb, IL. Join Jen Miller from Jen Miller Collective for a morning of songs and stories about hope through depression and anxiety. This free will offering event is hosted by the Northern Illinois Synod WELCA of the Northeast & South Conferences. Find out more at nisynod.org/welca

You are most welcome at the 2025 WELCA Retreat at LOMC!

# Women ELCA

# Walking the Ancient Path

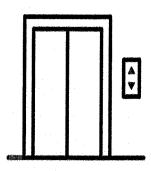
Saturday, April 26, 2025—from 8:45 a.m.-3 p.m. Cost: \$30
Registration forms are available on the table outside the church office.
The program and worship are being led by PATHWAYS staff of Christ Lutheran Church, Belvedere, Illinois.

"Thus says the LORD: Stand at the crossroads and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls."

-Jeremiah 6:16

We invite you to join us as we explore ways to connect with the ancient paths that have been walked by thousands of pilgrimages before. During our time together we will introduce practices that will help you to press pause, center yourself in the present, and connect with the divine. This will be an experiential retreat with a brief history/description of the practice and an opportunity to practice it and table interaction. We will also make a prayer bracelet (The Pearls of Life). LOMC is located at LOMC, 1834 S.IL Rt. 2, Oregon, Il. 61061

Your insights are needed to assist us in tending to our Elevator. On occasion the elevator door will refrain from opening. If this happens, please push one of the open door buttons to open the door. We placed a bright arrow by each. If the elevator takes to you to a floor you did not indicate or the door does not open, please indicate it on the form in the elevator. This will assist the elevator technician in any repairs.



Thanks for your assistance!



Are you looking for a way to be a part of God's Work in the world? Do you enjoy people of all ages? Are you willing to spend roughly 1-2 hours a month visiting people of Immanuel? Serving on the Homebound Care Team could be just the spot of you! Join us for an informational meeting and training to serve on the Homebound Care Team with current

Homebound Care Team members on Wednesday, April 2 at 1:30 p.m. at Immanuel in the Friendship Room. If you would like to serve and are unable to be at the meeting, PLEASE let Pastor Bree or the church office know prior to April 2.

Immense THANKS to all who have been contributing food and service to make funeral luncheons, Lenten Simple Suppers and meals for the Twin Cities Homeless Shelter possible! Your generosity and service shapes lives! THANK YOU!





Immanuel is delighted to celebrate the baptism of Austen Michael Payne Jr. on April 6 at 9 a.m. worship. Austen Jr. is the beloved child of Lindsey Shaw and Austen Payne, Sr. We give immense thanks for Austen Jr, all his loved ones and his life in Christ!

Tri Church Teen (6th - 12th graders) Time in April will be a service event of packing Buddy Bags on Wednesday, April 30 from 7 - 8 p.m. at the Wesley United Methodist Church (2200 16th Avenue). Please meet us at Wesley United Methodist. Come and serve with us!





**Thank you** to everybody that supported the youth at the Culver's Share Night on March 25th. You helped raise \$1,267.71! Many THANKS to all who dined, donated and served! Special thanks to Culver's too!

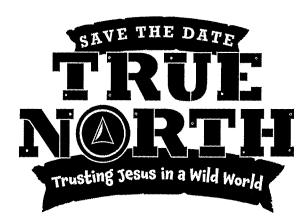


NOW is the time to make plans to join in CommUNITY VBS this summer! Consider having your grandkids or extended family coming to visit during that time and join us for VBS too!

CommUNITY VBS is offered for Pre-School-5th graders July 20-24 from 5:30-8 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran (501 8th Ave., Rock Falls). Festivities include a free supper, Bible exploration, music, games, science and arts & crafts!

Guard your calendars and plan to volunteer for this life-shaping week too! If you would like to be on the CommUNITY VBS planning team, the next meeting is on April 1 at 6 p.m. at Immanuel. PLEASE plan to join us or volunteer for CommUNITY VBS July 20-24!

If you are willing to head of Immanuel's VBS Meal or coordinate the kitchen for VBS please speak with Pastor Bree.



JULY 20-24, 2025 6-8 pm, Free Dinner at 5:30 Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rock falls, IL





Read through the gospels and at least one thing is clear: Jesus grew disciples. People followed him. They listened to him. Their lives were transformed. Then they went out and invited others into the same lifetime journey. The last two years, you have been invited on two parallel journeys. In 2023, we explored what it means to Be the

**Body** - that is, to learn and live what it is to be the body of Christ in everyday life. We are made part of Christ's body in

the world at baptism; we are called to live that each day. In 2024, we were invited to Open God's Story. We encouraged each other to connect God's work and word throughout the Bible with God's work in our lives. We invite you to bring those two journeys together in 2025 for a time of Growing Disciples. We will continue the work of Jesus' first followers: learning and growing in following Jesus. We will look at the ways and paths that Jesus taught us. Like those first disciples, we spend our entire lifetime shaping our lives in ways that follow him. And we invite others to do the same. Growing Disciples is a time for each member, each congregation to return to the roots of who we are as the body of Christ, listen to the life of Jesus, and grow deeper in our faith and our following. Every month will have a theme related to following Jesus, an area of discipleship we can grow and nurture in our lives. We will explore 7 different marks of discipleship and invite each other to grow deeper roots in each area, through practice, study, and opening of our hearts and lives, just as the original disciples did. We will share prayers, social media posts, monthly bulletin inserts, and blog posts from across our synod along with additional resources that you are welcome to use. Workshops and opportunities at CRE and Synod Assembly will invite you into ways to grow as a disciple. If you have a particular story of discipleship to share in one of these areas, let us know! This is an opportunity to grow and walk together. This is an opportunity to grow and walk together. You are encouraged to use #NISGrows on your social media posts as you grow throughout the year.

- Bishop Stacie Fidlar

# 7 Marks of Discipleship

PRAY. . . Prayer. . . Pray Frequently

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1Thessalonians 5:16-18)

**STUDY**...Christian Education...Study Scripture Diligently *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light upon my path*. (Psalm 119:105)

WORSHIP...Worship...Worship Regularly

I will bless the LORD at all times; the praise of God shall ever be in my mouth. I will glory in the LORD; let the lowly hear and rejoice. Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD; let us exalt God's name together. (Psalm 34:1-3)

**INVITE** . . . Evangelism. . . Invite Others Often

But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to preach? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:14-15)

**ENCOURAGE** . . . Teaching/Mentoring. . . Pass on the Faith *Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.* (1 John 3:18)

**SERVE** . . . Social and Justice Ministry. . . Serve for the Sake of Others For the Son-of-Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)

**GIVE** . . . Stewardship. . . Give Freely

...give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back. (Luke 6:38)

Prayer is the way a disciple enjoys an intimate relationship with God. Prayer can be private or public, ritualized or conversational, silent or out loud, spoken or sung, words or action, simple or profound. Through prayer God's will is discerned, and greater clarity is gained for our journey. Prayer is powerful. God's creative, redeeming, and healing power is often directed through prayer. There is no one way to pray; each of us will find a different way to pray that centers us on being open to how God is being revealed through prayer. Prayer is adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. Sometimes prayer invites us to move our body or to think of something or someone specific. Often times we find ourselves in moments of prayer without any words.

What is your favorite way to pray?

Throughout our Growing Disciples year, you are invited to find what types of prayer fill your soul. Maybe it is writing intercessory prayers for your congregation to use. Maybe it is through writing poetry or playing music.

Exploring ancient and new prayer practices is a great way of growing in your faith life and centering on who God is calling us to be. Explore the resources as you discover new prayer practices that help you grow in your faith and your calling as a disciple. Feel free to use the finger labyrinth below in your daily prayer practice. Use your finger to trace along the groves as you open yourself to the prayers on your heart.



# **Prayer Resources**

Additional resources will be added throughout the year. If you have a resource to add, please email Pastor Mack Patrick at niscommunications@nisynod.org

#### **ELCA Prayer Ventures**

• ELCA Prayer Ventures offers daily prayers each month. These petitions are offered as guides to prayer for the global, social, and outreach ministries of the ELCA, as well as for the needs and circumstances of our neighbors, communities, and world.

#### Bread for the Day

- Bread for the Day is a daily-use devotional resource filled with rich treasures.
- It is designed for personal, household, or group devotions. This is the perfect resource for individuals, congregations, households, Bible study groups, prayer groups, pastors, church councils, outreach teams, confirmation students, and teachers.

#### Resources for Crafting Prayers of Intercession

• Evangelical Lutheran Worship encourages that "The prayers [of intercession] are prepared locally for each occasion" (ELW. p. 105). How can this be done? What practices are useful? What resources can help? Listed below are several resources from ELCA Worship or Augsburg Fortress.

## Many Ways to Pray: Walking a Labyrinth

 A reflection on what it looks like to walk a labyrinth and its impact on personal prayer.

# Finger Labyrinths

• A variety of finger labyrinths that you may use in your personal prayer life.

# Seven Faith Practices Bible Study: Pray

• Living Faith in Daily Life: A four-session small group study on prayer. A four-session small group study on prayer.



On Sunday, March 23rd Immanuel welcomed new members! Everyone who participates at Immanuel is a part of our community of faith. All of you matter and your participation in the life of our congregation makes a difference! As per our congregational constitution, membership is required to vote at congregational meetings and serve in leadership roles. Being a member is a way

of formally acknowledging your partnership in the Gospel at Immanuel. The following friends joined Immanuel: Phyllis Houck, Clayton Pyskaty and Deacon Michelle Pyskaty. Welcome new members!



MANY THANKS to all who purchased Easter Lilies in memory, honor or celebration of others! You are welcome to take your Easter lily home following worship on Easter Sunday! Dedications will be shared in the Easter bulletin and the May Messenger.

The peace of Christ is always with us and beginning April 6th we will begin sharing it in a variety of ways during worship! In John 14:27 Jesus says, "My peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you." Truly the peace of Christ is with you always! We invite you to share a sign of Christ's peace in the ways that are comfortable to you beginning April 6! The options for sharing the peace of Christ are limitless! You can share the peace of Christ by saying, "Peace be with you," or "Peace of Christ to you." You may want to accompany the words with a wave, a peace sign, a fist bump, an elbow bump, a hand shake, a hug, etc. You are welcome to share the peace solely through words and simply leave your hands folded or behind your back or in your pockets. As we share the peace of Christ with one another, let us allow one another the freedom to share the peace in which ever ways are most comfortable for us without judging one another. Truly, the peace of Christ is with you! Let us share Christ's peace in whatever ways are most comfortable!

# You are an important part of the body of Christ!

Each of you matter to God, to our congregation and community! Pastor Bree and the Church Council are here to serve alongside you. You are welcome to contact Pastor Bree and Church Council members as needed.

Council Contact Information								
Pastor	Pastor Bree Truax 360-989-4906 <u>pastorimmanuelrf@gmail.com</u>							
Executive Board	President Kevin Arnold 309-434-8638 <u>Karnold</u> @growmark.com	Kevin Arnold         D           309-434-8638         8           Karnold         De		Secretary Ronda Borgma 815-622-9300 Rondaborgman @gmail.com	6 <u>nn</u>	Treasurer Bill Wescott 815-590-6270 paramedic61071 @yahoo.com		
Congregational Life Ministry	Deb Keaschall 815-718-5237 Debra.Keaschall@ gmail.com		Bill Wescott 815-590-6270 paramedic61071 @yahoo.com					
Faith Formation Ministry	Stacey Hackbarth 815-303-3386 shackbarth1@icloud.com		Please keep our Council Members and Pastor Bree in your prayers.					
Service Ministry	Pam Shoffner 815-716-0190 mccrash2007@hotmail.com		Bonnie Cassens 815-535-8323 BJCassens@yahoo.com					
Support Ministry	Scott Attig 815-303-9642 attig80@yahoo.com		Eli Attig 815-303-4092 <u>eliattig@gmail.com</u>					
Hospitality Ministry	Sheryl Wagner 815-252-7923 dashwagner@gmail.com		Shannon Schutz 815-590-6150 sschutz2000@gmail.com					
Worship Ministry	Ronda Borgmann 815-622-9306 <u>Rondaborgmann</u> @gmail.com		Kevin Arnold 309-434-8638 <u>Karnold</u> @growmark.com					



# Mark Your Calendars for Relay For Life on June 14 from 5-9 p.m.

Members of Immanuel, their family and friends are invited to become members of the *Spirit of* 

Immanuel. Relay For Life team at the 30th annual event to be held at Westwood Sports Complex in Sterling on Saturday, June 14 from 5 - 9 p.m.

Relay For Life is about celebrating survivors, honoring and remembering those lost to cancer, and Fighting Back against this cancer which is not fussy about who it attacks - male or female, younger or older, whatever nationality or heritage. Information will be shared through the bulletin. weekly. For questions, contact Service Ministry Council members, Pam Shoffner or Bonnie Cassens. Registration of survivors to walk the first lap, receive a free Survivor T shirt, and a free box lunch after the opening lap and team members as well may register online at <a href="https://www.relayforlife.org/saukvalleyil">www.relayforlife.org/saukvalleyil</a> or call 1-800-ACS-2345.

#### A HUGE THANK YOU

to the local businesses below who are supporting the Messenger!

Thanks be to God for your generosity! If you own a local business and would like to be a part of the team of businesses that help make the Messenger possible, please contact the church office.





& ASSOCIATES PC

Counseling & Consulting

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MINISTERS: MEMBERS OF IMMANUEL EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

Immanuel Office Phone: 815-625-3575

Fax: 815-625-3702

Office Administrator - Jill Leesman

office@immanuelrockfalls.org

Custodian - Jerry Adams

Organists & Music Directors - Virginia Schumaker & Lori Attig

Sunday School Superintendent - Jennifer Morgan

Pastor Bree Truax Cell: 360-989-4906

pastorimmanuelrf@gmail.com

**Church Office Hours** 

 $Monday-Friday \ 8:00 \ a.m.-12:00 \ p.m.$ 

Website: immanuelrockfalls.org

1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

In-Person Worship - Sundays at 9 a.m.

Sunday School at 10:15 - 11:00 a.m.

Facebook: Immanuel Ev. Lutheran, <a href="www.facebook.com/ImmanuelRockFalls/">www.facebook.com/ImmanuelRockFalls/</a>

Phone-in worship - available toll free anytime 1-888-975-5536