

Immanuel Messenger

May 2025



Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church Mission:

We gather as people of Christ, serving with love, hope and faith.



Happy Mother's Day to all moms and all who extend love and care to others! **THANK YOU** for sharing God's love through words and action!

Let us pray: *O God, THANK YOU for all loving mothers and all who extend care toward others. Uphold all who are caring with others. Guide relationships and bloom love in all places. Thank you for moms and all who share love! Amen.*

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. and Wednesdays at 4 p.m. You can call into worship toll free ANYTIME at **1-888-975-5536**.

*Worship
with us
from*
HOME



All are welcome to join in our Northern Illinois Synod Conference meeting on Sunday, May 18th at 2 p.m. at St. John's (703 Third Ave., Sterling). At this gathering we will be discussing Synod Assembly

Resolutions and so much more! Please come and share your insights and discuss resolutions with Synod Assembly Voting Members. All are welcome!

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK!

Your assistance is needed in trimming bushes, weeding, edging and so much more! **Our Spring Clean Up Day is on Saturday, May 3 at 8 a.m. The rain date is May 4 after worship.** Come and help spruce up the grounds! Please bring your own work gloves, shovel and gardening tools. Thanks in advance for your service!





Grace and peace of Christ to you all!

As you may already know, I love words! As it notes in Proverbs 18, words have power. Words have great capacity to bring life or destruction. We can use

“The tongue has the power of life & death”

Proverbs 18:21a (NIV)

words to speak truth and share hope, love, grace, and encouragement. We can use words to bring harm and share falsehoods. We make minutely chooses with our words... Our words matter and shape lives—ours and others!

“Don’t judge, just do!”

Joyce Kereven

May God help us to use our words to bring life!

Surrounding the computer in my office are a host of words—little papers taped and pinned up filled with quotes and words spoken to me. One of those notes is a quote I wrote down during a Women of the ELCA (WELCA) Bible Study on April 16, 2019. Joyce commended us that morning, “Don’t judge, just do!” In a few simple words Joyce was ushering us into life, **encouraging all to be active in living out God’s love.** Joyce used her words to encourage and challenge us to refrain from judging others. Living out God’s love in word and action is not easy AND it is a part of following Jesus! Following in the ways of Jesus—**loving God** with all that we are (Matthew 22:37), **loving our neighbor as ourselves** (Matthew 22:39), **loving foreigners** in our midst (Leviticus 19:34), **serving one another** humbly in love (Galatians 5:13), and more. **May God help us to live out God’s love!** Gratefully—Pastor Bree Truax

pastorimmanuelrf@gmail.com 360-989-4906

Pastor Bree (PB) is off & on vacation **May 8-12**. For emergency pastoral care during these dates, please call Pastor Carol Ahrens at 815-291-6987 or the church office at 815-625-3575. PB will also be off and out of state **May 16-17** for high school graduations of loved ones. For emergency pastoral care during those dates, please call Deacon Michelle at 773-573-0948 or the church office at 815-625-3575. Thank you!

Council Meeting Highlights from Mtg. on April 14, 2025

1. An update from Kyle stated that he has everything fully installed and he will soon schedule training for those who will be accessing the security system. Council suggested that staff and Support Ministry members receive the training.
2. Support ministry informed council of a door opening failure on the elevator. The repair company has been called. (Elevator was repaired on April 15-16 and is fully functioning.)
3. Council scheduled spring clean up day on Saturday, May 3 beginning at 8 a.m., with a rain date of May 4.
4. Council voted to purchase and install a domestic dishwasher in the kitchen; the water softener purchase was approved at the February meeting. These purchases will be made using Thrivent Choice dollars.



Next Meeting will be on May 19, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at Immanuel.

Respectively submitted, Ronda Borgmann, Council Secretary



Memorial Day is the day that's set aside to remember with gratitude and pride all those who served and died for our country and our freedom. May your day be filled with memories and peace.

O God, thank you for all who serve in the Armed Forces. Thank you for all who have made the ultimate sacrifice, of giving their lives in service to others. Amen.

The church office will be closed on Monday, May 26th in observance of Memorial Day.

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!





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

5/07 Betty Clementz

5/28 Joyce Greenwalt

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.

WELCA Bible Study will be held on **Tuesday, May 20, 2025**, at 9:00 a.m. at Immanuel. You are welcome to bring your Bible and "Gather" Magazine or copies will be provided for you. All women of Immanuel are members of WELCA and welcome to join WELCA for a time of fellowship and Bible Study!



**THANK
YOU!**

Funeral Luncheon Update

Thank you for your donations in support of funeral luncheons for families in need. In one morning, you donated over \$900! This will allow us to offer funeral luncheon provisions for people in need.

Huge thanks to all who have helped serve at and provide food for funeral luncheons! Funeral luncheon options include:

- A. Hot dish, green beans, salads and desserts for \$3 a plate.
- B. Sandwiches, baked beans, salads, chips and desserts for \$3 a plate.
- C. Desserts & coffee for \$1 a plate.

Funeral luncheons are booked thru Pastor Bree with family submitting the option and the head count. The fee is for the requested amount meals with WELCA providing extra at no cost. If there is fiscal need, meals will be provided at no cost.

To sign up to help serve or donate food for funeral luncheons, please contact Ronda Borgmann at rondab1963@yahoo.com or call 815-622-8966. Many hands make light work!

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

Vera Stutzke

105 E., 23rd Street
Rm 205
Sterling, IL 61081

Delores Kuhlemier

1011 6th Avenue
Rock Falls, IL 61071

Shirley Downey

Morningside of Sterling
2705 Avenue E, Rm 3
Sterling, IL 61081

Nancy Maxwell

710 W. LeFevre
Apt. 204
Sterling, IL 61081

JoAnn Linton

20538 Manton Road
Sterling, IL 61081

Joyce Greenwalt

P.O. Box 144
Polo, IL 61064

Ruth Ann Metzen

Morningside of Sterling
2705 Avenue E, Apt. 107
Sterling, IL 61081

Virgil Rhodes

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

Norma Atkins

620 N. Ottawa Avenue
Rm. 222
Dixon, IL 61021

Deb Gonzalez

812 W. 5th Street
Rock Falls, IL 61071

Special THANKS to all who continue to remember our home bound through prayers, cards and visits! We are church together!



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.

If you would like a visit or to be included in congregational prayers, please call the church office (815-625-3575).

**WORSHIP
at Parkway Ctr
& Morningside**

Immanuel is offering worship at two area care facilities. We are leading worship the **second Sunday** of each month (May 11) at **3 p.m. at Parkway Center**, (1801 Avenue G in Sterling). The **second Tuesday** of each month, (May 13) we are leading worship at **9:30 a.m. at Morningside of Sterling** (2705 Avenue E). If you would like to assist with either of these services, please contact Pastor Bree at 815-625-3575. Thank you for support of these worship opportunities! We are church together!!

Immense THANKS to all who donated lilies for Easter Worship!

In Loving Memory of:

June Alber
Harold, Lillian & Terry Adams
Christian 'Chris' Rhoads & Loved Ones
Don & Vanita Burkheimer
Kenneth & Myrtle Dewey
Ed Downey
Hugo & Mabel Gerken, parents
Glen R. Kuhlemier
Doris & Johnie Leopard, Stephanie Rivera
Ken Strock
Marian Rhodes
Harry & Evelyn Steltzer
Norden & Mary Scanlan
Terry Schutz
Robert & Mary Lou Wolber
Harold & Helen Mattson
James A. Sikkema

Paul & Florence Simpson

In Honor of:

Our Grandchildren
Dakota Noah DeVries
Our Grandchildren

To the Glory of God for:

Our 9 Grandchildren
Family
Our Grandchildren

Given By:

William & Carol Alber
Jerry & Betty Adams
Rod & Janice Attig
Kathy Burkheimer
Sharon A. Handel
Shirley Downey
Tom & Betty Clementz
Delores Kuhlemier
Lorrie Leopard
Nancy Strock
Virgil Rhodes
Jerry & Betty Adams
Nim & Sally Scanlan
Pat & Chris McCarty
Sandra Phillips
Harriet Bushman & Denise Kramer
Linda Wolber, Kellie & Jared Gardner,
DuWayne, Abby, Deyon, Darci, & Daniel Wolber
Linda Wolber, Kellie & Jared Gardner,
DuWayne, Abby, Deyon, Darci, & Daniel Wolber

Given By:

Terry & Mary Andersen
Rick & Pauline Moeller
Lou & Deb Gonzalez

Given By:

Kevin & Teri Arnold
Mike & Sherry Leaf
Lou & Deb Gonzalez

We welcome you to join in this prayer:

O God, we praise you for the lives of the loved ones who have gone before us. We thank you for wrapping all of humanity up in your love. We praise you O God of love and grace! We commend these dedications to you as we celebrate the gift of eternal life. Amen.



Thank you for your generous remembrances and gifts that adorned our worship space!



TriChurch

St. Paul · Immanuel · St. John's
The ELCA Lutheran Congregations of Sterling & Rock Falls
Partnering in Christ to serve our community and our congregations

Tri Church Introduces God's Work Our Hands Project

Many of you may have been familiar with Arrowwood and the Rock Falls Rehab Nursing Home – both facilities on Martin Road in Rock Falls that closed last fall. **Arrowwood is in the process of becoming Cledy's House**

of Hope – a sober living home for women in our communities. As described in the Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery newsletter, Cledy's House of Hope, designed to honor the legacy of Cledy Rumley, a devoted mother and champion of hope, is a 42-bed recovery residence for women committed to rebuilding their lives in sobriety.

Tri Church members toured the facility and determined this project very worthy of supporting. Help will be needed with cleaning, painting, and outdoor clean-up, as well as donations from a “wish list” for resident rooms. Until the contractor's work is completed, it is unknown at this time as to when Tri Church project work will take place. It will also be determined if there will be one designated work time, or perhaps more than one to accommodate a variety of schedules. Please look for more information in Sunday bulletins and newsletters.

Thank you in advance for “your hands” to support God's work in our community. We, too, can be champions of hope!

—Deb Keaschall, Tri Church Convener

Let's Feed Our Children



INDIVIDUAL PASTA DRIVE

**Join in supporting the
hunger needs of young
people in our area!
Individually Packed Pasta
Donations are needed!**

Let's Feed Our Children serves grab-and-go meals at 19 sites throughout Whiteside County in Rock Falls, Sterling, Tampico, Erie, Fulton, Lyndon, and Morrison (Prophetstown) throughout

the summer for young people ages 18 and younger. In the summer of 2024, they served over 34,000 free meals! **You can be a part of this vital service through your donation of Individually Packed Pasta until May 11th.** Kid's favorite choices are: Easy Mac, Chef Boyardee style of pasta, ramen noodles and chicken noodle soup. **Immanuel's collection basket is in the narthex through May 11. We will bring the collection forward during the offering on Mother's Day, May 11.** Thanks in advance for donating as you are able! If you would like to help pack lunches, you can sign by following this link: Choose your volunteer position and dates here: <https://signup.com/go/EiUzLvT> or reach out to United Way at 815-625-7973 or mybarra@uwwhiteside.org.

THANK YOU for being a part of United Way's ministry through your giving and through yearly donations to the Let's Feed Our Children. If you would like to make a special donation to United Way, you may do so directly by mailing it to: United Way of Whiteside County, Attn: Mardi Ybarra, P.O. Box 806, Sterling, IL 61081 with Lets Feed Our Children on the memo line or contribute to the **Noisy Offering throughout May that will support Let's Feed Our Children.** Thank you for ALL of the ways that you give and serve others!



Breaking Bread Together BBT

Join us for **Breaking Bread Together (BBT)** this May! BBT is a time of sharing life, God's love and a meal together! These are no host gatherings for all interested parties. **Join us for BBT this month on: Tuesday, May 6, (note day change) at 11:30 a.m. at The Factory, (103 W. 3rd Street, Sterling).**

Afterward we will head to Jodie Wetzell's shop, **Frosted Farm Girl** (9825 Tampico Rd., RF)! If you prefer to meet us there, we anticipate arriving at 1:15 p.m.



On Tuesday, May 20 at 11:30 a.m. BBT is at Route 40 Café (145 Washington St., Milledgeville). Come and share life with God and each other at BBT!

If you are in fiscal need and would like to participate in BBT, please speak with Pastor Bree privately and we will buy you lunch!

You can support **Sterling Buddy Bags** by **dining at the Factory (103 W. 3rd St. Sterling on Tuesday, May 6th!** Please join us in supporting Sterling Buddy Bags program. The Factory will donate a percentage from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. The money raised will help keep this program going for children in need of weekend meals.

Dear Members of Immanuel Lutheran Church,

Words cannot express our gratitude for the generosity you have shown our beloved Patricia, not only during her life among you, but also as she suffered and after her death. The support you gave her will never be forgotten. The generous donation of sponsoring the lovely banquet after her service truly touched our hearts in a way you will never know. The beauty of your church sanctuary truly reflects the beauty in the hearts of your church members. God's Blessings and prosperity to all! —The Family of Patricia Mintun



Dear Church Members,

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your generous contribution of \$683.33 to our organization. Your support means the world to us, and we greatly appreciate the positive impact you have in helping us fulfill our mission. Thank you for standing with us as we continue to provide compassionate care and comfort to those we serve. —The Board and Staff of Rock River Hospice & Home and Jacqueline Donaldson, Executive Director



We'd Love to Honor Our Graduates!

Do you have an 8th grader, high school, college or vocational graduate in your household? **Please let the church office know about them by May 25**; as Immanuel would like to celebrate their achievement on Sunday, June 1, 2025 during a special youth led worship with reception to follow. Thanks!

Thanks be to God for our Confirmation and Sunday School teachers and students! Classes are offered weekly **(10:15-11:00 a.m.) thru May 18th**. Please join us! **We will have a special celebration on May 18th during**



worship. There is no Sunday School May 25 until September. **Come and grow in God with us! *Please keep our S.S. youth and teachers in your prayers!***

6th-8th Grade Tri Church Confirmation is on May 4th at Immanuel. It is Immanuel's turn to provide lunch. Please let PB know what you would like to provide. THANKS! If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Bree. Come and explore your faith with us!



2nd-College folks—JOIN US for our year end faith formation Extravaganza with mini golf and more! **After worship on May 18, we will car pool to 9th Hole Mini Golf & More for a festive morning of mini golf, soccer, pool and more!** This celebration is FREE! Your trusted adults are welcome to join in the fun too! Expect zany faith-filled fun with random praises

and a BIG CELEBRATION of God's love for all people! Adults—please contact Pastor Bree if you are able to drive. Youth may be picked up from the Mall at 11:30 a.m. or will be back at Immanuel by 11:45 a.m. 9th Hole Mini Golf & More is located at the Northland Mall in Sterling and is owned by Matthew Hicks. Come & celebrate with us!

Birthday BUDDIES

We are participating with Tri-Church serving LSSI group homes this coming year in a new program to make birthdays a special day for some people in our community! “Birthday Buddies” is a program that will give some differently-abled people an opportunity to feel God’s love through a gift on their special day. Each of the Tri Church Congregations will take turns providing a gift and cupcakes for residents monthly. We will be sharing the names of our assigned recipients with you all and encourage you to send cards or sign a card from Immanuel before their birthday. Immanuel is celebrating **Michael E. on May 7th**. You are welcome to make or purchase a birthday greeting for Michael and leave it at the church office by Sunday, May 4th for it to be included in the Birthday delivery. Please keep Michael and all who are in LSSI Group Homes in your prayers. Thanks in advance for sharing God’s love through the Birthday Buddies program!

Congrats to Lindsey Shaw and Austen Payne on the baptism of Austen Payne Jr. (AJ) who was baptized on April 6. We welcome you to send a card of celebration, encouragement & support to Lindsey, Austen & AJ at their home (611 4th Avenue, Rock Falls, IL 61071



Strong Girls 2 Women (SG2W) Registration for 2025 is open! Camp is June 23-26, from 8:30-11:30 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran in Mt. Morris. Strong Girls 2 Women 2025 - Strong Girls Under the Sea, is a day camp designed to empower female campers going into 4-6 grades. Our theme this summer reminds us that **we have infinite potential** just under the surface! We'll have unique role models from interesting careers here everyday to inspire our campers. Registration is \$20 and will be covered by Immanuel. Contact Pastor

Bree for the registration link or register through the Facebook page of Trinity Mt. Morris. —Camp Director Melissa Rojas, Trinity Lutheran Church, 308 E Brayton Rd, Mt Morris, IL 815-734-6354 or trinitymmoffice@gmail.com



Relay For Life (RFL) will be held on Saturday, June 14th, from 5 - 9 p.m. at Westwood Fitness & Sports Center, Building 3, 1900 Westwood Drive, Sterling,

You can be a part of The Spirit of Immanuel Relay For Life Team by signing up with Teri Arnold on a Sunday morning

after worship (May 4 & 18)! You can also register online at:

https://secure.acsevents.org/site/STR?pg=entry&fr_id=110056

In addition, you are welcome to purchase a \$10 luminaria in honor of a cancer survivor or in memory of someone lost to cancer. Names will be read and luminarias will be displayed at Westwood on June 14th from 5-9 p.m.

You may pick up your luminaria as a keepsake following the event.

Survivors are invited to be apart of the opening lap with registration after 5:00 p.m. to record the number of years of survivorship. The registration form is also posted on the relayforlife.org/saukvalleyil website or call 1-800-227-2345 to register and receive a t-shirt in the mail.

Luminaria forms and survivor forms are also available outside the church office. Please make your check payable to the American Cancer Society RFL of Sauk Valley and mail the form to the address on the form.

Church Women United May Friendship Day Event is on Saturday, May 3 from 11 a.m. -1:30 p.m. at the Big Red Church (311 2nd Ave., Sterling). Pastor Bree speaker for this event. If you have not signed up yet and want to attend, please contact Pastor Bree. The cost is \$5 (payable at the event) and includes a box lunch. All are welcome!



MEN'S GROUP

Menz Group will meet at St. John's in Sterling on Monday, May 5, 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. Hope to see you there!

SAVE THE DATE

TRUE NORTH

Trusting Jesus in a Wild World

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



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).

CommUNITY VBS is a multi-day opportunity to experience God through the Bible, arts & crafts, science, games and more! Save the dates and plan to attend or volunteer for this amazing opportunity. Please watch your email & next month's newsletter for the QR code to register.

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 May 6th at 6 p.m. at Immanuel. PLEASE plan to join us or volunteer for CommUNITY VBS July 20-24! Consider having your grandkids or extended family coming to visit during that time and join us for VBS too!

CommUNITY VBS is sponsored and led by Immanuel, First Presbyterian, St. Paul, St. John's, Grace Episcopal, First Christian of Sterling, Bethel Reformed Church and Open Door Community Church. Immanuel is the host site for this year. Thank you for supporting this vital ministry!

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 pastorimmanuelrf@gmail.com			
Executive Board	President Kevin Arnold 309-434-8638 Karnold@growmark.com	Vice President Deb Keaschall 815-718-5237 Debra.Keaschall@gmail.com	Secretary Ronda Borgmann 815-622-9306 Rondaborgmann@gmail.com	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	<i>Please keep our Council Members and Pastor Bree in your prayers.</i>		
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 eliattig@gmail.com		
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 Rondaborgmann@gmail.com	Kevin Arnold 309-434-8638 Karnold@growmark.com		



Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center

NOW is the time to register for summer camp at LOMC! You can register for camp at www.lomc.org.

Opportunities are available for Grades 3-5, 6-8, High School Youth and Families! Immanuel has some

scholarship funds available to assist with camp costs. Please speak with Pastor Bree privately to request funds. **In addition to summer camp, LOMC has tent and trailer sites available for rent!** LOMC is also looking for **volunteers to assist with mowing**—please call the camp if you can help (815-732-2220).

THANK YOU for supporting the mission and ministry of Immanuel through your prayers, service and giving! You make a difference!

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.

Moeller, Myers
& ASSOCIATES PC
Counseling & Consulting

3917 E. Lincolnway, Suite C

Sterling, IL 61081

mmaccil.com

815.626.8760



CHERYL A. STUTZKE
Event Coordinator
castutzke@sbcglobal.net

BLUE GOOSE RUN

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Shane Schutz (815) 716-0320
Chad Wetzell (815) 716-3837

**Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church
501 8th Avenue
Rock Falls IL 61071**

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U S POSTAGE PAID
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**DATED MATERIAL--
PLEASE DO NOT HOLD.**

MINISTERS: MEMBERS OF IMMANUEL EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

Immanuel Office Phone: 815-625-3575

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. & Wednesdays at 4 p.m.

Sunday School at 10:15 - 11:00 a.m. thru May 18

Facebook: Immanuel Ev. Lutheran, www.facebook.com/ImmanuelRockFalls/

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