

# THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER



**NOVEMBER 2023**  
Volume 38, Issue 3



## From Your Pastor

Now on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As He was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When He saw them, He said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him--and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then He said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well" (Luke 17:11-19).

Ten men. Ten men with leprosy. They were outcasts of society. They lived on the fringe—shunned, even feared by all. Their movements were restricted. They had to warn all to stay away by proclaiming "unclean" in their hearing. They were considered to be the worst of sinners, because they had the most vile of diseases. Somehow, they knew and recognized Jesus. They cried out to Him in desperate hope.

Their cry: "Jesus, Master, have mercy"—not a demand for acceptance, but a simple plea for help. They knew their fate: they were doomed to die from this dreadful disease. They knew the reasons for their exclusion from society. And Jesus recognized their call for help. Not with a display of power, but with a simple statement: "Go, show yourselves to the priests."

Their cry for mercy is the same one that we make in our liturgy. "Lord, have mercy"—our Kyrie. And it means the same thing today as it did for these ten. We are not worthy, but, please, Lord, look upon us with favor and give us what we do not deserve. These ten were looking for healing. So are we. They wanted physical healing. So do many of us. Yet, the mercy we more urgently ask for is the forgiveness of our sins, that we may be accepted in the sight of the Father.

These ten were not healed immediately—at least not visibly. Their healing began with what was not visible: Christ's Word. They set out in faith—desperate faith, but faith, nevertheless. They began the journey to the priests to be certified as clean, even though their healing was not yet visible. Along that journey, the healing came. The joy must have been overwhelming. Nine of them continued, even hurried, to see the priests. The other one also hurried, but in a different direction—He returned to thank Jesus.

He turned around. He came back glorifying God. He had no questions about who Jesus was. He glorified God, present in the Son. He turned around to thank the One who had given him the thing he desired most. He was not swayed by the crowd mentality. His faith overcame that. He did what he knew was the right thing to do: he turned around to give praise to the One who had given him this gift.

We, too, need to "turn around."

As we celebrate Thanksgiving, we need to recognize the true Source of our gifts. We need to turn around, and look to the ultimate Giver. We so often depend upon our own abilities that we forget that we are but stewards—managers—of these gifts. We need to remember that all that we have is but a gift from God. When we rely upon ourselves, we no longer recognize God as the true Source of all. We, in essence, reject God.

The one leper knew the Source of his blessing. He did not reject God. We are in the same position as that leper. All that we have is ours by God's mercy. We deserve nothing from God because of our sin. We come to church to give thanks to God for the blessings that He showers upon us. And we know that all of the material gifts that we receive are but minor blessings compared to the ultimate gifts that we receive: forgiveness and the gift of eternal life. These are the ultimate, undeserved gifts.

And, just how do we receive these gifts? We receive them the same way that the lepers were healed: by faith; faith in the Word of God. We receive these gifts through the same One who healed the lepers: our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Christ ascended that Cross of Calvary for us, died and rose again to secure every blessing for us.

As you celebrate Thanksgiving Day, think of it as a "Turn Around Day." Consider it a special day to ponder all of God's goodness. Then, do not continue on your way with only your own hopes and desires in view. Instead, receiving God's overflowing and overwhelming goodness, recognize the Giver of all. Turn around daily and in all things with thanksgiving to God.

We have faith. We know the true Source of our gifts. Give thanks to the One that has given us life, His life for our new life, and all that we are and have. Give thanks!

Your fellow-servant for Christ,

*Pastor Mahuken*



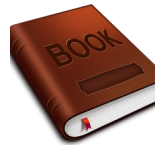
- November 3.....Cody Johnson
- November 4.....Arrick Clausen  
James Claussen  
Marissa Hatcher  
Sara Lickteig  
Dale Petersen  
Phyllis Schmidt
- November 5.....Coleen Bruhn
- November 7.....Janice Hennings
- November 8.....Alexa Lenhart  
Jett Lundell  
Cody Malone  
Cheri Martinson
- November 9.....Jersey Bral  
Finnley Bremser (1st)  
Graham Bremser (1st)  
Brenna Bubke
- November 10.....Scott Korner
- November 11.....Ty Jacobson  
Loren Lee  
Lisa Schroeder  
Sandra Voss
- November 13.....Janet Beeck  
Journey Bral
- November 15.....Peggy Aldag
- November 16.....Craig Bogatzke  
Bailey Ellerbeck  
Raymond Jepsen  
Hannah Ogren  
Lyndsy Peters
- November 17.....Carylee Martinson
- November 18.....James Fredericks Jr.  
Brett Wigg
- November 19.....Don Namanny  
Dick Streck
- November 20.....Koda Jensen  
Sarah Lundell
- November 21.....Jacob Lundell  
Spencer Schoenfeld  
Axel Walker
- November 22.....Janice Gierstorf
- November 23.....Tricia Bielenberg
- November 24.....Tyler Quandt  
Marvin Streck
- November 27.....Valarie Hall  
Jason Schultz

- Brian & Nakia Zavitz ..... November 2, 2007
- Guenter & Joyce Detlefsen..... November 7, 1964
- Vern & Karen Wood ..... November 9, 1968
- Dennis & Judy Gierstorf ..... November 15, 1969
- Jason & Marissa Hatcher ..... November 19, 2010
- Brandon & Kerry Meseck ..... November 20, 2010
- Paul & Jamie Nahnsen ..... November 20, 2021
- Zach & Kati Schwarz ..... November 22, 2002
- Tom & Cathy Bubke ..... November 23, 1969
- Gordon & Barb Quandt..... November 24, 1978
- Neil & Kay Wilken (50th) ..... November 24, 1973

Please notify the office of any omissions or corrections.



## From the Church Record Book



**Dismissals:** "May God continue to bless you."

**Megan Cornelius**, released to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Farnhamville, IA.

**Thank You** members of Immanuel for remembering us with the encouraging cards and gifts we received in recognition of Clergy Appreciation Month. We serve a loving and merciful God and precious Savior by the empowering work of the Holy Spirit, and we are thankful to be in His service with you. The Lord bless and keep us all!

Pastor Kaiser and Pastor & Chris Mahnken



### TIME CHANGE AND SATURDAY WORSHIP

Remember to change your clocks before you go to bed on November 4 as Daylight Savings Time ends that night!!

Please remember our Saturday p.m. worship time changes to a 4:00 p.m. starting time beginning Saturday, November 11.

Our Saturday worship will begin at this time (4:00 p.m.) throughout these weeks of late fall and winter.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.  
Psalm 116:15

## All Saints' Day

We will be observing Sunday, November 5 as *All Saints' Sunday*.

On that day, (and the Saturday evening before), we will particularly thank God for His grace and faithful blessings through Jesus our Savior by which He has given the gift of eternal life to those who have lived and died in faith, those whose souls now rest in our Savior's presence in heaven, awaiting the great day of Resurrection.

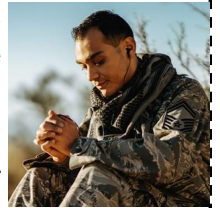
## DOOR OFFERINGS FOR MILITARY BIBLESTICKS NOVEMBER 4-5 & 11-12, 2023

Military BibleStick Door Offerings will be received the weekends of November 4-5 and 11-12. Please use the labeled box in the Narthex to leave your offering. Military BibleSticks are given to members of our Armed Forces by the organization Faith Comes By Hearing. We have again pledged ourselves to a goal of providing a case of BibleSticks, which costs \$2,500. Please prayerfully consider a donation to this excellent means of getting the word of life, hope, and salvation to the members of our Armed Forces, who stand watch to protect us.

**Small, safe, and strong.** The Military BibleStick is a small, matte-black, weather-resistant digital audio player designed expressly for the safety of deployed troops.

**Pure Word of God.** The Military BibleStick contains nothing except God's Word. Each service member and veteran receives the New Testament and select Psalms in dramatized, multi-voice audio (English and Spanish versions available).

**Family outreach.** Along with the Military BibleStick, each service member and veteran has the opportunity to send a free MP3 Bible on disc to their family, so that all may be disciplined in God's Word.



## Please Join Us for Immanuel's 2023

### HARVEST DINNER

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5  
11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.



Turkey with Mashed Potatoes  
and Gravy, Dressing, Corn,  
Salads & Desserts

#### FREE WILL DONATION

Proceeds from the meal will go to  
Immanuel's mission projects

*Dine-in or Carry-out*  
Delivery available — Phone 676-2235

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
501 Glad Street, Schleswig, Iowa



## The Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, November 26 at 11:15 am

### Decorate the Church



## Thanksgiving Eve Worship with Holy Communion

Wednesday, November 22  
at 6 p.m.

*Offerings received at this service will be  
used for Home Mission projects.*

Rejoice always,  
Pray continually,  
Give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

-1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

## Upcoming Sunday School

### Christmas Program practice



In addition to practicing during the Sunday School hour, the following extra practices are scheduled...please mark your calendars!

\*November 29 (5th-8th grade) times TBD.

\*December 6 (5th-8th grade) times TBD.

\*December 9 (all children) 9:00 a.m. — 11:00 a.m.

The children's Christmas program will be presented Saturday, December 9 at 4:00 p.m. with a soup supper to follow.





As unbelievable as it sounds, next week we have our first set of Parent-Teacher Conferences for the school year. We are already one-fourth done. Isn't it amazing how quickly time passes? There seems like so much to do and yet so much has already been accomplished!

If I had to choose my favorite things happening in the classroom, it would be hands-down, the understanding I see regarding who Jesus is and good versus evil. The other day, two classmates were having a disagreement. I wasn't there at the start so I can't say what the source of contention was. I did, however, hear the blood curdling screech of frustration and see the tears by one of the parties involved. As the little person made their way over to me, I asked what had happened. The response was priceless (and through tears), "It was the sneaky snake!" (We'd been learning about the sneaky snake in the Garden of Eden. I must say, the child applied it correctly. Whether it was selfishness, inability to demonstrate self-control, etc., the odds are good the source of the conflict was not Jesus. I suppose it could have been righteous anger. Regardless, I was over the moon with joy that the children are identifying what is and is not Jesus behavior. Once they recognize it, they can begin to walk in their authority over it. We all have the choice whether or not we're going to follow Jesus and how He wants us to respond or whether we're going to act out of our flesh. The children may not have the adult verbiage, but they certainly know whether Jesus' love is being demonstrated in a situation.

**We have exciting news and you are all invited!** The past couple of years preschool has hosted a carnival for Grandparents' Day. Needless to say, the children (and grandparents) have had a great time. We decided to expand and alter it a bit this year. We will be hosting the carnival at the Schleswig Community Building (and HUGE thank you to Bank Iowa and United Bank of Iowa for donating the cost of the building). Of course, we couldn't stop with just the carnival. Oh no! Why?

Well because we want you to all come and eat with us and join in the fun! Therefore, we will be hosting a vendor fair and silent auction along with a meal the same evening. You can have supper, start on your Christmas shopping, and spread the joy of Jesus to others. The Fall Fun Night will begin at 5:30 and last until 7:30. The vendors and meal will begin at 5:30. Please join us in prayer asking for wisdom regarding all the details. (I'm working my way around asking for volunteers to man booths for the evening. If I haven't gotten to you yet or maybe we don't know each other very well, please shoot me a text if you'd like to join in the fun. Trust me, I would appreciate it tremendously!)

Also, if you noticed the bulletin, we'd like to have a cake walk with the carnival. Would you be willing to bake a cake or two to donate as prizes for this game? Please shoot me a text at (712) 854-0104 if you can/will. The ones from Grandparents' Day last year were fantastic! I heard great reviews following the event after people had eaten them!

I pray you have a wonderful month as we head into the Thanksgiving season. There is much to be grateful for each and every day. The greatest being that Jesus loves us enough to die for us! Woot! Woot!

Blessings,  
Mrs. Gustafson



Here are a few pictures from our recent field trip!

**Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Voter's Meeting Minutes  
October 16, 2023**

**I. Opening Devotion and Prayer**

Led by Pastor Mahnken on "What does the Holy Spirit do?"

**II. Reading/Approval of Minutes and Agenda**

Both the October Agenda and the July Minutes were approved.

**III. Reports of Officers and Boards****A. Elders (Curtis Korner)**

Grant Clausen is completing his term of service. Curtis will be starting his second term and Joel Bubke has agreed to serve as an Elder. Curtis also sought the prayerful support of Immanuel members for the Elders and for Pastor Mahnken as they wrestle with some challenging decisions to make.

**B. Trustees (Ryan Kragel)**

An access point to the attic is being looked at. Landscaping projects have been completed. Potential future projects include new siding on the parsonage (a bid has been submitted by Maverick Roofing/Siding). The other project to consider is the flaking paint above the altar. The trustees will continue to investigate these needs.

**C. Treasurer/Stewardship/Finance (Dick Fredericks)**

Dick shared the income and expense reports. After 3 quarters of the year is passed, Immanuel is \$4,673.79 ahead.

**D. Education/Youth (Angie Ellis)**

Rally Day was held in September. Our youth will again be participating in Mercy Meals. Two replacements are needed for the Board of Education.

**E. Preschool (Jessica Ogren)**

Everything is running smoothly so far this school year. There was a good response from Immanuel members in purchasing items for Immanuel Preschool. Three people on the Preschool Board will be rotating off. Two of the three slots have been filled, pending the approval of the ballot.

**F. Mission/Fellowship (Judy Gierstorf)**

The Mission Board will serve a Harvest Dinner on November 5. It will consist of turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing, etc. Judy brought up the possibility of serving breakfast before church to raise money as well. Judy is also acting on the advice of Leslie Gustafson to get children's books into the hands of the pre-school children. Judy asked for opinions from the voters about funding/proceeding with this project.

**G. Memorial (Lodean Voss)**

Nothing to report at this time

**H. Pastor's Report**

In addition to sharing membership statistics, Pastor renewed his plea encouraging Immanuel members to pray 3x daily for the spiritual well being of its members. Also, he made a plea that we pray to guide more young people into being pastors and to pursue careers in the Christian education field.

**IV. Old Business****V. New Business****A. Approve Use of Advent Suppers (12/6, 12/13, 12/20 and Harvest Dinner 11/5)**

Peggy Wunschel made a motion to allow the serving body to direct the proceeds of the Advent meals as well as the Harvest Dinner. Curtis Korner seconded the motion and the voters approved it unanimously.

**B. Budget for 2024****1. Salaries**

- a. **Secretaries:** The Elders recommended that Val Teut and Amanda Bruhn each be given a \$1.00/hr raise. The motion was made by Rachel Mentink to follow this recommendation, it was seconded by Guenter Detlefsen, and approved by the voters.
- b. **Organist:** The Elders recommended that the organist receive a raise from \$80/service to \$85/service. Dick Fredericks made a motion to follow this recommendation, Jerry Ernst seconded that motion, and the voters approved it unanimously.
- c. **Tech Coordinator/Videographer:** Ryan Ernst currently serves in this capacity. Stemming from COVID, his work allows Immanuel's services to be shared via the internet. The Elder's recommendation was to increase the rate from \$72/service to \$75/service. Motion was made by Leroy Hight to follow this recommendation. Loren Jepsen

seconded the motion and the voters approved it unanimously.

- d. **Pastors:** It was moved by Leroy Hight, seconded by Dick Fredericks, and approved by the voters to give Pastor Mahnken an annual wage increase of \$1,500 and to give Pastor Kaiser an annual wage increase of \$1,000.

**e. Janitor****f. Groundskeeper****g. Snow Removal**

The Trustees recommend that items e, f, and g should all be frozen for the year. Guenter Detlefsen moves to abide by the Trustees recommendation, Glenda Bryson seconded the motion and the voters approve this motion.

**2. Concordia Seminary, St. Louis Adopt-A-Student**

(Annual support of \$1,000)

**3. Crossroads of Crawford County**

(\$4,000 in financial support for 2024)

**4. Approve Recipient of Portion of our District Support (Amigos en Cristo-Pr. Pedro Lopez)**

(Annual support of \$5,875)

**5. Lutheran Family Services**

(Annual support of \$2,250)

**6. Approve Recipient of Our Together in Mission Support (African Radio Ministry)**

(\$2,000 annual support)

A motion was made by Curtis Korner to fund items 2-6 at the same rate as in previous years. Leroy Hight provided a second and the voters unanimously approved the motion.

**C. Ballot**

1. **Education: (needs 2)** Kelsi Jepsen & Ross Wood
2. **Finance: (needs 2)** Tara Jepsen & Sandy Bubke
3. **Elders: (needs 2)** Curtis Korner (2nd term) and Joel Bubke
4. **Preschool: (needs 3)** Brittany Bremser, Amy Hoffmeier, and \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Trustees: (needs 1)** Ryan Ernst
6. **Secretary:** Craig Bogatzke
7. **Vice-President:** \_\_\_\_\_

A motion was made by Peggy Wunschel to adopt the ballot and its nominees in its entirety. Curtis Korner provided the second, and the voters approved it unanimously.

**D. Support for Zion/Unity Ridge Lutheran School**

A motion was made to give Unity Ridge Lutheran School \$5,000. It was seconded. After discussion the motion failed.

Leroy Hight made a motion to make a \$2,500 1 time gift, it was seconded by Dick Fredericks, and unanimously approved by the voters. This gift will be taken from Home Mission after a motion was made by Curtis Korner, seconded by Leroy Hight and approved by the voters.

**E. Other**

Guenter Detlefsen requested that some improvements be made to some exterior lighting. Ryan Kragel said he would look into it.

**VI. Adjourn with Responsive Prayer 2 (LW, p.273)**

Submitted by Craig Bogatzke, Secretary

"Everyone should be eager to advance the teaching and study of the Word for his own salvation and the glory of God." Martin Luther



### Pastor Mahnken's Report Voters' Meeting--October 16, 2023

We began 2023 with 608 baptized members on the books; and 501 communicant members on the books. We have received 12 by Holy Baptism (of these 12 baptized five were adults, who were also added as communicant members). We have added 10 communicant members by adult confirmation (of these five were already baptized). We added six to our number of communicant members by Jr. Confirmation. We have had six deaths: Larry Clausen, Judi Clausen, Curt Schultz, Lois Ernst, Kenny Winsor, and Colton Clausen. We released two from our roll by personal request to other Christian church bodies. We have had one transfer out to another LCMS congregation. We have had two transfer in. As of today, October 16, 2023 we have 618 baptized members on and 510 communicant members on our roll.

Our Saturday evening worship time will be changing. Beginning the 2nd Saturday in November—November 11—our Saturday service will begin at 4 p.m. It will remain at this time until March 9, if all things remain the same.

Please keep in your prayers our neighboring congregations of St. John, Kiron and Faith, Deloit as their pastoral vacancy continues. They are exploring options for their pastoral care. Retired Pastor Gordon Buchholz of Audubon is covering their Sunday services for now. Please also keep in your prayers Christ Lutheran Church in Denison as they have called a pastor to serve them.

Pastor Kaiser, my wife, and I thank you for remembering us yesterday, presenting us with a card and gift on behalf of the congregation.

There are several prayer requests which I invite all of you to continue to include in your daily prayers. One of them is for the war between Israel and Hamas, which is the terrorist organization leading the Gaza Strip. The impending escalation will be of world-wide impact and significance. This event threatens our world in ways we have not seen since 9/11, and I am not exaggerating! For an excellent summary of what has happened to this point, why it has happened, and what is at stake I invite you to read the transcript of Albert Mohler's podcast today, October 16. You could also listen to the podcast. His daily episodes are archived. His podcast is called *The Briefing* and the address is [albertmohler.com/the-briefing](http://albertmohler.com/the-briefing)

A second prayer request is that you daily ask our merciful Lord to call more men to the Pastoral Office and, beyond that more church workers. We face a huge shortage of teachers as well. Everyone

should be aware of the huge pastoral shortage we have by now. Fewer pastors means also that those who do serve are asked to cover more broadly and so are stretched more thinly. That is not a good recipe for successful ministry.

I ask you to join me in giving thanks to God for Pastor Kaiser's service among us. He preaches once a month per our agreement with him, but his visits of our shut-ins, his filling in to lead Bible Class during the week when I have other responsibilities, and other assistance he provides exceeds our agreement. Without his service, many things would not get done here at Immanuel.

Finally, I again remind you of my prayer challenge for us all: "Please join me three times a day in prayer for the spiritual growth of the members of Immanuel. Please pray three times a day! Pray that the eyes of our hearts may be opened to the wonder of God's grace. Pray for the Holy Spirit to be at work among us. Pray on behalf of the families and children of Immanuel that they will be blessed with a love for Jesus and a growing zeal to live for Him in this darkening age.

When I was looking over our statistics this afternoon and noted to Val that we had received 10 by Adult Confirmation this year and five of those had also been adult baptisms, she replied "Our prayers are working." Indeed, God has promised to mercifully hear and answer our prayers.

But there is also something telling about five adult baptisms and ten adult confirmations in one year. I did not suddenly become a much better pastor than I was 20 and more years ago! These numbers tell me that we are surrounded by people who did not grow up "in the church." We can't simply assume that everyone around us believes in Jesus and has received saving faith! Besides them, there are many who say they are "in the church" who haven't been in a church to receive God's grace for years! Yes, continue to pray, but we also need to continue to invite and teach and grow in ministry to help one another grow up in our salvation (1 Peter 2:2). And that, again, takes more pastors and more lay people passionately devoted to be involved in the work of ministry. So, more prayers!

Finally, as you pray, thank the Lord Jesus for His promise that whatever we ask the Father in His name, He will give it to us for the glory of our Savior (John 15:16)."

I thank you for your prayers.



~ THE LWML INVITES  
ALL LADIES ~



Pastor gave a presentation at our meeting on the life of Martin Luther. This included what was going on in the church at the time that caused him to post the 95 theses, thus sparking the Reformation.

Immanuel will be hosting the Pastors' Conference on November 14th. Plans were made to serve the morning coffee and rolls and also the lunch.

We voted to sponsor a student in Haiti to attend school for another year through the ministry in Mission project. His name is Frantz-Isaac.

Election of officers was held. Peggy and Coleen were elected to serve as President and Treasurer respectively for another two year term.

Visits have been made to Immanuel members now residing in Gracewell, Silveridge, Maple Heights, Heritage Heights and Odebolt Nursing and Rehab.

We concluded our afternoon with dessert and enjoying a time of fellowship.

Donna Harm, Secretary

From Your library . . .  
"Have we got a book for you!"



*The Pastor's Mail Order Surprise*

By Amelia Rose & Kate Whitsby

Missy Stanton believes her life is over when her husband Tommy dies in a tragic work accident in the railyard of Boston.

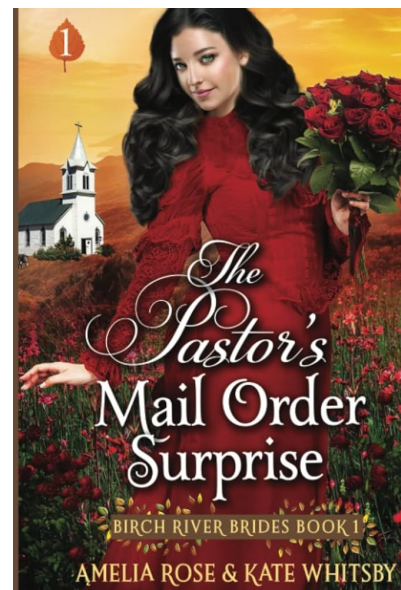
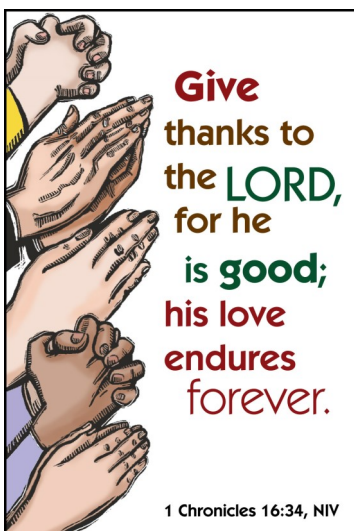
She was born a forgotten child abandoned to the Catholic church when she was a baby. The nuns took care of her and she grew up into a beautiful young girl. She is alone in the city, no family and no means to gain employment. She turns to the Matrimonial Times to hopefully find an answer to her problem.

Her first thought was that God had abandoned her, until a Pastor reached out from Wyoming and offered her a brand new life. Can she let go of her memories?

Birch River, Wy., is a mining town and every woman in town is already married. Pastor Tilsdale offers her a home and a marriage out of friendship, but realizes she is exactly what he was looking for.

Slowly getting to know each other as Missy gets over her grief of losing her husband. Read what surprises lay ahead for them.

—Submitted by Carol Neddermeyer



**AFRICAN RADIO MINISTRIES—NEWS**

We celebrate God's work through you, the African Radio Ministries partners and the saints serving in God's vineyard in Africa.

**Ethiopia News:***September Kingdom Growth:*

♦ New Converts	62	♦ Baptized	23
♦ Callers	156	♦ Confirmed	55
♦ Listening Groups		♦ Bibles	
formed	5	Distributed	30

**Hosanna Prison**

Our hearts go out to Ethiopia during these challenging times. Despite the civil unrest, the unwavering leadership on the ground remains hopeful and faithful in the Lord. Recently, the team visited Hosanna Prison to celebrate ten Baptisms, Holy Communion, and the Confirmation of 30 inmates through inspiring Divine worship.

Rev. Mengistu has been working tirelessly to bring hope to the prisoners in this region. Through his efforts, a plan has been put in place to build a house of worship for these individuals. During a recent meeting, church leaders throughout the region met, resulting in a generous contribution of materials to start the construction process. As this initiative moves forward, let us keep it in our thoughts and prayers, knowing the freedom and life in Christ it will bring to those who need it most.

**Liberia News:**

John Saah lives in northern Liberia where he is known by his neighbors as a drunkard. No one in his Foya community considered him useful, in fact he was an outcast. But one day John listened to the message preached on the ARM radio program in his Kissi dialect. He was curious to meet the pastor who spoke about new life in Christ.

John told ARM manager, Rev. Ezekiel Saah that he had been rejected by other churches because he drinks alcohol. So he chose to stay home on Sundays because he didn't want to embarrass anyone. Rev. Saah told him, "Jesus loves you as you are and God will accept you as His son. So we too welcome you to Hope Lutheran Church."

The next Sunday John began attending service at Hope Lutheran Church. We praise God to report that after three months, John Saah is lives and proclaims Jesus as Lord and Savior! Through his life testimony, John points others to Christ. He invites everyone he knows to come and worship with him at Hope Lutheran Church. John will soon be baptized along with the HCC kids. Glory to God!

Your partners in the harvest.

Missionary Linda Kurtz  
John and Kathy Duitsman

**¡AMIGOS EN CRISTO and GRACIA!**

News from *Las Iglesias Evangélicas Luteranas*  
*Amigos en Cristo in Denison and Gracia in Storm Lake*  
Pastor Pedro Lopez

Blessings to you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am sharing the latest events and blessings happening around the Hispanic Ministry in our District. But before anything else, I would like to say "gracias" for your continued support and prayers.

We finished our first ESL (English as a Second Language) program at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Fort Dodge on September 21. It was a great experience for our volunteers and all who participated. We met several people during the program, we made some friends, whom we will try to keep in touch with so that we can grow our relationships and see the possibilities to start a Bible study in the near future.

We begin our third ESL session at St. Paul-Hartley. We have been blessed in bringing new people to worship at St. Paul, even as they learn English. We had a bilingual worship service on October 8.

It was a great opportunity to share about the Hispanic Ministry, challenges, and culture. At the first class, we were asked about baptism. We are working with a Hispanic family for a double baptism at the end of our ESL program. We will keep you informed.

At St. Paul-Carroll, we started our second ESL program on Tuesday, October 10. We have a great opportunity to teach people the English language and also teach about God as we incorporate Christian hymns and Bible readings in our classes. We are also preparing several new members to be baptized and confirmed in our church. There has been over 20 people attending our Bible study and prayer group. We had a group of them (those who were not working) come and be part of the St. Paul float at the high school band parade.

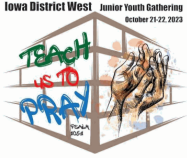
The ministries in Denison and Storm Lake continue with the same schedule. As we have mentioned already, we lost several families that moved out of the country and state but continue to outreach to new friends in these two areas. In late September, I had the privilege to lead chapel time at Unity Ridge Lutheran School, so I took the opportunity to make it a bilingual one. The kids enjoy this every time!

Our immigration workshop was very successful. Many families were informed on how to continue their efforts to become legal residents and become future USA citizens and were also given referrals to lawyers and other agencies. We continue to look for opportunities to meet the needs of our community and make new friends.

During our District conference I was able to share a lot of what I am sharing with you here. More opportunities are opening up so that we can go to new areas of the district and develop more Hispanic ministries. Please keep all of these places in your prayers and don't forget to support your Hispanic Ministry.

Gracias and Bendiciones to all, hasta pronto,  
Pastor Lopez





2023 IDW Youth Gathering was held in Des Moines October 21-22, 2023. Our participating kiddos: Beckham Walker, Brody Morgan, Charlie Beeck, Draton Palmer, Ezden Hargens, Gavin Schneider, Kara Korner, Karsen Bruhn.

There's a verse from Proverbs that connects with the weekend so well.  
Proverbs 22:6 'Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.'

Teach us to pray. "Prayer is a gift that God gives us" Pastor Newton of Ankeny reminded us of this. He was our KeyNote Speaker for our Mass Events in between our sections. This year was great a theme, it reminded us that we can talk to God anywhere and anytime. Pastor Newton did a wonderful job in his messages and often reminded us that our accessibility to prayer is anytime and in any situation, all that needs to happen is us giving our full attention to God as we talk to Him. We can give him all the good, all the bad and all the ugly and he helps us through it ALL. We just have to go to him in Prayer. We talked about how sometimes it can be hard to pray or not really know how or what to pray for. It is so important to continue to remind them how easy it can be to talk to God. Praying for others is also very important. Everyone and Anyone always needs prayers. The Pastor also gave us advice that you can pray for someone maybe you're not particularly fond of and the more you pray for them the less you are going to be mad at them. Middle school can be so tough... So kids, remember this ^^!

We had 4 sections we rotated to during the day before we did fun games, Karaoke, and Mercy Meals in the evening. Our daytime sections were: Prayer Trivia Kahoot, Lord's Prayer, Ask a Pastor, and Who Are You. We had unfortunately got a little split up in a few of our sections. There was OVER 300 kids this year!!!

- Prayer Trivia~Kahoot Room. All the kids go crazy for this every year. It's so much fun and they get to use their phones for this Kahoot App! Focus was on Lord's Prayer and some Bible Trivia. One of our teams got 2nd Place, 3rd Place and 4th place out of 9 teams! They did great. So proud of all of them.

- The Lord's Prayer Room was pretty neat. They had several different stations for this. One station they had to look at huge nails that were similar to the ones used to nail Jesus to the cross and think about the pain he endured for saving all of us. There was also a bowl full of vinegar and cotton balls we had to dip into the vinegar and swirl on our tongues. That represented how God takes all our sins away no matter how bad they are. And YES, we all smelled like vinegar after! Another was a dinner table set up and there was room for everyone +2 empty seats, one for Jesus because he sits with all us sinners and then the other seat they had to put names down of people the youth thought should know the Lord or that needed prayers. And then we prayed for those people. We wrote our own letters to God thanking him for whatever we wanted to thank him for.

- Ask a Pastor section the kids got to Ask the Pastor Wehmas from St. Paul Lutheran Church in Ida Grove about Prayers or anything they wanted. This was fun for the kids. A few questions...What made you want to be a Pastor, Is it hard to Preach in front of people, and Do Pastors Sin too? (Haha, And yes they do he says.)

- Who Are You section, this was interesting. Got a little deep with kids how hard life can be and how hard middle school can be and where we fit in and how we fit in and just feeling accepted by other people. We spend so much time paying attention to who others think we should be, and how trying to live up or down to those standards is so exhausting. Our middle schoolers are going through this and it's tough. Of course everyone wants to feel accepted. We focused on how we can let go of that through prayer and through God and except who God made us to be. Young kids have languages of their own and various interests like sports, band, and this super popular game called Fortnite that most of us adults know zero about. But, a language we all were able to speak together was the language that is spoken and offered by our Father. And no matter the age of the participant or physical ability, every one of us bonded within the Truth and Love of Jesus Christ.

"We are SPECIAL there is only one of us, So Rock Your Weird" "Your a 1 of a Kind, Thanks Be To God"

And then we got to fake Tattoo everyone with Liked and Loved permanent marker tattoos!! We ate a lot, drank lots of pop and had lots of laughs.

Taylor and Ashley really enjoyed chaperoning this great group of middle school kids. It's inspirational to think about the Godly direction and influence that an event like this can have on the kiddos, not just in the here and now but throughout their lives growing up. Hundreds of kids just made a weekend of memories centered around God!

Hope we get another group together again next year. It's October 19-20, 2024. Parents please plan for it, they all do really have a blast. It's such a great opportunity for the kids to get away from their parents in a safe and faith filled environment, let loose and be silly and hear God's word all at the same time. The laughs and giggles over the weekend are countless and it was a blessing for us chaperones to be apart of it. Mercy Meals, kids made over 33,000 meals this weekend!!!

I will ask that you continue to keep our Youth in your prayers! That as they grow up, to keep God in their lives and to always try and do the right thing. Keep them coming to church. We know they will appreciate all the prayers!

"Oh give thanks to the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!"  
Psalm 105:1

Thank you for your time in reading about our fabulous weekend!!  
~Article submitted by Ashley Beeck & Taylor Teut

See photos on the reverse side!

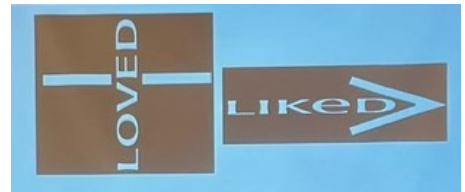


### Pictures from the 2023 IDW Jr. Youth Gathering



**Middle School students from Immanuel and their chaperones.**

Ashley Beeck, Charlie Beeck, Karsen Bruhn, Gavin Schneider, Brody Morgan, Draton Palmer, Beckham Walker, Taylor Teut, Ezden Hargens and Kara Korner.



**ALIENS: EXTRATERRESTRIAL VISITORS OR EXTRADIMENSIONAL INTRUDERS?**

[Following is an article written and posted May 27, 2020 by Pastor Jonathan Connor of Zion Lutheran Church in Manning, IA. It is copied verbatim from Zion's website:

<https://zionmanning.com/blog/223/aliens-extraterrestrial-visitors-or-extradimensional-intruders.php>]

Aliens exist, there's no two ways about it." Helen Sharman, Britain's first person in space (in 1992), offered these confident words just weeks ago. She went on to offer, "It's possible they're here right now and we simply can't see them."

What do you think?

Many people have claimed to see aliens. Some even claim to have been abducted by them. Yes, many of these have been exposed as hoaxes or weather balloons or a meteorological event or birds or some other natural explanation, but a handful remain unexplainable by any natural account. And some of these claims have been made by reputable people (like Ms. Sharman).

And, if you were to look back through history, you'd see that people have been reporting unknown lights and objects in the skies for thousands of years – people from India to England, from the Americas to China. The Ancient Greeks and Romans have stories about “fiery globes” and “flaming chariots” that flew through the skies. The American Indians told stories about “flying canoes” and “great silvery airships.”

What are we to make out of it all? Are aliens real?

Let's take a few moments to think it through. Before we conclude our planet has been visited by beings from other planets, let's first ask if beings even exist on other planets. If life only exists on earth, the whole question of extraterrestrials must be reconsidered.

So, is there life “out there”? Let's start with Scripture. God's Word tells us that God created the sun and the moon and all the stars “to govern the day and night and to separate light from darkness” (Genesis 1:18). In other words, the moon and the sun, the stars and all the planets, were given for Earth – for us. The universe was made for us!

This is a significant and surprising truth, one that moves believers to wonder and awe. King David marveled: “When I look at Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him?” (Psalm 8:3-4)

The majesties of space were created for us, for our enjoyment and to mark seasons and time for us. This doesn't necessarily prove there isn't life “out there,” but it is strongly suggestive. Space was created for earth (and science is showing us how precisely positioned we are for space observation and discovery!).

Darwinian evolutionists struggle to accept this, seeing the universe as a vast waste of space if life only exists on earth. Carl Sagan, the famous evolutionist, expressed this sentiment when he offered, “The universe is a pretty big place. If it's just us, seems like an awful waste of space.”

In fact, many evolutionists, having acknowledged the insurmountable odds to spontaneously generating life on earth, are increasingly looking to space to account for life's origin on earth. The theory is called *panspermia*. It a nutshell, it purports that aliens seeded life on earth, which then evolved.[1]

But this assumes other planets are capable of supporting life (and then developing technology to get it here!). Ms. Sharman (quoted above) offers, "There are so many billions of stars out there in the universe that there must be all sorts of different forms of life..."

That seems reasonable until you consider something called “habitable zones.” A habitable zone is a condition that has to be just right for life to exist on a planet. So, think Goldilocks. There are currently 13 known habitable zones that have to be met before Goldilocks will be happy, before Goldilocks is even able to sample the bears' porridge. These include things like the existence of liquid water, the level of ultraviolet radiation, the planetary rotation rate, the tilt of the planet, the atmospheric electric field, the levels of carbon dioxide and monoxide, and many more.

Jay Richards and Guillermo Gonzalez were astounded by these realities and wrote the book *The Privileged Planet* to communicate how unlikely our planet is and to suggest it just might be favored in the cosmos (it was made into a documentary, which is well worth watching!) They wrote, “Precious few plots of galactic real estate are as amenable to complex life as ours...” As scientific knowledge advances, the number of habitable zones continues to decrease as the number of potential planetary candidates for supporting life continues to dwindle.

But let's just assume space is teeming with aliens. Where are they? Voyager 1, NASA's space probe launched in 1977, has long ago passed Pluto without a hint of alien life detected. But maybe they're farther out. If so, how did they get to earth?

(continued on reverse side)



Consider a few stark realities. Light travels at an astonishing 186,000 miles per second. If we could achieve this speed (a feat we will discuss below), it would take 4.2 years to reach the next closest star after the sun. To traverse our galaxy, it would take 100,000 years. To reach the next galaxy like our own (and, therefore, the one with the greatest chance of supporting life) would take 2.3 million years (and the one after that is 20 million light years away!).<sup>[2]</sup>

Are we to assume these little ETs hopped in their spacecraft, dropped it into warp drive, and zipped along for millions of years to flit around in our skies? Radar has picked up unidentified flying objects, but it has never detected one leaving our atmosphere. Where do they go? They're certainly not going home and back! Are they able to make physical structures disappear?

Further, when you consider the physical realities of traveling at the speed of light, you quickly realize how hopeless such space travel is. Consider this: to propel an object that weighs one pound to a velocity 50% the speed of light would require an energy source equal to the energy of 98 Hiroshima-sized atomic bombs. To get something the size of a space shuttle to 50% the speed of light would require 23 million atomic bombs. It would require the same amount of energy to stop the craft!

And, lest you think this might somehow be achievable, these little aliens would also have to figure out how to avoid planets and stars. Worse, they've have to figure out how to avoid the dust in space! Hitting a piece of dust at a mere 10% the speed of light would be like hitting 10 tons of TNT. At 50% it would be like slamming into 2.2 atomic bombs! Because of this, these little green dudes would need to develop a dust detection system that would be capable of traveling faster than the speed of light to detect the dust light years ahead so as to perform evasive maneuvers. But this would put such gravitational pressure on them that it would kill them. Anything over 9 Gs kills people and destroys ships. Imagine the impact of millions of Gs!

These are the hard realities standing between us an alien visitation. And, to be as charitable as possible, even assuming evolutionary ages, there hasn't been enough time for such advanced life to evolve somewhere out there and get here. Reality has a way of asserting itself.

But what about people who claim to have been abducted? Did they make it up? Some may have. Many, however, probably had a genuine experience, not with extraterrestrial beings, though. What they likely experienced was extradimensional beings. And the Bible has a word for them: demons.

Why, for instance, do "alien" abductees often report that their abductors disparaged Jesus and His Word? Why would aliens from distant galaxies travel here to ridicule Jesus and His Word? And why is there such a lack of committed, confessing, practicing Christians reporting abductions? And why do abductees report being released immediately upon the invocation of Jesus' name? Why would aliens submit to Jesus? Aren't these realities a bit suggestive?

Gary Bates, author of *Alien Intrusion*, and source for much of the information in this article, offers this conclusion to his extensively documented study:

These entities are not real physical ETs from other planets. They are from another dimension... So, to find their source, one needs to wear 'spiritual glasses.' Unfortunately, most of these modern-day researchers have embraced a humanistic-based view of the world, with the theory of evolution serving as the creator of both them and the aliens. This opens them up to spiritual deception and, in turn, has blinded them to the claims of the Bible, which makes God the Creator. I suggest the answers they have been looking for but do not want to hear may be – 'God is real, and the Bible is true.'

Ms. Sharman (quoted at the beginning of this article) is partially right. "Aliens" exist and they are among us, but they are not, in fact, extraterrestrial; they are extradimensional. They are demons. Scripture speaks openly of them even as it declares Jesus' decisive victory over them. And there are no two ways about this: Jesus lives and Jesus reigns!

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[1] Space prevents detailing the challenges to evolving life from simple to complex. In brief, evolutionists propose two mechanisms to move evolution upward: natural selection and genetic mutations. Natural selection enables an organism to adapt to its environment, but it never creates any new genetic information. Genetic mutations do a fine job of deleting, duplicating, or damaging existing genetic information, but they, likewise, never create any new genetic information. In other words, these proposed mechanisms can account for variation within an organism kind (think variation in the dog kind), but they cannot create new kinds (like a green haired dog or moving a dog to a horse).







[2] Why are we assuming the speed of light? Here's why: if we assume normal space travel speed (38,000 miles per hour), it would take over 11 million years to reach earth from the next comparable galaxy. Those poor little aliens would starve!



# NOVEMBER 2023

Immanuel Lutheran Church,  
Schleswig, Iowa

**GRATEFUL  
Thankful  
& BLESSED**

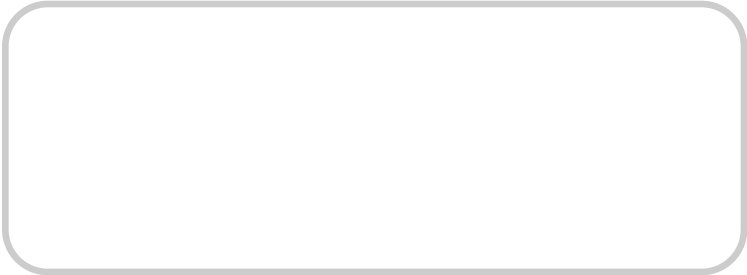
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Preschool</b> Mon., Tues., Thurs.: 8 a.m.—3 p.m. Wed.: 11:45 a.m.—3 p.m.</p> <p><b>Confirmation</b> 5th &amp; 6th grade: 3:30 p.m.—5:15 p.m. 7th &amp; 8th grade: 6:15 p.m.—8:00 p.m.</p> </div>			<p><b>1 All Saints' Day</b> 6:30 Bible Study p.m. Preschool Confirmation </p>	<p><b>2</b> Preschool 1:30 p.m. LWML 6:30 p.m. Bible Study</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>6 p.m. Wedding Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>4</b> 3 p.m. Andresen-Jepsen Wedding 5 p.m. Worship w/HC</p>
<p><b>5 All Saints' Sunday</b> <i>Daylight Saving Time Ends</i> 9 a.m. Worship w/HC 10:15 SS &amp; BC 11 am-1 pm Harvest Dinner</p>	<p><b>6</b> Preschool</p>	<p><b>7 Election Day</b> Preschool Voting in Fellowship Hall </p>	<p><b>8</b> 6:30 Bible Study p.m. Preschool Confirmation</p>	<p><b>9</b> Preschool 9 a.m. Quilting 6:30 p.m. Bible Study</p>	<p><b>10</b> 10 a.m. Veteran's Day Program at School 5:30-7:30 p.m. Preschool Vendor Fair at Comm. Bldg.</p>	<p><b>11 Veterans Day</b>   4 p.m. Worship w/HC</p>
<p><b>12</b> 9 a.m. Worship 10:15 SS &amp; BC 11:30 a.m. Elders' Meeting 1:00 p.m. Schleswig Sharks 4-H mtg.</p>	<p><b>13</b> No Preschool</p>	<p><b>14</b> Preschool 8 a.m. Pastors' Conference @ Immanuel</p>	<p><b>15</b> 6:30 Bible Study p.m. Preschool Confirmation</p>	<p><b>16</b> Preschool 6:30 p.m. Bible Study</p>	<p><b>17</b> <i>IDW Sr. Youth Gathering in West Des Moines (17-19)</i></p>	<p><b>18</b> 4 p.m. Worship w/HC</p>
<p><b>19</b> 9 a.m. Worship w/HC 10:15 SS &amp; BC</p>	<p><b>20</b> Preschool</p>	<p><b>21</b> Preschool <i>Messenger</i> Deadline for Dec/Jan issue 12-4 p.m. Volunteers to OGT</p>	<p><b>22</b> 6:30 Bible Study No Preschool No Confirmation 6:00 p.m. Thanksgiving Eve Service w/HC</p>	<p><b>23</b> <b>Thanksgiving Day</b> </p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>25</b> 4 p.m. Worship w/HC</p>
<p><b>26</b> 9 a.m. Worship 10:15 SS &amp; BC 11:15 a.m. Hanging of the Greens </p>	<p><b>27</b> Preschool</p>	<p><b>28</b> Preschool</p>	<p><b>29</b> 6:30 Bible Study 8:45 a.m. Newsletter Assemblage p.m. Preschool Confirmation</p>	<p><b>30</b> Preschool 9 a.m. Quilting 6:30 p.m. Bible Study</p>		

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Saturday Worship at 4 p.m. w/HC beginning Nov. 11  
Sunday Worship at 9 a.m. HC on first & third Sundays  
Sunday School and Bible Classes at 10:15 a.m.  
+++++

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**THE IMMANUEL MESSENGER**



**OUR MISSION  
STATEMENT:**  
*"Together in Christ,  
we grow through the  
Word and  
Sacraments, serving  
our Lord and  
sharing His saving  
grace with all  
people."*