



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Glorifying God. Impacting the Community.

Immanuel Informer

March 2024

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The Holiest of Seasons



The month of March, in a way, resembles the weather we've been experiencing lately. Lots of change in a short amount of time. One day it's dreary and cold and the next day it's sunny and warm. As a pastor I am always aware of the number of Sundays per month. March happens to have five Sundays which means more worship time. That's great!

Much like the weather, during the season of Lent we also go through changes as we walk the road with Jesus on His way to the cross. As you know, the season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday with its dark and somber feel. Our hymns are subdued as we withhold our alleluia's. It's done intentionally so that we can capture the full spectrum of Jesus' humility on his long road of suffering (Lent) and ultimate sacrifice on the cross (Holy Week). It is there on the cross that He is exalted. All is quiet as we remember Jesus dying for the sins of the world.

Then a dramatic shift takes place come Easter morning as we celebrate our Savior's victory over death. It's a complete contrast moving from contemplative darkness to joyful light as Jesus is resurrected to eternal life. That beautiful "Alleluia!" proclamation returns on Easter Sunday, March 31st. I invite you to join us on Palm Sunday for a beautiful Cantata, "Out of the Shadows" and of course, Holy Week with its profound significance. Be sure to invite a neighbor, a friend, a family member, or a stranger. Pray for the Spirit to give you the words and prepare their heart to receive it. All you have to do is simply ask. They may even take you up on your invitation and join our celebration. To God be all the glory!

"Alleluia! Christ is risen!" "He is risen indeed! Alleluia!"

Pastor Steve Deombeleg

Blessings on your Stewardship Journey

Are You a Giver or a Taker?

It has been said that we are either givers or takers. Very likely, however, most of us fall somewhere between these two ends of the spectrum. In John 12, we read about a very generous giver and an extreme taker. Mary, the sister of Martha and the brother of Lazarus, was the giver. Her giving was the anointing of her friend and Savior. *“Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair”* (verse 3). Mary’s extravagant gift demonstrated much love and devotion. She anointed Jesus with very expensive ointment or perfume. Very likely this was special ointment that she had been saving, and she found the perfect occasion to use it. How she anointed Jesus also showed her love and devotion. It wasn’t enough that she used very expensive ointment; she used her hair to wipe Jesus’ feet. Her acts of love epitomize giving. Mary gave herself and her best.

In the same story, we find a taker. *“But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples (he who was about to betray Him), said, ‘Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?’ He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it”* (verses 4-6). It is clear that Judas was a taker, and he suffered the consequences for his greed and selfishness.

In our thoughts and prayers, let us ask our Lord to send His Holy Spirit to grant us giving and generous hearts. May we, like Mary, be willing to give ourselves and our best.

CHRISTIAN GIVING IS NOT MEASURED BY THE SIZE OF THE GIFT, BUT BY THE SIZE OF THE HEART.

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).



God showed us His love and grace by what He was willing to give us. *“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life”* (John 3:16). God’s grace is given to us without any merit on our part. Grace is not something we’ve earned. It is a free gift to us, but it comes at a high cost to our Lord. Grace has been defined as “God’s Riches at Christ’s Expense.” By grace, we believe that the tremendous love Christ poured out on the cross is available for us! The Holy Spirit opens our eyes and minds so we can see Who God is and what He does for us.

Stewardship Corner

Throughout the forty days of Lent, we face head on the destructive nature of sin in our lives and our need for a Savior. As we repent of our sinful ways, we place our sins at the foot of the cross knowing that Jesus has already paid the penalty for our disobedience. Because of God’s love and grace, we receive forgiveness of our sins and victory over death. *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Corinthians 15:56). Receiving God’s forgiveness, we share God’s grace and love with others.



Join us this Lenten season, as we consider the Passion of our Lord Jesus from the Gospel of John. We will hear John 18–19, Jesus' betrayal and arrest, Jesus facing Annas and Caiaphas, Jesus before Pilate, Jesus delivered, Jesus crucified, and Jesus' death and burial. We'll especially consider the divine majesty and glory of Jesus that's hidden under his suffering and death. We pray that God the Holy Spirit would, by this meditation, imprint the image of Christ crucified in our minds and hearts and on our consciences.

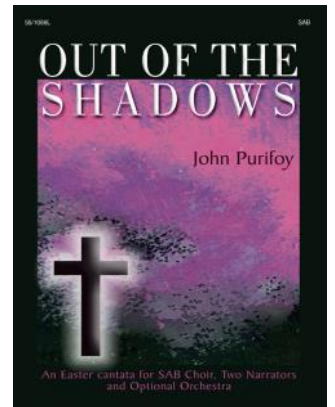
Midweek 4: Whom Do We Follow? John 19:1–16a

Midweek 5: Wisdom Has a Friend... John 19:16b–27

Midweek 6: Jesus Finishes the Battle... John 19:28–42

Join us Palm Sunday for *Out of the Shadows, a Cantata*

On March 24, at 9:30 a.m., our choir will lead us through the agony and angst of the stirring events of Holy Week, textually and musically evolving into the jubilant celebration of the risen Christ in this moving portrayal of the most significant event in all Christendom. The remarkable beauty and sensitivity of Purifoy's music captures the extreme sadness contained in the story's darkest shadows as well as the exhilarating excitement created by the risen Christ. ...out of the shadows of darkness, Jesus triumphed ...out of the shadows of death, Jesus rose ...out of the shadows of the crucifixion, we are all reborn.



March 28, 7:00 p.m. - Maundy Thursday
Worship with Holy Communion

March 29, 7:00 p.m. - Good Friday Tenebrae Service

March 31 at 9:30 a.m. Easter Sunday
Worship with Holy Communion

Join us after worship on Easter Sunday for a Do-it-Yourself Breakfast and Easter Egg Hunt for the kids. Please bring a breakfast dish to share.



Spring flowers and lilies will be offered for purchase to decorate Immanuel for Easter. Order forms will be available March 3 - 17 in the Sunday service folders and on a table in the Narthex.

Put Your Hands Together

A ministry of Immanuel Lutheran Church

PYHT Report (through 2/25)

Private & Online Donations: \$867.00

Pending Grant Applications: (0)

Grant Awards: None New Grants Written: (0)

PYHT Food Distributions & Activity:

In-Kind Food Donations/Food Rescue Received: 48,774 lbs.

PYHT Pop Up-Pantry Families Served: Saturday Feb 10th 98/363 T=176 Families 622 Individuals

PYHT Food Relief Agencies & Ministries Served: Abundant Children & Family Services, Pilsen FP, Berwyn FP, Westchester FP, Elmhurst FP, Elmwood Park FP, Project 22:9, Youth Crossroads, Downers Grove Community Kitchen, IHC DuPage, St. Paul Oak Lawn, St. Matthews Soup Kitchen, Housing Forward, York Township FP.

NEWS

Volunteers: We are always grateful for the wonderful volunteer turnout on Saturday Pantry Day, and all throughout the year! February 10th Distribution thank you to: Pastor Steve, Ed, Karen, Tommy, Donn, Heather, Carol, Trina, Tina, Randy, Bill, Mike M., Cameron, Alicia, Ron, Rita, Mike H., Grace, Julie, Scott, Susan, Lynn, Becky, Marilyn, Barb, Eddie, Lisa, Evan. 1000's of lbs. of food and beverages were distributed in the love and fellowship of Christ to our community in need. You all are the heart of this successful ministry! Thank you, Bill, for the new and repaired pantry carts, which make our work much easier!

Weekday (Friday) Distribution List

As you may know, our weekday food distributions are by text message invitation when we have extra food available to give away. Began in July of 2022, we now have 215 Families on our list. Invitations to food giveaways are now done in both English and Spanish to accommodate the large immigrant population. There are still communication challenges, but thanks be to God, love, kindness, and generosity is universally understood.

APRIL SHINE EVENT: The Northern Illinois District-LCMS Annual Shine Event

Pantry Day SHINE Event: Saturday, April 13th @ 11am

New T-Shirts for everyone!

Expansion Project Update

Unfortunately, no new grant awards have come through this year for the expansion project. Funding appeal that began in November to 97 of our congregation members, 13 families responded, \$4,710. The expansion project is in limbo until we reach the minimum \$60K funding goal.

PYHT: URGENT Request for Official Board Members: See Jayne Siou

No new or large grants can be written without official Food Pantry Board Members.

Please pray for continued guidance and support of our expansion project!

IMMANUEL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Have To or Get To?

Valerie Winston

Last month I wrote about switching God for good. I have another switch for this month and it's all about perspective. We all lead very busy lives and sometimes our schedules seem so overfilled. We have all heard the comment that there are not enough hours in the day to get everything done.

Sometimes when we are frustrated with our schedule and all that we have to do, we will run down a list of all the things we “have” to do. We have to get up in the morning. We have to go to work. We have to get groceries. We have to do laundry. We have to clean the house. We have to deal with people who annoy us.

What if we changed our perspective and focused instead on what we “get” to do. We get to wake up each morning and see a brand-new day. We get to go to work and perform a job that earns us the money we need to survive. We get to eat good food. We get to have clothing and a home. We get to be around people and keep from being alone or lonely. We get to be an example to those around us. We get to experience new things. We get to have a day filled with activity that keeps us from being bored.

I often tell students that technically we don't “have” to do anything. But how amazing is it that we “get” to do so many things. All of that is because of all the blessings God has bestowed upon us. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to man. And God is faithful, he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”

We all have things that we have or must do. And those things are no more challenging than what anyone else has to do. But as the verse says, God will never put more on us than we can bear. Not only that, but when things get difficult, God will provide a way for us to handle it. So, instead of having to do, we get to do. It's all about perspective.

**Daylight
Saving Time
Begins**



Everything written in the Scriptures was written to teach us, in order that we might have hope through the patience and encouragement which the Scriptures gives. Romans 15:4

Getting the Most Out of Your Daily Bible Reading

As you read the Bible each day, allow the Scriptures to speak to you. This daily “dialogue “ between you and the biblical text will reveal new understandings about God, and about yourself.

March - Prayer

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Habakkuk 1:1–17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 17 Psalm 22 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Habakkuk 2:1–20 | Great Lent (Orthodox) |
| Third Sunday in Lent | <input type="checkbox"/> 18 Psalm 23 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Habakkuk 3:1–19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19 Psalm 25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Nehemiah 8:1–18 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 Psalm 26 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Nehemiah 9:1–25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 21 Psalm 27 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Nehemiah 9:26–38 | <input type="checkbox"/> 22 Psalm 28 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7 Nehemiah 10:28–39 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23 Psalm 31 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Esther 2:1–23 | Palm/Passion Sunday |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Esther 3:1–15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 24 Mark 11:1–25 |
| Fourth Sunday in Lent | <input type="checkbox"/> 25 Mark 12:1–27 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Esther 4:1–17 | <input type="checkbox"/> 26 Mark 12:28–44 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11 Esther 5:1–14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 27 Mark 14:1–31 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12 Esther 6:1–13 | Maundy Thursday |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13 Esther 6:14–7:10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 28 Mark 14:32–72 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14 Esther 8:1–17 | Good Friday |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15 Esther 9:1–19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 29 Mark 15:1–41 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16 Esther 9:20–32 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 Mark 15:42–47 |
| Fifth Sunday in Lent | Easter Sunday |

Set aside time to read the bible on a daily basis.

Find a quiet place to read and reflect on each day’s reading.

Begin with prayer, asking God for guidance and blessing.

March Birthdays

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 6 - Karen Sierawski | 13 - Heather Hempel | 24 - Teagan Bozzi |
| 7 - Bob Brown | 17 - Kennedy Perry, <i>6th Grade</i> | 28 - Aissa Perez |
| 7 - Tom Czubernat | 19 - Andy Polivka | 31 - Tannah Bozzi |
| 10 - Aerin Everhart, <i>Kindergarten</i> | 20 - Valerie Winston | |
| 11 - Carol Northcutt | 22 - Hortencia Perez | |
| 11- Sandra Houle | 23 - Lynne Hempel | |

A Month of Prayer

The fellowship of prayer consists of caring people who pray daily for members in the church. Members and their families will be listed in alphabetical order each month. Please pray for both their known and unknown needs. *School Families in italics.*

1. Tina Alicea
2. *Aguirre Family*
3. *Anderson Family*
4. Ron & Barb Arndt
5. Susan Arnold
6. Taylor Balslew
7. Bell Family
8. Jennifer Bettin
9. Jeffrey Bettin
10. Karen Bimler
11. Blair Family
12. Christine Bost
13. Bozzi Family
14. Ruth Anne Brendemuhl
15. Bob Brown
16. *Brown - Thurman Family*
17. Doretha Brown & Rashaad Smith
18. *Caldwell Family*
19. *Chapmon Family*
20. Joe & Lisa Chioda
21. *Davis Family*
22. Detrall Dearbone
23. The Deombeleg Family
24. Laprika Duff & Jayla Pernel
25. Arlene Gasperich
26. Lisa Gasperich
27. Stella Gonzalez
28. The Hadler Family
29. Steve Hadler
30. Steve & Lucretia Hardy
31. Evelyn Haynes

For the Record
Nothing to report





March 2024



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

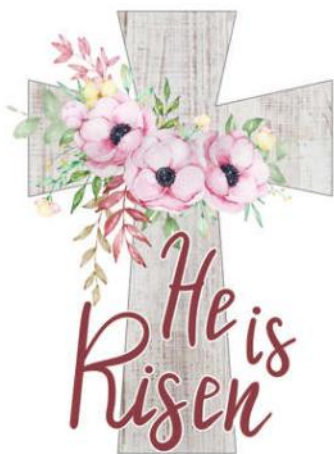
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	9:30am Worship with Holy Comm. 10:30 Fellowship 11:15am Bible Study	4	5	6 - 1:45pm Chapel 3pm Faculty mtg. 6pm Lenten Supper 7pm Lenten Service 7:30ish Adult Choir	7	8	9
10 - <i>Scrip Orders Due</i> 9:30am Worship & <i>All School Sing</i> 10:30 <i>Open House</i>	11	12	13 - 1:45pm Chapel 6pm Lenten Supper 7pm Lenten Service 7:30ish Adult Choir Practice	14	15	16	11am Food Pantry <i>Daylight saving time begins tomorrow. Move your clock forward one hour tonight before bed.</i>
17	9:30 Worship with Holy Comm. 10:30 Fellowship 11:15am Bible Study	19	20 - 1:45pm Chapel 6pm Lenten Supper 7pm Lenten Service 7:30ish Adult Choir Practice	21	22	23	
24	9:30 a.m. Palm Sunday Cantata 10:30am Fellowship 11:15am Bible Study	25	26	27	28 - 7am Morning Prayer Meeting 7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service with Holy Comm.	29	30
31 - 9:30 Easter Sunday Worship with Holy Comm. 10:45 Do-it-yourself Easter Breakfast							

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RETURN REQUESTED

POSTMASTER: DATED MATERIAL



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*As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another,
as good stewards of God's varied grace. 1 Peter 4:10*