

## What to Do?

Greetings in the Name of Jesus,

*"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden" Matt. 5:14*

Well, what a drastic change it's been since the last newsletter. A month ago, we lived in a different world; a world of the familiar, of routines, of pretty much being on autopilot. We never realized just how much we enjoyed putting it in cruise control and singing along with Doris Day, "que sera sera, whatever will be will be, the future's not ours to see, que sera sera." Today we are singing, "Don't stand so close to me" by The Police. Our manual for normal operating procedure is nowhere to be found.

With the arrival of COVID 19, there is a new operating manual. This manual has instructions on how to live your life when you are isolated, anxious, bored, vulnerable, miserable and desperate. This is the "new normal" and we are not very pleased with it. It has disrupted every part of our daily lives. It feels like the angel of death has arrived and there's no place to hide. What are we to do during a time of uncertainty and fear of the unknown? We have many unanswered questions. What to do?

With all the expert analysis and greatest minds feverishly working to contain the virus and ultimately eradicate it, nobody has the answer we're looking for. As Americans, we have had it so good for so long, we couldn't see it coming—we were blindsided. That's what happens when you believe you are invincible. It is truly humbling to be invaded by something you cannot see; something that controls your life and the lives of the those you love and care for. What to do?

Our Heavenly Father is the only One who can adequately answer that question. Throughout the pages of Holy Scripture there are accounts of great upheaval and tragedy, death and destruction, hopelessness and despair, disrupting every aspect of life. Yet, in the midst of calamity God is there with His people to assure them of His presence and deliverance (Psalms 46 and 91). Today and every day it is good to be reminded of who you are in God's eyes. *"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."*

I mentioned previously that I was going to focus on our Vision Statement and what it means to be a "missional church." A good example of that is the gathering of food donations for the Westchester Food Pantry. This is one way to "proclaim the excellencies of [Jesus]." Let's continue to be God's light on a hill by looking out for our neighbors and praying for them; checking in on them and each other, praying for each other, encouraging each other, and giving back to God with our offerings.

And please be sure to check your email as this is the primary means of communicating with you. Look forward to emails regarding online worship during Holy Week as well as Easter this year. It is unfortunate to have to cancel these services, but the Lord has made a way for us to gather just the same. We can

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## Count your Blessings in the Midst of a Virus Pandemic

For many of us the Coronavirus national emergency is perhaps the biggest life-changing event that as a country we will face. Fortunately, our generation has missed the great depression and world wars which caused even greater lifestyle changes than what we are facing today. As we all know, this virus pandemic has caused the closing of schools and colleges, the cancellations of sporting events, and the job loss for many people. Many churches are no longer holding services, concerts cancelled, restaurants closed, vacations postponed, etc. The coronavirus has caused significant declines in the world's financial markets, decreasing the value of people's investments and retirement funds.

It is easy for people to become bitter and frightened in these circumstances and many will blame God. God's Word tells us of a better way. *"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17). These verses give us actions that will enable us to overcome the worst circumstances. We aren't told just to "feel better" but to *"rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks..."*

There's a lot to give thanks for, too, when we're going through difficult times. God is with us, and He is control. What a joy we have knowing that we have God's presence and protection. We have God's strong and abiding presence through His Word and Sacrament. Each and every day, we have the opportunity to turn to God in His Word to be uplifted and refreshed even when the world around us seems to be closing down. Through the faith that God gives us, we know it is God's will that we rejoice in Him and seek His peace in the midst of this virus pandemic.

In the midst of this crisis, the church still continues its vital mission and ministry. Jesus tells us *"I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it"* (Matthew 16:18). God promises us that nothing will overcome the Church because it rests on Jesus. The church is here to minister to the bitter, frightened, and doubtful. We encourage your prayers and ask you to continue your generous giving. The fear of catching the virus will keep many away from church, but we do ask that you continue your faithful giving as you are able. May God help us all during these challenging times be the light that He wants us to be.

**FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE REFLECT GOD'S LOVE TO OTHERS.**

"For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another" (1 John 3:11).



## Stewardship Corner

The Apostle Paul wrote, *"What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?"* (1 Corinthians 4:7). There is nothing that has originated from us so we cannot boast as though we are self-made and independent. Through faith, we know that we are able to eat because God created plants and animals. The clothing that we wear comes from material created by God. God created the trees and metals that form the structures for our homes. God gives us the ability to build and reshape what He has created, but God is the true source of everything.

## Let Us Focus on Jesus and Be Agreed in Prayer

By Valerie Winston

It's hard to put my thoughts and emotions into words right now. As an educator it has been most difficult to be away from my students in this situation. I am unable to comfort them, answer questions, and am unable to educate them. There have been many adjectives used to describe what we are going through with COVID-19, school closures, stay-at-home orders, and quarantines. This situation has been called fluid, ever-changing, unique, and unprecedented.

Much of our focus has been on the illness itself, loss, devastation, and fear. There are people from home that I know personally who have contracted the virus. And there have been friends and former students who have lost loved ones to it. Each time I check social media, I see a range of emotions being expressed. There is anger, outrage, confusion, depression, exasperation, and even boredom. But I also see hope, faith, humor, support, and love.

In the midst of all this, I think of the verse, "Be still and know that I am God". During times like this it can be difficult to just be still. But we have to remember that there has been healing. There have been recoveries. There is always hope. In this we can find strength and encouragement. Let us ever be mindful of the many times God has told us that when there are times of trouble, He is our refuge, our strength, and an ever-present help.

We need to hold fast to our faith and uplift and encourage others. We need to continually pray. We need to pray for those who have fallen ill, for those who have lost loved ones and for those who are healthy to remain so. We need to uplift our students, teachers, and families as we work to create a new educational norm. We need to pray for all those on the frontlines, such as healthcare workers and all those who continue to serve the public in so many ways. And we especially need to pray for those who are struggling in their faith during this time.

As has been said throughout this year we need to transition and focus our eyes on Jesus. Let us continue to uplift and encourage one another. God's blessings and peace to all.

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always look to a future date to gather for an Easter celebration. I miss you all and look forward to the day we meet again to worship in the Lord's house.

So, back to our question—What to do? The Lord speaking through the prophet Isaiah calls us to trust Him:

*"You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off"; fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Is 41:9b-10)*

In the Fellowship and  
Love of Christ,

Pastor Steve Deombeleg

## April Birthdays

- 4 - Becky Lelingis
- 5 - Phyllis Ondrovic
- 6 - Laneta Washington
- 8 - Vernon Witt
- 9 - Miguel Lepe
- 11 - Wayne Valentino
- 18- Elaine Boettcher
- 19 - Luke Svec
- 20 - David Mannella
- 21 - Kayla Anderson
- 25 - Miguel Lepe Jr.
- 28 - Heidi Murphy
- 30 - Viviana Pena

*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.

**APRIL**

- |                     |                           |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Psalm 12          | 14 1 Corinthians 15:1-11  |
| 2 Psalm 16          | 15 1 Corinthians 15:12-34 |
| 3 Psalm 22          | 16 1 Corinthians 15:35-58 |
| 4 Psalm 31          | 17 1 Peter 1:1-12         |
| Palm Sunday         | 18 1 Peter 1:13-25        |
| 5 Matthew 21:1-11   | 19 1 Peter 2:1-17         |
| 6 Matthew 21:12-22  | 20 Hebrews 4:14-5:10      |
| 7 Matthew 26:17-35  | 21 Hebrews 6:13-7:10      |
| 8 Matthew 26:36-56  | 22 Hebrews 7:11-28        |
| Maundy Thursday     | 23 Psalm 33               |
| 9 Matthew 27:11-31  | 24 Psalm 42               |
| Good Friday         | 25 Psalm 71               |
| 10 Matthew 27:32-56 | 26 Job 5:1-16             |
| 11 Matthew 27:57-66 | 27 Job 5:17-27            |
| Easter Sunday       | 28 Romans 5:1-11          |
| 12 Matthew 28:1-10  | 29 Romans 5:12-21         |
| 13 Matthew 28:11-20 | 30 Romans 6:1-14          |

**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.



**A Month of Prayer**

The Fellowship of Prayer consists of caring people who pray daily for members in the church. Members will be listed in alphabetical order each month. Please pray for their known and unknown needs.

- |                     |  |                                  |
|---------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 1. Dot Schnieder    | 8. The Svec Family                       | 22. Randy & Michelle Weeks       |
| 2. Doreen Schulz    | 9. The Swasko Family                     | 23. The Welch Family             |
| 3. Karen Sierawski  | 10. The Tense Family                     | 24. Dorothy Westphal             |
| 4. Jayne Siou       | 11. Chris, Katy, Carson & Braydon Thomas | 25. Robert Westphal              |
| 5. Rose Slagle      | 12. Paris, Rick & Zariah Thomas          | 26. Philbert Wilcox, Sr.         |
| 6. Daniel Stallings | 13. Lisa Tipple                          | 27. Philbert Wilcox, Jr.         |
| 7. Rita Stallings   | 14. Lance Turner                         | 28. John Wilkins                 |
|                     | 15. Debbie & Wayne Valentino             | 29. Brett Willis                 |
|                     | 16. Shawn Viger                          | 30. The Winston /Anderson Family |
|                     | 17. Sarah & Thy Vu                       |                                  |
|                     | 18. Jelisa Washington                    |                                  |
|                     | 19. Laneta & Ja'mya Washington           |                                  |
|                     | 20. Patricia Washington                  |                                  |
|                     | 21. Marilyn Weeks                        |                                  |

**FOR THE RECORD**

Deaths:

Ed Ivers March 9, 2020



# APRIL 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>During Shelter in Place - All services and bible study will be online at <a href="http://www.immanuel-hillside.org">www.immanuel-hillside.org</a> or through Zoom. All previously scheduled church and school April functions have been cancelled or will be rescheduled.</p>						
5 - Palm Sunday 9:30 Worship Online 11AM Zoom Bible Study	6	7	8 10am WBS Zoom 4:30pm MBS Zoom	9 7pm Maundy Thursday Service	10 7pm Tenebrae Good Friday Service	11
12 Easter 9:30 Worship Online 11AM Zoom Bible Study	13	14	15 10am WBS Zoom 4:30pm MBS Zoom	16	17	18
19 9:30 Worship Online 11AM Zoom Bible Study	20	21	22 10am WBS Zoom 4:30pm MBS Zoom	23	24	25
26 9:30 Worship Online 11AM Zoom Bible Study	27	28	29 10am WBS Zoom 4:30pm MBS Zoom	30		

2317 - 2329 South Wolf Road  
Hillside, IL 60162

Church phone - 708-562-5590

School phone - 708-562-5580

E-Mail: [general@immanuel-hillside.org](mailto:general@immanuel-hillside.org)

[www.immanuel-hillside.org](http://www.immanuel-hillside.org)

**RETURN REQUESTED**

**POSTMASTER: DATED MATERIAL**

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Rev. Steve Deombeleg, Pastor  
[ilcpastor@immanuel-hillside.org](mailto:ilcpastor@immanuel-hillside.org)  
708-562-5590 ext. 101 Cell: 847-714-6080

Deatrice Honey, Administration Assistant  
[general@immanuel-hillside.org](mailto:general@immanuel-hillside.org)  
708-562-5580 ext. 200

Donn Hempel, B.A., Director of Music  
[dhempel@immanuel-hillside.org](mailto:dhempel@immanuel-hillside.org)  
Office: 708-562-5580 ext. 205  
Home: 708-442-1505

Valerie Winston, Principal  
[vwinston@immanuel-hillside.org](mailto:vwinston@immanuel-hillside.org)  
708-562-5580 ext. 201  
[www.icahillside.org](http://www.icahillside.org)

**REMEMBER TO PRAY. . . .** If you have a prayer request, please call the pastor in the church office (708-562-5590). We are praying for you! Please notify the office when circumstances of your request change or when the Lord answers your prayers. We want to rejoice with you and thank the Lord.



**Glorifying God. Impacting the Community.**

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