

# Immanuel Lutheran News

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Visit our web site at [www.immanuelaltamont.org](http://www.immanuelaltamont.org)

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## *From the Pastor*

Dear People of Christ at Immanuel,  
“We’ve never done it this way before.” We sometimes joke that Lutherans say that to justify not changing the way things are done, but we can’t say that right now. With the Coronavirus epidemic and the government’s response of closing all public gatherings for the time being, we can do ministry in a different way, or we can do no ministry at all. Jesus wants us to continue his ministry, no matter what.

Why are we not having church services? As we follow the Lord’s own word, we have several things to consider. Yes, the Third Commandment says that we should “Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy.” That means meeting for worship. But the next commandment says we should “honor your father and your mother.” We know that the government is one part of the earthly authorities that we are to obey, even when it goes against what we would rather do. If the government said we could no longer worship Jesus or speak his word, we would have to answer as Peter did at Acts 5:29 when he was told to keep silent about the gospel, he said, “We must obey God rather than men.” The important thing here is that we are not being told we can never worship together again, but to stop for a few weeks for public safety. We are not only to think about ourselves at this time, but to remember the people we might hurt by spreading infection as we meet together. This involves the Fifth Commandment, “You shall not murder.” We learn the Small Catechism on this subject, “We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.”

Part of helping and supporting others right now is social distancing. We will get back to the worship services, the congregational meals, the ministry of the Lutheran school in a classroom setting, and the visits to the homes, nursing homes, and hospitals for the sick, but for the safety of all we are to stay home and use the phone, cameras, and the internet to care for God’s people. This is how we love others in the present.

It’s hard. Hard to stay home. Hard not to drive over to visit someone who is hurting. Hard not to think, “I have my constitutional rights to assemble, to run a business, to shop where and when I want. I’m going to exercise that right.” You might say we are sacrificing some of our freedom for the welfare of others. One would think Christians would be very good at this. We worship someone who always thought of others before thinking of himself, who laid down his very life for others. We learn how to do this from Jesus.

So what has the pastor been doing during the shelter at home order? I’ve been making videos of worship services. I’ve been making phone calls to members. I’ve been a good husband, cleaning my house and yard and garage. I’ve been praying for you. It’s amazing how fast the days go by staying busy like this. I’m doing it differently to keep you safe from infection and to help our country fight this disease.

I’ve also been praying for our leaders in government, for the medical workers, for the police, firefighters, emergency medical workers, and even for the grocery business and for truck drivers. The food supply is very important. I’ve also been praying for you.

This situation touches home. Lisa’s parents live in Michigan. One of her nephews lives in

their basement. He goes to work each day and visits his girlfriend in a different town. Last week that town had several cases of the epidemic appear. So we are praying that this is not brought into the home of my in-laws, for they are elderly and compromised in health.

As Deuteronomy 31:6. God says, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." That was a promise to Israel at the death of Moses, and it is promised to the New Israel, which is the Christian Church and every individual member of it. We can depend on God to get us through this, to do things a new way for this time until the epidemic is passed. God has given us his son, Jesus as a pledge.

We confess to God our doubts, our fears, our anger at the present situation, and our failure to love others more than ourselves. If ever there was a time we needed forgiveness, this is the time. God does forgive us. He asks us to be patient and wait for his answer to our prayers. To do things differently, to trust and not to be overcome by suffering. Some of you are out of work and worrying about your expenses. Some of you will suffer because you cannot go to the funeral of a family member. Some of you are starved for conversation and a human touch. God is faithful. He will answer your prayers. Just hold on and wait for him .

Fathers, this is a good time to teach your children the faith. Put away the phones and the video games, and get out the Bible. I suggest reading the stories of Genesis to the family, beginning at chapter one and continuing through the Noah narrative and the life of Joseph. These are exciting stories. They faced great challenges with faith. Or read the story of David, beginning in 1 Samuel chapter 16. I also have a guide called "The Family Altar" posted on our web site, [immanuelaltamont.org](http://immanuelaltamont.org) for you to use. Read a story and talk about it with your family. Say a prayer for the concerns of your family and say the Lord's prayer. It is so

important, and it is time you took your most important God-given role as the spiritual leader of your family.

If anyone is having an emergency, call, text, or email me. I will do whatever I can to help you. Our community food pantry is operating on Tuesdays at First United Methodist Church for those who are in dire need. There are other sources of help if you are hungry or afraid. We will get through this together, with the help of God. And when it is over we will be so thankful.

What about Easter? If the governor's shelter at home proclamation is not lifted before April 12, we will celebrate Easter on the Sunday after it is lifted. We will celebrate Christ's resurrection. We will have confirmation and all the other festivals, but we must stay home for now and adjust things as events develop. This is part of loving other people as God has loved us.

Blessings to you, and may God give you the faith you need to trust in him.

*Pastor Wright*

### **Services Postponed:**

Due to COVID-19/Coronavirus we have postponed public Worship Services.

Watch online at [immanuelaltamont.org](http://immanuelaltamont.org) Sermons or on facebook. We will resume public worship after the governor's proclamation lifts.

### **The Original EASTER SCHEDULE**

- April 9 Maundy Thursday 6:30PM. Lord's Supper
- April 10 Good Friday 12:00PM prayer service
- 6:30PM Tenebrae Vespers
- April 11 No Saturday service
- April 12 Easter Sunday,  
Sunrise Service 6AM  
Easter Breakfast at Church 7AM  
Easter Festival/Lord's Supper 9AM

**Confirmation Sunday** April 26, 10:00 AM with regular service at 8:30 AM.

## Prayer Corner

- For healing of Curtis Baginski, Claudia Berg, Herb Berg, Gail Bryan, Tiffany Dunaway, Abbey Franzen, Wayne Franzen, Gert Heiden, Pam Kepley, John Lowe, Joe Matthewson, Judy Mercier, JR Newby, Deb Pagel, Gary Pryor, Larry Quandt, Walter Ruding, Evelyn Shumaker, Norma Siebert, Elverna Tappendorf, Jim Voelker, Nora Wendling, Craig Wolff and others.
- For our pastor, church staff, ALIS school staff.
- For Lutheran missionaries Ted Krey and Britt Odemba and for their families.
- For our government for protection of unborn children and elderly.
- For all who travel
- For peace in the world, an end to violence in the name of God, and for harmony among nations.
- For those persecuted for their faith in Jesus.
- For police, fire fighters, emergency medical personnel, and those who serve in our military and their families; Chelsea Giovannetti and Michael Weishaar

**CID LWML 75th Anniversary Convention** is scheduled for April 30 – May 2.

**CEFS Meal Deliveries** continue thru April 3 for Immanuel drivers.

If you plan to pick up a meal call 618-483-6912 the day before to reserve your meal for pick up. **Meals on north and south routes for drivers are still being delivered as usual.**

**Large Print** postponed.

**Ladies Aid Meeting** postponed.

**Pork Dinner Thank You** *On behalf of everyone on the pork dinner committee we would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who helped support Immanuel's Pork Dinner. We had a wonderful group of youth and adult members giving of their time to help and also a delicious variety of desserts donated. With all this we served between 450-500 people who came to support us, enjoy a meal and fellowship. For all this we are extremely thankful.*

**ALIS** is hiring a 7/8 boys basketball coach for 2020/2021 school year. Contact Bethany Nelson: [bnelson@alisrockets.com](mailto:bnelson@alisrockets.com).

**Volunteer Appreciation Banquet** for CEFS Meals on Wheels and Retired and Senior Volunteers is Thursday, April 23, beginning at 4:30PM, meal served at 5:30PM at Effingham Event Center, 1501 W Fayette Ave, Effingham. RSVP to Amy or Debbie at 217-342-2193 ext 135 or 119.