

Immanuel Lutheran News

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Visit our web site at www.immanuelaltamont.org

October 2020

From the Pastor

This month the annual harvest of corn and beans will begin again in our community.



Truly this has been a year

unlike any other we've ever seen. The response to Coronavirus has shut our loved ones in nursing homes, kept us from seeing our family in the hospital, paused and eliminated jobs in every economic sector, closed our schools for two months, and forced us all to put on a face covering at some point.

Worship has changed slightly as well. We no longer "pass the plate" to collect an offering after the sermon is preached. That is because it is healthier for us to place our offering in the basket as we enter or exit the church. We don't have to handle something that other people has touched.

Offerings are still important! Regardless of whether we give in a basket, through the mail, or on the internet, God still asks us to give. The Bible teaches us that God is the owner of everything. He merely allows us to manage things for him. God allows us much freedom as to how we manage his property. We get to decide what to do with everything. As we manage, he wants us to help the poor and provide for the workers of the church.

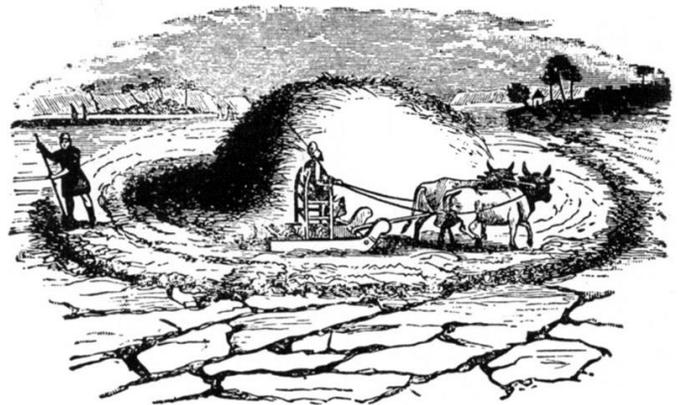
Some things are required by law: paying taxes, paying fees with licenses, and buying some forms of insurance. Other things are optional: new or used vehicles, rent or buying a home of varying values, and the type and quality of food we purchase and consume. We can decide whether to have cable television or not.

But one thing is clear—we are to return to the Lord the *first* portion of all he gives to us. In doing so we show ourselves that we really do believe the Lord's promises to provide for us. We also show our gratitude for all his property that he lets us manage, and for the one lasting gift that we get to keep forever, the righteousness of faith that comes from Jesus to us, and the gift of eternal life in heaven.

There are various ways to help the poor among us. The local food pantry is one of them.

Giving to the Altamont Ministerial Association fund is another. We've had some fundraisers at the church to help people out locally. There are other community benevolent funds in our locality as well.

Care for the church workers comes through regular offerings to our congregation. If you are not coming to church right now because of Covid 19, don't let that steal the joy of giving to the Lord through the congregation's general fund offering. Together we support twenty-two full and part-time workers at Altamont Lutheran Interparish School. We support a pastor and a director of youth and family, and several part-time workers and musicians, as well as helping support a missionary pastor in the Dominican Republic and other ministries in central Illinois.



There's a humorous harvest narrative in the Bible about giving. "Do not muzzle the ox as it treads out the grain." In Deuteronomy 25 God said that oxen should be able to eat some of the grain that they were threshing by walking over it again and again. I don't think that today we would enjoy eating grain products that animals had walked over. We prefer a mill to do the de-husking of the wheat. However, the image is used in 1 Timothy 5:18 to teach that we should take very good care of the church workers through our honor, support, and kind fair speech about their lives. If brute animals should be able to share in some of the harvest bounty, how much more should those who serve us in the

Lord be welcomed to share our treasures. I think that comparison is quite humorous.

Giving to God is healthy for the soul. Like the health of the body, it does require discipline. Just as you are careful not to eat too much rich food and to get enough exercise to maintain your health, giving through the church takes agreement in the family, determination to do it, and discipline not to spend everything on ourselves. Paul told his church at Corinth to set aside an amount each week and save it up until he could come to collect it and distribute it to the other churches in need. He thanked his people when they sent him support, especially when he was under house arrest in Rome.

In the same way, as I strive to be a good pastor, I must encourage your house to give to the Lord from the best that God has entrusted into your management. Make it a priority for your family. It always helps me to remember that I really don't own anything myself. I am managing everything for it's true owner, God. He promises to bless you as you follow his direction.

As Jesus served me by giving his all, right down to his life to purchase me from sin and death and deliver me back to God, I want to give the best that I have for his purposes in the world today. Covid 19 is helping us all to see what is most important in this life, what we can live without, and what we cannot live without. The gospel of Jesus is that one thing I can't live without.

Here's a great hymn about giving. Read it as a prayer for proper stewardship in your home.

**Hymn 786 in *Lutheran Service Book*,
"Lord of All Good"**

- 1 Lord of all good, our gifts we bring You now;
Use them Your holy purpose to fulfill.
Tokens of love and pledges they shall be
That our whole life is offered to Your will.**
- 2 We give our minds to understand Your ways;
Hands, eyes, and voice to serve Your great design;
Hearts with the flame of Your own love ablaze—
Thus for Your glory all our pow'rs combine.**
- 3 Father, whose bounty all creation shows;
Christ, by whose willing sacrifice we live;
Spirit, from whom all life in fullness flows:
To You with grateful hearts ourselves we give.**

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God's Answer to Racism "Treat everyone you see in the same way that you want to be treated." Rather than doing to others what they have done to us, Jesus taught, "As you *wish* that others would do unto you, so do unto them" (Luke 6:31 ESV). I think I just felt the earth move.

Pastor Wright

Safe to Worship

During Covid 19 we are sanitizing the church with disinfectant fog twice each weekend. We all should follow these precautions:



- Avoid physical contact at church with people who are *not* in your household.
- Use hand sanitizer upon entering the building.
- Pick up a worship folder from the table at the entrance.
- Leave your offering envelopes in the basket near the doors.
- Socialize *outside* the building before and after services.
- Sit at least six feet apart from people who are *not* in your household.
- Receive communion from the pastor with both palms up, then proceed to the table for the blood of Christ.
- Wear a face covering when singing and if you must approach another person inside the building. This includes visiting our office personnel on weekdays.

Prayer Vigil – We here at Immanuel are having a prayer vigil on Sat/Sun, **Oct 3 & 4**. Commit to a half-hour of prayer for government and life issues.

Sign-up sheets are in the narthex and don't forget to take a **40 Days for Life** booklet to guide your prayer.

The Baby Bottle Project - If you haven't already, please turn in baby bottles for **Family Life Center**.

Drive Thru Barbecue

Lutherans for Life has

formed a chapter with members from Bethlehem, Zion, and St. Paul—Blue Point congregations. We are having a fundraiser **porkburger and bake sale** as a drive-through in our parking lot Saturday, **October 17**, 10 AM to 1 PM (**Grill was not available on 1st Sat; Fireman Breakfast is on 2nd Sat.) Let's try again for 3rd Saturday!**

Come out and enjoy a good meal and support life as God created it.



Church Council Meeting: Monday, October 12, 7:30 PM. Elders and Trustees convene at 7:00 PM.

Church Voters' Assembly: Sunday, October 18, 1:30 in the Parish Hall.

Is Abortion an Election Issue? These pamphlets are available at the church from Lutherans For Life.

Reformation Rally

Service: Sunday, October 25, 5 PM at

Immanuel. This year's preacher is The. Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe, former president of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana, and currently serves as president of the Concordia University System of the LCMS. Dr. Wenthe is originally from Effingham.



Reformation – Choir The joint Festival of the Reformation Service is October 25, 5:00 p.m. Choir Practices: October 4, 11 and 18, 2:00 p.m. at Immanuel. Members from, St. Paul – Blue Point, Bethlehem, Immanuel and Zion churches are invited to sing in the choir. This is the 503rd anniversary of the Reformation. Detailed choir information will be shared at the October 4 practice and orientation. For info: Dean Manuel manueldean9@gmail.com cell: 618-267-7914. *“Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise.”-Martin Luther*

Music Corner

Music at Immanuel For the 6:00 and 8:30 services, contact Sheryl Marble at 217-343-6432 if you can help beautify the service with your voice.

Sunday Praise Team invites singers and instrumentalists to join them. Contact Bill Simmons at bsmns@altamont.net or speak to the group after service.

Prayer Corner

- For healing of Heath Beccue, Claudia Berg, Tiffany Dunaway, Abbey Franzen, Wayne Franzen, Stephen Heimgartner, Carol Kassel, Pam Kepley, Cathy Marble, Brian Mueller, JR Newby, Deb Pagel, Pam Paszotta, Russell Phillips, Elnor Rhodes, Walter Ruding, Julie Seales, Evelyn Shumaker, Norma Siebert, Barb Smith, Doris Strullmyer, Elverna Tappendorf, Craig Wolff and others.
- Comfort to the family and friends of Amiee Lowry, Gary Pryor and Cheyenne Wilkerson,
- 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 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.

Central Illinois District LCMS “Gatepost”

newsletter is available at

<http://www.cidlcms.org/resources/gatepost>

Life Chain 2020 2-3 p.m. Sunday, October 4 in Effingham. Prayerfully, peacefully and legally line Henrietta, Keller and Fayette. Bring lawn chairs if needed. *See bulletin board for details.*

EDUCATION UPDATE

New Member Class has begun. Join us on Tuesdays, 6:30 to 8:00 PM in the upper Parish Hall.

Wednesday Catechism Classes for public school children in grades 5-8 are 2:45-4:00PM in the Parish Hall lower level.

Sunday Bible Class with Pastor Wright continues the study of the Book of Revelation from 9:45-10:45 in the Parish Hall upper level.

High School Bible Class meets in the Parish Hall lower level youth room on Sundays at 9:45-10:45.

Together Time is every Wednesday. Jr. High is from 5:30-7:30 pm and Sr. High is from 7:00-9:00pm. *Parents please sign up to chaperone on our linktree.*

PreK-8th Grade Sunday School this Fall
Please see the insert for the **weekly devotion!** Children's **video lessons and weekly devos** every Sunday on the church website under Ministry → Children.

The Ann Crocker St Clair Chapter thanks you for celebrating Constitution Week September 17-23 with our chapter. We appreciate your cooperation.
Thanks to Kenny for ringing the bell to commemorate the signing of the US Constitution.

Lutherans for Life Donations – If you use Lutherans for Life offering envelope, donation will go to *National* Lutherans for Life. If you want a donation to go to *local chapter*, use a Designated envelope and mark “Immanuel Lutherans for Life”.

CEFS Meal deliveries for Immanuel are October 19-30. Schedules will be emailed and will be available on the small table in the PH lobby.

Scripture Readers – Readings Oct – Jan, 2021 are in the narthex.

Portals of Prayer, Oct – Dec, available at each of the church doors.

Ushers schedules are on the usher's table in the narthex

ALIS

2020 Annual PTL Auction Sunday, September 27th at ALIS! There is also an open house for the community to view the renovations to our gymnasium and cafeteria. We are excited for everyone to see the progress and benefits of your continued support and dedication to our school!

2pm to 4pm Open House and Silent Auction
4:15pm Live Auction on the lawn behind the school.

Everyone is encouraged to bring lawn chairs and practice safe social distancing guidelines.

Children are welcome to attend but are asked to avoid walking on the gymnasium floor and refrain from playing on the playground.

If you have auction donations that have not been dropped off, we ask that you please drop them off at the school as soon as possible.

ALIS is hiring a volleyball coach. The season runs from mid-January through March, with practices normally starting in December. With Covid, this is subject to change. For more information contact Bethany @ bnelson@alisrockets.com or to fill out an application stop by school ofc.

THANK YOU- ALIS has undergone some major renovations with the gym, cafeteria, and kitchen. A wood floor was installed in the gym, and a new floor was installed in the cafeteria. Walls were removed in the cafeteria and gym to allow for portable bleachers and increased cafeteria space. A new storage room was built. The walk-in freezer was replaced in the kitchen. Also, a three-door refrigerator was purchased to replace the walk-in-cooler along with several new updates to make the kitchen more efficient. A few things are left to complete, but we want to thank everyone for your help and support. It is greatly appreciated! In addition to using ALIS donated funds (including the Dave Coslet estate), PTL helped make these projects possible!